

Equipping everyone to recognise  
and respond to the Spirit

— The —

# CHURCH WHO HEARS

# GOD'S VOICE

'Will help many discover a more intimate and fruitful  
relationship with the God who speaks.'

Paul and Becky Harcourt

TANIA HARRIS PHD

‘In both the Old and New Testaments, the promise and presence of God’s Spirit is closely associated with his people being prophetic. By sharing her own adventure and diving deeply into the Scriptures, Tania has produced a book that is clear and compelling. We pray that it will help many people discover a more intimate and fruitful relationship with the God who speaks, as well as helping churches handle a gift that is both precious and necessary, but is not without its challenges.’

*Paul Harcourt, Leader, New Wine, England; and Becky Harcourt*

‘Tania Harris awakens the church to a marvellous fact that is so easily overlooked: *the Lord of the universe speaks to us!* She weaves together a compelling narrative of scriptural commentary and personal story that is sure to help her readers rediscover the grand adventure of following Christ. This book was a truly delightful read for me.’

*Frank D. Macchia, professor of Systematic Theology,  
Vanguard University of Southern California*

‘Tania Harris has provided us with a readable, scholarly and insightful study of the ways in which God speaks to us and through us in the church. The work is thoroughly and carefully grounded in the Scriptures, a broad-based understanding of Christian theology, and the wisdom of the various Christian traditions, including my own Catholic perspective. Stories of people’s encounters with God give flesh-and-blood context to Tania’s reflections, and spell out in practical terms the ways in which we may respond to our engagements with the sacred. The breadth of Tania’s research and her gift of storytelling make this a valuable resource for scholars and casual readers alike. The undoubted faith which underscores the whole work serves as an inspiration and encouragement to anyone who cares to engage with it. I am sure that people from all traditions will find nourishment

here, as well as a fresh understanding of their own community's story. I commend Tania's book to you with glad enthusiasm.'

*Father Kevin Bates SM, OAM, parish priest,  
Holy Name of Mary parish, Australia*

“What is God saying to me? Where is God leading me? How do I know for sure it's God and not me?” I would be surprised if most, if not all, Christians have not asked one of these questions at one time or another. I know I have. In her book, Revd Dr Tania Harris helps us to find the answers within the community of the local church. Rather than an individual adventure, we live as Christians in community – and it's in this context we hear God speaking to us. This book is a much-needed, balanced approach to hearing God's voice. Applying its teaching will help us to move closer to God, and in so doing, discern God's direction and purpose in our lives.'

*Dr Freddy Boswell, Bible translator and former CEO,  
SIL International*

'Tania's book is genuinely the most comprehensive, satisfying and challenging book I have read on the relationship between prophetic revelations and the Bible.'

*Pastor Mike Breen, leader, 3D Discipleship Movement*

'Revd Dr Tania Harris's newest release couldn't be more timely. In a postmodern world where disenchantment has led to the quest for reconnection with transcendence, Tania has reminded us that the triune God, who is communion in his very being, seeks communion with his creatures. As the late Francis Schaeffer noted, "He is there and is not silent." Tania takes a careful and compelling look at the manner in which the Spirit of God interacts with those whom he has made in his image, so that we might walk in his paths. He speaks! The real challenge is whether we are listening. Tania builds a bridge between the world of theology and the world of the average Christian by making hearing God's voice accessible. Take your time as you read

this monumental work and start listening. Indeed, God is there, and he is not silent.’

*Dr Mark J. Chironna, pastor, theo-semiotician  
and prophetic mentor, US*

‘As a Baptist pastor seeking to help our church discover how to hear from God for themselves, *The Church Who Hears God’s Voice* is just what we needed! There is so much in the book to resource and inspire the local church pastor, as well as plenty of insights that shine a light on problems that have been previously untouched. The book is compelling in its argument that churches flourish when they hear the voice of God. Well written and heartily recommended!’

*Mark Edwards, senior pastor,  
Inglewood Community Church, Australia*

‘Communication is the cornerstone of our relationship with God. Revd Dr Tania Harris offers a solid theological background and lots of practical insights for why and how we all should listen to God. I highly recommend this book!’

*Pastor Jürgen Galonska, senior pastor,  
City Church, Aarhus, Denmark*

‘Tania Harris, in her brilliant new book, builds a safe bridge between pastors and prophets . . . as well as for the sceptic to cross over into a well-founded prophetic lifestyle. The same God who inspired the Bible writers and the apostles in Acts continues to speak to and lead his disciples of today.’

