

# **MY SHEEP HEAR MY VOICE**

**(Revised Edition)**

J. C. Hedgecock

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## **Dedication**

To my wife, Shirley, who is a very special gift from the Lord. During the many years I have been walking in this message and learning the truths I am sharing in this book, I have had to make many hard decisions in obedience to the Lord. There have been many hardships, rejections, persecutions, trials and sacrifices. Through them all, Shirley has stood strong in her support of me. She has never complained and has always encouraged me to obey whatever God spoke to me, even at times when I did not feel like obeying. For this, I am eternally grateful. When I found a wife, I certainly found a good thing. (Proverbs 18:22)

To Patricia Hedgecock Ross, who has spent countless hours editing and preparing this manuscript as well as others that have been previously published. To Aaron Ross, Julia Arulsamy, Renae Ross, and Will and Cindy Kok for their assistance in editing.

To the faithful brothers and sisters in Servants of the Lord Ministries who have stood with me in prayer and support. They have helped make this book possible.

Above all, to the Lord Jesus Christ, who sent his Holy Spirit in revelation. He is the true Author of this book.

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## **Introduction**

This book has been written to teach you how to hear the voice of the Lord and how to be led by his Spirit. I do not claim to have all the answers on this subject, but I know personally the One who does have the answers.

What is shared in this book is not a theory but rather what I have learned over the years by walking with the Lord on a daily basis and seeking to hear his voice in matters from the most minute to those which are life-changing. This book is by no means an exhaustive teaching on knowing God and walking with him, but it will give you a solid foundation and start you on your way to walking with the Lord and having fellowship with him. I have endeavored to share the light I have in a clear and simple manner so that everyone from a newborn believer to a seasoned saint can fully understand what is presented.

I rejoice in the Spirit as I present to you the opportunity to intimately know our precious Heavenly Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This book will show you how you can have beautiful fellowship with our Creator and our Redeemer.

Prepare your heart, open your spirit and read on...

J. C. Hedgecock

## Chapter 1

# To Know God

We will begin this study with a chapter about knowing God personally. It is important to understand that many believers in the world do not really know God. Even though they met him when they received Jesus into their hearts, they did not pursue a relationship with him. Therefore, they have never gotten to know him.

There are many scriptures in the Bible which reveal the access we have to God and what has been made available to us through Christ. **Because Jesus loved us enough to lay down his life for our redemption through his blood, we have been given the provision to know him as well as the Father.** God's purpose for his children is that we move into fellowship with him after accepting Jesus as our personal Savior, rather than simply "meeting" Jesus and never having a personal relationship with him or the Father.

There have been thousands of books written about God by people who have known him to some measure. You can study books by those who were recognized as great men and women of God. You may glean out what they learned about God during the time they were in ministry. Many of these faithful servants walked with God for fifty or sixty years, and you can gain some insight into what God is like by studying their lives. This has been the approach many believers have taken in trying to learn more about God. Many have also studied the writings of Paul, Peter or others whose revelations are included in God's Word. In that way, more knowledge about God and how he operates can be gained.

However, this has created a problem in "theology". The church has focused on studying about God rather than the study of God. **We've labeled the study about God as "theology", and this is taught in seminaries and Bible colleges all over the world.** Believers study the Bible, as well as other books written by men and women of God, to see what they have to say about him. **But we've missed the most important thing, which is the personal, individual study of God ourselves!** Pure theology is not the study about God. It is the study of God. God intends for us to get to know him through a personal relationship with him!

### **A Personal Savior**

When I received Jesus as my personal Savior, I did not come under the umbrella of another person's salvation. I either stand or fall before God by myself. My salvation is not dependent upon a pastor, priest, church or denomination. It is solely dependent upon my personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

**My relationship with God has developed because I made the effort to know him personally.** It did not come because someone else sought God for me. If that had been possible, my parents would have taken care of it long before it happened. My father was a very godly pastor who knew the Lord intimately, but I had to go to the cross myself. I had to open my heart, humble myself and receive Christ's atonement personally. No one else could receive it for me.

