

John 10:1-10 ESV

Whose Voice Are YOU Hearing?

Since we follow who we hear, let us hear Jesus!

Services: Sunday, 5/7 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, 5/8 at 7 PM

Church Year: Fourth Sunday of Easter – 2017

Join us on Ascension Day: Free Meal at 6 PM; Divine Service at 7 PM

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: In today's world many voices are calling us to hear and follow – *some want to bless us*, but others want to destroy us. Therefore, in today's gospel reading, Jesus identifies **two voices** and **two very different outcomes!**

In John 9, Jesus taught about **spiritual** blindness; now, in John 10, Jesus wants His hearers to know the striking difference between Himself—*the True Shepherd*, and the Pharisees—*the false shepherds*.

In today's reading, as Jesus speaks about a sheepfold or sheep pen, *picture a large area enclosed by a high wall with one gate and one gatekeeper*; the wall protected the sheep from 🐾 wild animals and 🐾 people with evil intent, while the gatekeeper controlled who entered by the gate!

1. **Two Voices:** ¹ **“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.”**
 // Think about it this way: The “sheepfold” is the kingdom of God; the “thief” and “robber” is the one who intends spiritual harm; the “shepherd” is Jesus and

all who speak for Him; and the “sheep” are all who believe in Jesus.

- a. The shepherd: ³ **“To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.”** // Thinking about the sheep pen, it could accommodate *several herds*; however, when a shepherd called, *only the sheep of that shepherd recognized and responded to his voice*. In today’s world of many voices, who are we hearing? Since wicked people want to destroy us, Jesus is calling us to hear only **▶Him, ▶His Word, and ▶those who rightly teach His Word!** This is a classic example from [Acts 17:11 NIV](#): **“Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness **and** examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”** Even though they heard the teaching of the great Apostle Paul, *they did not believe it until they verified it with the Holy Scriptures!*
- b. A stranger: ⁵ **“A stranger they will [surely] **not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.**”** // When we have no idea who is calling us on the phone but we answer, *we can immediately tell if the voice is a stranger or a loved one*. In a similar way, let us know the Bible, then, when people try to draw

us in another direction, *let us flee from them to our Savior!* Jesus said, ^{ESV} **Matthew 7:15** “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.” Paul gave this instruction to the Christians in Rome: ^{ESV} **Romans 16:17-18** “I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ...”

Then the Bible records these words in verse 6: **This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.** // Jesus was speaking to a mixed group of people – *disciples, Pharisees, and others*; He spoke of **spiritual** things in **physical** ways, *but they did not understand*. So Jesus said the same thing *in a more understandable way!*

2. **Two Outcomes:** ⁷ So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me [*the many false prophets and false teachers*] are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. // The OT has about 80 references to the “remnant,” *the small group of faithful believers who were looking for the coming of the Promised Messiah*; even though many tried to deceive them, *by God’s grace they did not listen!*
 - a. Salvation: ⁹ [Jesus said:] “**I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.**” // Jesus is ➔ the

door to paradise, ➔the only way to God the Father in heaven! For those who ♠have been crushed by their sins **and** ♠know they deserve God's eternal wrath, God is there to 😊save them through Jesus and 😊bless them forevermore!

- b. Destruction: ¹⁰ **“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”** // The thief, *the enemy of God*, wants to 😞steal us away from Jesus, 😞physically put us to death, and 😞ultimately have us cast into the lake of fire. Therefore, let us not be foolish, *but aware of our enemies* – 😞the devil, 😞the sinful world in which we live, and 😞the sinful nature within each of us. Then, **by** God's grace, **by** the power of the Holy Spirit, **by** our baptism into Christ, **by** God's holy absolution, **by** the instruction of God's Holy Word, and **by** the body and blood of Jesus Christ, let us stand firm in Christ – ➔hearing Him, ➔knowing we are forgiven through Him, and ➔rejoicing in the abundant life we have in Him – *both now and forevermore!*

Conclusion: Let us pray: Lord Jesus, *since You are the Very Best Shepherd, You came, You lived, and You laid down Your life for us – the sheep; now You are risen and alive forevermore, so help us to ♠ever hear You and ♠follow You – both now and forever! Amen!*

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