*Pastor Pernille Liland, founder,  
Nordic Prophetic Network*

‘Tania Harris’s excellent book helps us to reflect both theologically and practically, weaving together biblical truth with lived experience for an empowering and inspiring read. This will surely become a go-to book for all of us seeking to equip ourselves and others to discern God’s voice in this noisy and distracting world. Highly recommended.’

*Cathy Madavan, writer, speaker, broadcaster, UK*

‘Revd Dr Tania Harris has done an excellent job setting out a programme for recovering the often “lost art” of hearing God’s voice in the twenty-first-century church. Building on substantial theological discussion as well as both positive and negative testimonies, she explores the practical issues for the individual Christian and the local church that seeks to hear direct from God. This book will open new vistas for everyone who reads it!’

*Revd Dr Jon Newton, associate professor,  
Alphacrucis College, Australia*

‘This thoroughly researched and determinedly biblical book grabbed my attention and held it throughout – the topic of hearing God’s voice is so important! If we are called to follow Jesus, what can be more important? Revd Dr Harris’s book gives the answer . . . recognising his voice and responding to it! *The Church Who Hears God’s Voice* reintroduces the mystical experience of the Spirit without weirdness or sensationalism. This book will stimulate your spirit and refresh your soul.’

*Dr Peter Read, vice-principal,  
Regents Theological College, UK*

‘Tania Harris has done her homework! Her book helps us to nail the questions people are asking, particularly from those streams of Christianity that are wary of the idea. Through historical context and biblical knowledge, Revd Dr Harris helps to overcome our objections and fears about hearing God’s voice and challenges us to consider that hearing from the Spirit is normal for all Christians. She has struck the right balance between academic research, personal story, biblical knowledge and digestible, practical, how-to steps to make this book an easy and enjoyable read for every church leader and parishioner.’

*Revd Dr Jackie Roesé, founder and president of  
The Marcella Project, US*

‘This book is holy ground. *The Church Who Hears God’s Voice* outlines a clear roadmap to maturity in one of the key areas of controversy in

the contemporary church: does God speak today? While Tania has many years' experience as a pastor, teacher, theologian and leader, in this book she becomes our friend, carefully walking us through this challenging subject with love, grace and truth. For those of us from a Pentecostal–Charismatic background, Tania offers wisdom, insight, balance and safety. For those from a more traditional or Reformed background, Tania sets forth a clear biblical narrative that will give us courage to embrace this gift from above. *The Church Who Hears God's Voice* is an important book, beautifully written, approachable and compelling, offering us both the theory and practice as to how we can all hear, discern and follow the voice of the Lord.'

*Fergus Scarfe, regional director, God TV UK and Ireland*

'This book is a feast. I spent my weekends devouring its richness and depth! As a pastor in Asia who is responsible for training leaders, I've witnessed first-hand the struggle even mature believers have in "hearing" the voice of the Spirit. In *The Church Who Hears God's Voice*, Revd Dr Harris dives deeply into the common traps believers face, spelling out both the diagnosis and the remedy in ways that any on-the-ground pastor will benefit from, while satisfying the questions of Bible scholars and theologians. If you're a church leader seeking a fresh and engaging theological examination on the topic of God's voice, coupled with real-life do's and don'ts, this is the book for you. There is no book like this out there!'

*Pastor Lindy Heung Shea, assistant director of Cells & Empowerment Ministry, International Church Assembly, Hong Kong*

'The church is in the midst of a Spirit reformation and Tania's book is a voice in the centre of it.'

*Pastor Vicki Simpson, prophet and speaker, Australia*

'I see *The Church Who Hears God's Voice* becoming a classic. The book blends personal testimonies, a firm understanding of Scripture and scholarly research to examine the topic of hearing the Spirit. As a

pastor, I love that the book gives plenty of advice on how to guide the church through the process of hearing the Spirit. One of the groundbreaking aspects of Tania's work is the recognition of the potential for damage Spirit experiences can bring when handled badly. Tania does not shy away from this, including stories of how improper discernment has led to, at best, disillusionment and disappointment, and at worst, loss of faith. But she does not stop there, showing how to facilitate discernment within the context of the local church community. Revd Dr Harris consistently brings the reader back to the heart of the New Covenant, which is that every person in the church is able to hear directly from the Spirit. Every pastor needs to read this excellent book!