I heard testimonies of other Christians who had met Jesus, but I still had to experience him for myself. My life changed when I became an eye witness of God's love and experienced it personally.

### **Knowing God Personally**

My personal relationship with God is of little benefit to you, because you must experience it for yourself. You may praise

God for what you see in my life or someone else's, but it's not the same as having that personal relationship yourself.

It is somewhat like being a spectator at a sports event rather than being a player in the game. It is enjoyable to watch the game, but it is a lot more exciting to be involved in the actual playing! There is much more to win or lose if you are a player.

It is the same way in having a relationship with God. Because of what I have invested in developing personal fellowship with God, that relationship is of far greater value to me than it is to someone who may observe that relationship. They may see its merit, but it doesn't mean a lot to them because they haven't spent the years developing it that I have.

### **Encounters Rather Than a Relationship**

In these last days, there is little being taught about how to know God and develop a personal, intimate relationship with him. We are taught how to experience salvation, how to be filled with the Spirit, how God will manifest in particular situations, etc. However, such events are spasmodic in a Christian's life. There are usually long spaces of time in between the moments when most believers are conscious of the presence of God moving in their lives.

That is not what God intended! There is a better way. Yes, God does intend for us to have these experiences and for us to enjoy the manifestations of his presence. However, there is a great deal of difference between meeting someone occasionally as opposed to abiding with them continually throughout each and every day. **If you really want to know someone, you must spend time with them consistently instead of having occasional encounters with them.** God wants this for you!

The kind of relationship with God I am talking about is similar to the one I have with my wife, Shirley. Because we have been married since 1965, I know her much better than anyone else does and she knows me in the same manner. The intimacy we share because our hearts are open allows us to know one another at the deepest level.



Yet the Lord knows me much more deeply than this! He knows the thoughts and intents of my heart at all times. My heart is totally exposed to God whether I want it to be open or not.

It is possible to close the door of your spirit to other people, but no one can hide their heart from God. **When you choose to open your heart to God and seek a relationship with him, you will find that God will also begin to open his heart to you.** This is the first step to developing a relationship that goes much deeper than an initial encounter with him.

### **God's Fellowship is Available to You**

For many years, it has been implied in some Christian groups that a personal, intimate relationship with the Lord has only been available to the "elite" in church leadership. It seemed impossible to approach God personally or be near him. However, there has been a spiritual awakening in recent years, and many are beginning to realize that God desires fellowship with all of his children.

God is moving in churches and Christians are enjoying the manifestations of his Spirit. **They are beginning to enjoy the presence of God, but it has continued to be the result of spasmodic experiences rather than an on-going relationship.**

Unfortunately, some believers have made a "career" of moving from church to church in order to feel a move of the Spirit. They do not take the time to develop a personal relationship with God and they do not really know him. They may be very interested in learning about the experiences of others who have encountered God or know him intimately, but they are not really interested in making any effort to develop such a relationship with him themselves.

### **Our Father Desires Fellowship with Each of Us**

**God created us for fellowship with him!** Before Adam sinned, he walked in perfect harmony with God. The Lord came down in the cool of the evening to talk with Adam. (Genesis 3:8) That was a tremendous privilege, but Adam lost that fellowship when he disobeyed God.

Jesus came to pay the price and bridge the gap that separated us from the Father. **He gave his life to remove our sins so that we can once again have the fellowship with God he originally intended for us to have.** Because of the redemption made freely available through Jesus, we can accept the atonement and come back into unity with the Father. (Titus 3:3-7, 1 John 1:3)

### **A Perverted Value System**

We are living in a time when people, including believers, seem to be seeking everything but God! We have placed too much value on things that have little or no real value, and we have placed little or no value on things that are actually priceless. Our whole concept of good and evil has been perverted. We have come to the point that we are manifesting what the Word warns us about in Isaiah 5:20. What is good is called evil, and what is evil is called good.

Many believers have a perverted fear of God. They are very distrustful of him, and he is blamed for just about every negative thing that happens in their lives. They seem to think God is waiting for the opportunity to judge them harshly every time they make a mistake.

At the same time, everything good in our lives, we take credit for. We neglect to give God the glory for the good things we enjoy every day. We also give the devil credit (or blame him) for character flaws that are actually the manifestations of our selfish, rebellious natures. **We have thereby elevated the devil to a realm of power he does not possess!**

We also deny the power of God through our unbelief, while

at the same time we elevate ourselves as if we have control over our lives and our futures. This is the foundation of humanism, and unfortunately, this deception runs rampant among believers! **The concept that you can control your destiny and evolve enough "spiritually" to make the right choices and run your own life is a lie from satan!**

Whenever you move outside of Christ, it doesn't matter what you accomplish. It has no real value. It may have temporal benefits, but it has absolutely no eternal value. **There is nothing of real value outside of Jesus Christ and his Lordship!** Romans 7:18a (AMPL) says, *"For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh..."*

### **Real Success**

Today, "success" seems to be the theme in most churches. If it's successful, it must be good. However, some of the most ungodly people in the world have the greatest success. There are many people who lie, cheat and steal to gain success. I'm not saying it is evil to be successful, but **making worldly success your goal is a deception that has unfortunately made its way into the church.** Even if you obtain it, what do you really have? You have gained something which has only temporal value.

Let's look at Jeremiah 9:23 and 24. *"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, **that he understandeth and knoweth me**, that I am the Lord which exerciseth lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."*

The Lord says not to glory in wisdom, might (power) or riches, yet most of the ambition in this world (even in believers) involves one or all of these three categories. People are driven to achieve knowledge and pride themselves on the wisdom they have attained.

Many have built large, powerful kingdoms on earth to display their might. The carnal nature seeks this kind of power and control. Part of the original purpose of man was to maintain dominion, yet satan has perverted this and tempts us to seek it from the flesh.

Finally, many people try to accumulate riches so they can be completely independent, run their own lives and seek after anything their hearts desire. Riches give them the power to fulfill all the lusts of their flesh. Yet the Lord said to only glory in the fact that you know and understand him.

### **Glory in Knowing and Understanding God**

As I said before, there is very little preaching coming forth on how wonderful it is that we can know and understand God. Some believers act as if such a thought is blasphemous. It's almost as if it is irreverent to think you could know (much less understand) God. But God does not intend himself to be unknown. **God is not trying to hide himself from his children.** He is light and how can you hide light? Jesus' works weren't done in secret. He spoke very clearly about what he was doing and his purposes for our lives.

**God wants us to know him and understand him because he is our Father!** When God allows you to go through testings, he is not trying to make you miserable. **God wants to prove your heart to see if you trust him enough to obey him whether you understand what he is doing or not.** Then he will start giving you understanding. He will move you from being a servant to being a friend.

The disciples were with Jesus throughout his ministry. They saw the multitudes come and go because of Jesus' "hard sayings". Jesus even asked Peter if he would leave also, but Peter replied that he had nowhere else to go because Jesus had the words of life. (John 6:67 and 68) After a time of walking with him, Jesus called his disciples friends instead of servants because they had done whatever he commanded them to do. (John 15:14 and 15)

A servant does not know or understand what his master is doing, but a master will explain his heart motives to a friend. You don't get understanding about what God is doing when you first begin to serve him. It simply doesn't work that way. You begin by spending time with him and obeying him.

If you love Jesus, you will keep his commandments. (John 14:15) Then the Father and the Son will come and make their abode (dwelling place) with you. (John 14:23) They will manifest themselves to you. When God is abiding in you, you will begin to get to know him. You will become better acquainted with him as he manifests in and through your life.

After a season of walking in obedience and communing with God, he will begin to explain some things to you. He will start elevating you to the position of a friend. As he sees the faithfulness in your heart, he will begin to trust you with information about his kingdom. He will begin to show you why he does certain things.

This is especially helpful when God requires something of you that would cause most Christians to get offended because they don't understand God's purposes. If you observe God from far off, it sometimes appears that what God does is illogical. However, when you get to know him, you see that everything he does is perfect in every way.