*Revd Dr John Snelgrove, lead pastor, Kong Fok Church International and pastor-at-large, Hong Kong*

'*The Church Who Hears God's Voice* is a gift to the church. Tania does not shy away from the problems associated with hearing the Spirit, but creates frameworks for how to address them pastorally. Wonderfully warm stories and case studies are woven throughout the book, making it readable and practical. Her strategic approach to building the church who hears God's voice is a game-changer! I loved this book.'

*Pastor Sarah Whittleston, national prayer leader, Elim Pentecostal churches, UK and Ireland*

# **The Church Who Hears God's Voice**

**Equipping everyone to recognise  
and respond to the Spirit**

**Tania Harris PhD**



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## **Part I**

### **Introduction: The Spirit at Work**

‘The capacity for everyone to hear from God through the Spirit is one of the most groundbreaking and world-changing initiatives that has ever occurred.’

## The Power of Hearing God's Voice

### The vision that saved a drought-stricken farm

Jarrold was an Australian farmer facing the worst drought of his life. A sun-bronzed man with a broad smile and buffed muscles from working long hours in the field, he was more resilient than most. But this drought had been wearing him down. With each turning of the seasons, he and his wife waited for the rains to come, but they never did. Now the creek-beds had become ditches of dust and the green fields a barren brown. Without water, the land laboured to produce a fraction of its normal yield. How could Jarrold provide for his lively brood of six children?

For months, Jarrold had tried to steward the family's waning resources to eke out a living, carefully tracking supplies and stretching out their savings, but the bills continued to mount. Like many, he had reached the end of his ability to cope. All across Australia, farmers had resorted to suicide as their farms dried out, cattle died of starvation, and hope withered with every sunrise. The fight to stave off depression was a daily one.

Then Jarrold had a dream. In the dream, he saw the paddock in the north-east corner of his property. But it wasn't the usual scene. In place of the dusty plot was a crop of leafy canola, the stalks all rising to a height of 15 to 20 centimetres. Somehow, he knew that the canola had been sown in dry soil, but for some reason the plants were flourishing. He woke up thinking, *Wouldn't it be good if it was real?*

The next day, Jarrod shared his dream with his wife, Emma. Could it be from God? They had never sown canola before, but they knew it to be a high-risk crop. What's more, the seed alone would cost over \$35,000 – and there was still no sign of rain.

Jarrod turned to his agronomist for advice. Tom was a trusted voice in the region and had a wealth of expertise on his side. His advice was emphatic but not unexpected: no, Jarrod should not plant canola – the risk was too high.

And yet it seemed like the dream had come from God . . .

After wrestling over it together, Jarrod and Emma made a decision. They defied the agronomist's counsel, purchased 1,100 kilograms of seed and began planting in the north-east paddock. It took them nearly three days, sowing through the night to cover as much of the 1,000 acres as they could.

The paddock was 80% sown when the rain came. Jarrod and Emma marvelled as the seed took root and grew. Over the coming weeks, the plants rose to the same height as Jarrod had seen in the dream. His canola field soon became the talk of the town. It produced the finest crop of the year and raised 80% of their income at market. That income was the difference between bankruptcy and keeping the farm.

It's a simple story, but a profound one. Hearing God's voice saved Jarrod and Emma's farm. Obeying the Spirit led to a life-saving miracle and the knowledge of a God who is greater than the Australian drought. Yet the pattern of hearing and following God's voice and seeing it manifest is not unusual in biblical terms. The whole narrative of Scripture is a demonstration of the same process. Time after time, God speaks, people respond and miracles unfold.

In this chapter, we look at the *power* of hearing God's voice. We learn that hearing God's voice has always precipitated the miraculous, both within the Bible and outside it. Then we define what it means to 'hear God's voice' and see that the meaning will vary according to your church tradition. Finally, we discuss how hearing God's voice was understood in Scripture and how the Spirit's outpouring at Pentecost means that we can all hear from God in the same way as the biblical characters.

## **The most powerful experience on earth**

How was the earth created? Think about it. It began with God speaking (Gen. 1). How are people healed? It is the word 'sent forth' that overcomes disease and death (Ps. 107:20; Mark 7:34; 9:25; John 11:43). How are people saved? It is made possible through the living Word, Jesus, who became flesh to atone for our sin (John 1:1). This is the pattern throughout the Scriptures. It all starts with God speaking. According to the prophet Amos, God does *nothing* without first revealing it (Amos 3:7). Every act of God in biblical history was preceded by an act of communication. Even Jesus did nothing without first hearing it (John 5:19).

It is the words themselves that carry the power. God's words are the vehicle of his authority and the expression of his intent. God's ability to align a downpour of rain with the planting of canola at Jarrod's farm was contained in his voice. Words from God transmit creative force and have the potential to bring themselves to pass (Gen. 1:3). They are like a fire and a hammer that breaks rock into pieces (Jer. 23:29). Once spoken, they are diligently watched over so that they perform the task for which they were sent (Jer. 1:12). They transcend time, reverse the circumstances and overtake the generations (Zech. 1:6). Their purpose will always be fulfilled (Isa. 55:11), for to fail is to defy the nature of the One who spoke them (Num. 23:19; Isa. 45:23).

The efficacy of divine communiqués lies not only in their meta-physical ability. What makes hearing from God even more potent is the disclosure of divine information. As God said to the prophet Jeremiah: 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and *unsearchable things you do not know*' (Jer. 33:3). The prophetic experience takes us into the boardroom of the heavenly Council where God's plans are divulged (Jer. 23:18–22). Hearing God's voice gives us insight into what is going on behind the scenes of the natural world. It opens the door to the spiritual realm where we experience the knowledge of God first hand.

Thus, Daniel saw why his prayer was delayed when the angel appeared (Dan. 10:3), and Samuel was able to anoint the next king of

Israel when God revealed it to him (1 Sam. 16:12). Joshua the high priest saw the reason for the attack on the construction of the Second Temple and the strategy for getting it going again (Zech. 3 – 4), and Paul saw the reason for his pain and how to respond to it (2 Cor. 12:7–10). John saw the forces behind the threat of oppression from the Roman Empire and was able to tell the seven churches how to endure it (Rev. 5:6–8), and Jarrod saw what seed to plant and when to sow it, in line with the coming rains.

Divine revelation is necessary for God's purposes to be known on earth. But God doesn't do it alone. Instead, he chooses to involve creation in his plan. God's words become the means through which humanity can partner with him in bringing his plans to earth. Since God is an invisible deity, they become his outreached arm and the manifest touch of his presence. They are the link from the spiritual realm to the natural, from the non-physical world to the material. When we respond to them, we are empowered to do God's will so that God's presence is experienced first hand. Like a rocket bursting through the stratosphere, we see intangible truths break into tangible realities. Not only do we witness God's miraculous power but we get to know the One who bears it (Isa. 45:21). *We know* that God is truly among us (1 Cor. 14:25).

Hearing from God not only enlists our participation in the divine plan; it allows God to work *in us*. God's words have the power to change us from the inside out. They are sent to save, sustain and heal us. As a light to our path and a lamp to our feet, they guide and direct our lives (Ps. 119:105). Sharper than any two-edged sword, they expose our thoughts and divide our spirits (Heb. 4:12). Like bread to our bodies and food to our souls, they feed, nourish and sustain us (John 6:63). It's not difficult to conclude, as the psalmist does, that God's words are 'sweeter than honey' and more 'precious than gold' (Ps. 19:10). As the very source of life, we can't live without them (Matt. 4:4).

## **The impact of 'love energy'**

The power of hearing from God is not limited to the pages of the Bible. Today, stories akin to those of Daniel, Samuel, Peter and Paul are seen in churches around the world. Testimony after testimony recalls the power of hearing from the Spirit in the same way as the biblical characters.

So potent is the hearing God experience in the contemporary church that it has attracted the attention of sociologists. Of course, as neutral observers, these academics are not making assessments about *if* God is speaking, since that is empirically impossible. Rather, they are interested in the *impact* of revelatory experience on people. Their work gives us insight into the power of God's voice in individual lives and the local church community.

American scholar Margaret Poloma is well known for her work in this area. A charismatic Catholic, Poloma became interested in spiritual phenomena such as prayer, revival and divine healing early on in her career. Since then, she has completed an impressive raft of studies in the USA and Canada. Her first study in 1989 was with the American Assemblies of God (AG) and drew on the revelatory experiences of pastors and congregation members in over sixty churches from eleven different states.<sup>1</sup> These findings were followed up twenty years later in a second study involving twenty-one congregations with fellow sociologist John Green.<sup>2</sup>

The findings of both studies are telling. Poloma and Green found that the 'hearing God' experience made a significant difference to individual lives and was strongly linked to 'acts of service', such as prayer for healing, giving and evangelism. That is, people were more likely to offer prayer when someone was ill, forgive people when wronged, give to the poor and get involved in the community *after they had heard from God*. This benevolence extended beyond the church into the public arena and avenues of social welfare. An overall increase in church growth was the result.