### **A Scriptural Foundation**

We should have a good scriptural basis for anything we try to appropriate in our relationship with God. There are foundational truths that are available to every child of God the moment they come into the kingdom, but these truths require some basic understanding. We must know who we are, what God expects of us and what kind of relationship God has made available to us.

In John 17, Jesus prayed for his disciples before he was arrested and taken to the cross. I suggest that you read and meditate on this entire chapter, because it clearly shows the

Lord's heart for his followers. John 17:20 says, "*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.*" As you can see from this verse, Jesus prayed this prayer for us as well as his disciples.

Jesus prayed for us to receive the gift of eternal life in John 17:1-3. "*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. **And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.***"

When a person accepts the redemption found in Jesus Christ, they are given the opportunity to receive eternal life. But what does that really mean? (John 17:3 is the only scripture in the Bible that clearly and specifically defines eternal life.) **Eternal life is the ability to know God and Jesus Christ whom he sent.** This is the essence of eternal life, and God has made this gift available to every one of his children. Each of us can know God personally rather than merely know about him.

Before the Lord divinely revealed these scriptures to me, I thought eternal life meant I would never die. As I studied the Word, I soon realized I was born with an eternal spirit that would never die regardless of whether I got saved or not. Every spirit that has been created will either spend eternity in the presence of God or in the lake of fire, depending on the choice each person makes to either accept or reject Jesus Christ. **I was amazed to find out that eternal life meant that I could know the Father and the Son personally.**

The word *know* in John 17:3 is defined in the original Greek as "to 'know' (absolutely), in a great variety of applications and with many implications (as follow, with others not thus clearly expressed):--allow, be aware (of), feel, (have) known (-ledge), perceive, be resolved, can speak, be sure, understand." (Strong's

#1097 N.T.). This meaning is comparable to the word *knew* used in Genesis 4:1, when God said Adam *knew* Eve and they conceived a child. (Strong's #3045 O. T.) *Know* and *knew* basically mean to know someone in a variety of ways by experiencing intimacy which is the result of spending quality time together, much like the way a husband would know his wife. It results from both persons sharing with each other from their hearts rather than their minds.

As I mentioned before, I know my wife, Shirley, better than anyone else does and she knows me in the same way. We have always had open hearts with one another. Because we have always maintained such a deep level of intimacy, we enjoy a very close, personal relationship. This is the kind of "knowing" John 17:3 authorizes us to have with the Father and the Son.

### **In the Family**

You can compare eternal life to being born into a natural family. Your home, food and shelter are part of the package, but the real basis of a family is the love and fellowship enjoyed by the members who share a personal relationship with one another.

**Have you gotten a glimpse of how magnificent it is to be a child of God Almighty?** Our Father has given us eternal life, and we have been born into his family. He is not an elected official whose term must be re-instated every few years. He is the Creator of the universe and everything that exists. **He owns the earth and all that is in it, yet he has given us the gift of eternal life so that we can know him!**

It amazes me that most Christians have never availed themselves of this invitation. They are too busy with their careers or don't have time for God because they would rather watch television or read a book. In Acts 17:28a, Paul said, "*For in him we live, and move, and have our being...*" **Paul realized that Christ is everything!** Everything that has any value is found in him alone, yet very few believers really accept this

truth. They don't seem to realize the privilege and awesomeness of being able to know God.

### **Enoch**

Enoch was one of the greatest men in the Bible. Genesis 5:21 says that he begat Methuselah when he was 65 years old. At that time, he began to walk with God and continued to walk with him for 300 more years. Genesis 5:24b says, "...*God took him*" and he was no more. Maybe God got tired of making the trip to earth to walk with him every day!