Poloma and Green went on to analyse their findings using a sociological theory developed by American-Russian scholar Pitirim

Sorokin. They proposed that having a revelatory encounter produces a form of 'love energy'. This energising power (which they termed 'godly love') came from direct interaction with God. When people experienced this divine love, it energised and expanded their benevolence. As the scholars describe it, 'interactions in the divine-human (vertical) relationship provided a "love energy" that empowered benevolent action in human-human (horizontal) relationships'.<sup>3</sup> In short, the 'love energy' arising from Spirit experience motivated people to love and serve others.

The links between hearing God and serving others are not limited to North America. Similar outcomes have been found in studies around the world including Pentecostal congregations in the UK,<sup>4</sup> Singapore and Hong Kong.<sup>5</sup> Poloma herself found consistent results in North American Episcopalian churches.<sup>6</sup>

My own research revealed similar findings, albeit with a far smaller sample.<sup>7</sup> Individuals reported significant change as a result of their Spirit encounters. When people heard from God, they were saved, healed and released from addictions. They received hope for the future, insight for day-to-day challenges and new strategies for relationships. They started businesses and ministries. They relocated to different countries and discovered new giftings. The experience often led them to do things they wouldn't normally do. Like farmer Jarrod, they saw miracles when they did. After hearing from God, they were never the same.

These sorts of findings should not be surprising for Bible-believing Christians. What we see in the sociological studies of the contemporary church was the norm for the church of the New Testament. The book of Acts recounts how the Spirit's revelatory activity directed all the main players and became the impetus for the church's expansion.<sup>8</sup> In fact, hearing God experiences were the kick-starter for every major event! They provided the 'love energy' to do God's work, often in radical ways. Consider the salvation of Paul after receiving God's message in a vision on the Damascus road (Acts 9:3-19); the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch after Philip received a Spirit directive (Acts 8:26-40); Peter's call to the Gentiles after his vision on the rooftop

(Acts 10); and the outreach of the Jerusalem church after a famine was prophesied by Agabus (Acts 11:27–30). Then there was the commissioning of Saul and Barnabas as prompted by Spirit-leading (Acts 13:2–4), the launch of the mission to the West after a dream (Acts 16:9), and the perseverance of Paul following the Spirit's encouragement in Corinth (Acts 18:9–11), Rome and Jerusalem (Acts 23:11). Time and time again, the Spirit spoke and the works of God followed. As American missiologist Craig Van Gelder observed, the Spirit was *doing the work* of 'changing lives and transforming communities'; new types of communities were being created, leaders were being appointed, lives were being sanctified, and people were being led into active gift-based ministry to confront principalities and powers in the world.<sup>9</sup> In each case, the Spirit was initiating and guiding the process. Growth came when people heard from God.

### **The biblical meaning of hearing God's voice**

We've seen something of the power of hearing God's voice, but before we go further, it is important to define what we actually mean by the experience. Even though the claim to hearing God's voice is common in Christianity (as a 'revelatory religion', Christianity is predicated on the concept of a *communicating* deity), it doesn't always carry the same meaning. While all Christian denominations believe that God 'speaks' in some way today, there are widely different beliefs about *how* God speaks, *what* God says and what our *response* should be.

For many in the Protestant tradition, hearing God's voice is most commonly associated with Scripture-reading and preaching. The Spirit speaks largely to illuminate and apply *past* revelation – that is, the truths laid out in the Bible – rather than introduce new information. So, in these settings, you're most likely to hear that the Spirit speaks through Scripture, sermons, nature, Christian books and the 'wisdom of counsel'.

In other traditions – specifically the Pentecostal and Charismatic streams of Protestantism and the Catholic Church – hearing God's

voice includes these modes of receiving revelation but also allows for encounters that do not require the involvement of other people, liturgies, sermons or books. Here, people believe that they can hear God's voice in the same way as the biblical characters – that is, through dreams, visions, voices and the like.<sup>10</sup> These experiences are 'immediate' and 'spontaneous', meaning they do not arise from our own cognition or thinking. They are also *revelatory* in that they include the possibility of information that was previously unknown or points to the future.