Today, believers seem to have trouble keeping things straight with God for three days or three weeks, much less 300 years, yet there is no reason why we can't walk with God in the same way. He has made eternal life available to us. He wants to have fellowship with us now as well as prepare us to rule and reign with him during the millennial reign and throughout eternity. (Revelation 2:26 and 27 AMPL)

There is a future available to us as Christians that is beyond our comprehension. We only have a short time to prepare for eternity. **It is crucial that we get to know and understand our Father, because our eternity is based upon the relationship we develop with him now.** The door is open. The Son has made the way for us to come boldly unto God's throne to receive grace and mercy. (Hebrews 4:16) It is only by God's grace that he will speak to us and have fellowship with us.

As you continue to read this book, I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity to know God. **God will speak to your heart. You can get to know him and develop a personal, intimate relationship with him.** Believe that he is God and he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him! (Hebrews 11:6)



## **Additional Books by J. C. Hedgecock**

The ISBN numbers indicated are for the original title. Some of the books are available in other languages.

### **My Sheep Hear My Voice (Revised Edition)**

Do you desire to know your Heavenly Father and Jesus in a more personal, intimate way? Would you welcome the opportunity to hear God speak to your spirit for direction in every detail of your life? If the answer to these questions is *yes*, this book is for you. It will give you detailed, easy to understand instructions on how you can prepare for an exciting and fulfilling walk with your Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus. This is a vital message to the church, and it is based on experience, not theory.

(170 pages) ISBN 0-945255-32-2

*Revised Edition also available in Bulgarian, Burmese, Chinese, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Nepalese, Norwegian, Sinhalese, Spanish, Tamil and Telugu. Expanded Edition available in Czech, Danish, Dutch, Polish, Romanian and Russian.*

## **My Sheep Hear My Voice** (Study Guide)

This Study Guide has been prepared by Servants of the Lord Ministries to help you apply the teachings from the book “My Sheep Hear My Voice”. It is intended to help you as you seek to hear the Lord's voice and have deeper communion with Him. This guide focuses your attention on the main teaching points and provides added emphasis on the areas that will produce a rapid change in your relationship with God, should you apply them to your daily life.

(93 pages) ISBN 0-945255-03-9

## **My Sheep Hear My Voice** (Children's Edition)

Patricia Ross has edited *My Sheep Hear My Voice* to teach children how to have a relationship with God and hear His voice. This is easy to read and can be understood by children of all ages. It can be used by parents as a tool to train children in the ways of the Lord.

(21 pages) ISBN 0-945255-05-5

*Available online in other languages.*

## **My Friends Obey My Voice**

This book has been written as a sequel to the book, *My Sheep Hear My Voice*. It is primarily for those who have heard the first teaching and have studied it many times. If you are not walking in the fullness of the first message, this book will provide help in understanding why you do not obey when you have heard the Father speak.

(66 pages) ISBN 0-945255-09-8

## **The Manifested Sons of God (Revised Edition)**

Describing the fruit found in those called *sons*, this book was written for the children of God who desire to grow up and be productive in His kingdom. It describes in detail how to come to maturity and be a vessel of honor. Regardless of the deceptions, ignorance and unbelief surrounding this title, the Bible provides detailed explanations on the subject.

In the last days, at the closing of the church age, there will be a manifestation of the sons of God. The only question you have to answer at this time is: Will you be one of them?

Now is the time to prepare. Satan has produced counterfeit sons by deceiving spiritually immature, proud people, but this does not mean that God is not developing true manifested sons who are mature and humble.

We are living in a glorious age. Do not miss the tremendous blessings and opportunities that God is presenting to His children. Seek Him with your whole heart and you will find Him. This book gives a detailed view of how to come to maturity and what our future is as sons of God.

(155 pages) ISBN 0-945255-15-2

## **Light** (Revised Edition)

*Light* is a book that sheds God's light and revelation on twenty-three key areas including:

- Faith
- Authority
- Judgment
- The five-fold ministry
- The anointing
- The three infallible witnesses that confirm you are hearing God

*Light* was written for the children of God who are lights in a world of darkness and who desire to shine even brighter. Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 (KJV), "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." When revelation comes from God, it sheds light in our spirits and minds. Darkness and ignorance are exposed as revelation comes forth. In this book, Reverend Hedgecock shares revelation he has received on a variety of subjects. ***Light*** will encourage, challenge, and equip you, and it will increase the light you already have. **Many key truths await you in this book.**

(181 pages) ISBN 0-945255-19-5

*Expanded edition available in German.*

## **Sound Doctrine**

*Sound Doctrine* is an in-depth teaching on corrupted doctrines, the ways that seem right, and how to walk in the kingdom of God now. It deals with how satan has corrupted our doctrine, teaching and even our method of learning. There is a literal kingdom coming and we have the opportunity to rule and reign with Christ. Now is the time of qualification. If you have ears to hear, you will realize the kingdom is here now.

(302 pages) ISBN 0-945255-50-0

*Also available in German.*

## **The Gilted Prison**

This book speaks primarily to those who are serious about walking with God and do not have any intention of being deceived. If you resist the lusts of the flesh but also see that you are not growing at the rate you should, this book will help you. If you are frustrated because you have problems you cannot find the answers for, this book will help you see the tactics of the enemy and how to rescue yourself from them.

(77 pages) ISBN 0-945255-57-8

*Also available in German.*

## **How Love Grows**

*How Love Grows* is a pocket booklet that teaches how to allow God's love to grow in your life. God not only wants you to be filled with his love, He also wants you to have an abundance to share with others. The greatest way to be effective ambassadors and children of God is to manifest His character, which is love. This book will take you step-by-step through the process that will bring you to an abundance of love. It is your heritage. Do not let anyone steal it from you.

(56 pages) ISBN 0-945255-74-8

*Also available in German, Spanish and Romanian.*

## **Three Infallible Witnesses**

As you become sensitive to the Lord's voice, there are obstacles to overcome as you learn to discern the differences between the voice of the Lord, satan and self (the Adam nature). You must be able to test every thought to see if it is from God or not. You need infallible witnesses: the Word of God (Jesus), the witness of the Holy Spirit, and the peace of God. The three witnesses should be sought about every thought that enters your mind. This is a valuable teaching about how to consistently walk with God.

(39 pages) ISBN 0-945255-73-X

*Also available in German, Romanian and Russian.*

## **The Kingdom of God Now**

In the book of Revelation, John gives us insight into God's kingdom, and he describes the city of God (the New Jerusalem) in great detail. In the New Testament, we are told about God's kingdom being established as a literal government on earth for a thousand years (the millennial reign). Jesus Christ, along with His bride, will rule over the earth during this time. After the millennial reign, our Father will appear with the New Jerusalem. He will destroy the heavens and the earth and create new heavens and a new earth. We will spend eternity with our Father and Jesus Christ in the kingdom of God.

But what about now? This book shows you how to live in the kingdom of God now. It explains in detail how you can move into God's kingdom and stay there. Part of your inheritance is not available until later, but many of God's promises are available now. You can start enjoying what He has provided for you immediately!

(247 pages) ISBN 0-945255-75-6

## **Wake Up! Time Is Running Out** **Foundations for Spiritual Maturity** **Volume 1**

Have you struggled spiritually for many years? Do you realize you are not where you should be in your Christian walk? Are you frustrated because you long for intimacy with your heavenly Father and Jesus as your Lord but it seems unreachable? Do you desire to abide in the Spirit, grow up spiritually, and finish the race God has set for you? Then it is time to wake up because time is running out. Whether the Lord

returns soon or you go to Him in death, now is the time to get prepared.

***Wake Up! Time is Running Out*** gives simple, detailed instructions about how to identify spiritual hindrances and the steps needed to eliminate them from your life. It gives practical examples of how to move into God's presence and learn how to have a consistent, fulfilling relationship with Him. Not only will you begin to recognize how much God loves you, you will also enjoy fellowship with Him as He reveals His purposes for your life.

(174 pages) ISBN 0-945255-90-X

*Also available in German.*

In addition to the books described on these pages, individual teaching cassette tapes, CDs, video tapes, DVDs, study guides and other materials are available in different languages.



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Teaching engagements can be arranged as required (or by Skype) and can include one-day or weekend seminars or workshops. No church or fellowship is too large or too small.