A helpful way of conceiving the difference between the traditions is to consider Jesus' instructions about the Spirit's revelatory work to his disciples. Jesus said that the Spirit would speak about *two areas* after he left. First, the Spirit would *remind* his followers of all the teachings he had established while on earth (John 14:26). Thus, the Spirit would speak about the truths of salvation, kingdom life and the ways of God – teachings that are now recorded for us as Scripture. Hence, the Spirit speaks today as we read and hear from the Bible. For conservative Protestants, this is the only way God speaks today.

However, Jesus also spoke of a second area. Not only would the Spirit reiterate the core foundations of Christian faith; he would also speak about *things to come* (John 16:13). This referred to the issues the disciples would face after Jesus left the earth (John 16:12). Since they couldn't handle all the information at once, the Spirit would be given to *continue* speaking after Jesus had gone. In other words, the Spirit would speak about contemporary questions and concerns, applying the message of the gospel to particular situations. It is this second type of God-speech that Pentecostals, Charismatics and Catholics also embrace. These sectors of the church believe that we can hear from God apart from Scripture. That is, the Spirit's voice is heard in the same way as the biblical characters heard it – through direct revelatory encounters.

As we'll later see (in Chapter 9), it is this type of *direct* hearing God experience that was the most common mode of revelation under the Old and New Covenants. However, there is one significant difference between the two epochs. While God's words have always been the

source of his power and presence, not everyone has been able to access them as easily.

### **The democratisation of the Spirit**

As we've seen, God has always been speaking in order to reveal his nature. However, not everyone has been able to hear it. Under the Old Covenant, direct revelation by the Spirit was largely only available to the *prophets*. The prophets were a select group of individuals who were specifically called to hear God's voice on behalf of others. They would hear from God (mostly in dreams and visions) and then pass his messages on (prophecy them) to God's people (Num. 12:6). When the people acted on what they heard, they were able to partner with God and witness his manifest presence. This pattern continued into the incarnation when, as the living Word, Jesus came to reveal God's life-giving power and the fullness of God's nature. Jesus was known as a prophet, and indeed the greatest of *all* prophets.<sup>11</sup> In his death and resurrection, Jesus fulfilled all the words that had been spoken by the prophets, culminating in the display of God's supreme power over sin and death.

After Jesus' ascension came the seismic shift. On the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit was poured out on the *entire church*. Many signs and wonders occurred that day, but notice the first point of Peter's sermon. Quoting from the prophet Joel, he declared that the Spirit's outpouring meant that *everyone* – young and old, male and female – could now receive revelatory messages in the same way as the Old Covenant prophets. They could all hear God's voice in dreams and visions and speak them forth as prophecy (Acts 2:16–17). Every person who chose to follow Jesus could now hear directly from God *without* the mediation of a prophet.

This gift was not only given to the people assembled in Jerusalem that day. As Peter proclaimed, the promise was for those who lived in Jerusalem and beyond – Judea and Samaria and all those who were 'far off' (Acts 2:39). Now everyone could receive the power and knowledge

of God through hearing the Spirit's voice. Everyone could access the divine wisdom and revelation of God for themselves. That makes the act of receiving the Spirit with the capacity to hear from God – often termed the 'democratisation' of the Spirit – one of the most groundbreaking and world-changing initiatives that has ever occurred.

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Looking back on Jarrod's story, we may ask: what would have happened if Jarrod hadn't listened to his dream? What if he had merely passed it off as a figment of his imagination? He wouldn't have bought the canola seed and he wouldn't have sown it through the night. He certainly wouldn't have seen a miracle. He might even have had to sell his farm.

This is the power and privilege of hearing from God. When we hear from the Spirit, we receive access to God's power. We receive the knowledge of God's plans and the ability to partner with him to see them manifest on the earth. The 'love energy' we experience motivates us to serve, love and forgive. This was the testimony of the early church after Jesus, and it remains the reality of many in the church today.

As we've seen, not everyone will be convinced of the validity of Jarrod's dream, preferring to confine God's voice to Scripture-reading and preaching. Later in the book, we explore the reasons for this and take time to address them. But here we start with the understanding that the gift of the revelatory Spirit at Pentecost was for all – sons and daughters, young and old. The promise of the New Covenant remains. As Christians following in the tradition of our predecessors, our privilege is to hear the Spirit's voice and follow it. There is no other way.



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