

HEARING GOD | Week 2

John 10:3b

the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

John 10:14 (NLT)

I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me,

John 10:27 (NLT)

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

Three words. Hear. Know. Follow. This week is know.

#1 We can know it's Him when it lines up with His Word.

It doesn't care how sure you are. It's the standard.

Isaiah 8:20

To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Acts 17:11

These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

TALK ABOUT IT

Does checking something feel like doubt to you, or like honor?

Who are you most likely to believe without checking, and why that person?

What are you hoping is true right now that you have not taken to the Word yet?

#2 We can know it's Him when it matches His character.

If it came from Him, it's going to look like Him.

James 3:17 (NLT)

But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere.

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

John 10:10-11

10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. 11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

TALK ABOUT IT

Which one on that list is hardest to find in your own certainty?

What happens in you when somebody questions something you are sure God said?

Where is something producing anxiety in you that you have been calling conviction?

#3 We can know it's Him when it carries His peace.

God guides. Fear forces.

Colossians 3:15

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

Philippians 4:6-7

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

TALK ABOUT IT

Peace gets to overrule you. Who or what have you let overrule it lately?

Where are you waiting for easy and calling it waiting for peace?

Is there a person you are out of peace with that may be affecting what you think you are hearing?

#4 We can know it's Him when it holds up under godly counsel.

Somebody who loves you enough to tell you no.

Proverbs 11:14

Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

1 John 4:1

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

1 Thessalonians 5:19-21

19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies. 21 Test all things; hold fast what is good.

TALK ABOUT IT

Who is actually steering with you, not just cheering for you?

When is the last time you went looking for input? Were you steering or campaigning?

Who are you the safe person for, and have you been honest with her or just agreeable?

COMMENTARY

Jack Hayford. Hayford spent a lifetime refusing to choose between the Word and the Spirit, and this passage is where that refusal pays off. He would point straight at 1 Thessalonians 5 and note that the same breath that says test all things also says do not quench the Spirit and do not despise prophecies. Testing is not skepticism. It is how a Spirit-filled believer stays Spirit-filled without becoming gullible. The inner witness is real, and it is not self-verifying, which is exactly why Scripture has to be the plumb line.

Jimmy Swaggart. Swaggart would go straight to the difference between conviction and condemnation and refuse to leave it. For him that is not a fine distinction, it is the dividing line between the Holy Spirit and the accuser. Conviction always carries a remedy with it, because the Spirit points the believer back to the finished work of the Cross and gives him somewhere to go. Condemnation offers no remedy at all. It fastens guilt to a person and leaves him there. His test for any word would be simple. Does it magnify Christ and what He has already done, or does it push you back onto yourself?

Matthew Henry. Henry observes that the sheep in John 10 are not credited with cleverness. They are credited with familiarity. They follow because they know his voice, and they flee the stranger because they do not know his. The safeguard is the relationship, not the intellect. He also notes that the shepherd goes before them, which he takes as both leadership and protection, since Christ does not drive His flock from behind but walks the road first.

SOAP GUIDE FOR EXTENDED PERSONAL STUDY

SOAP is a simple way to read Scripture so it becomes a conversation instead of an assignment. Give it ten or fifteen minutes a day with a notebook open.

S is for Scripture. Read the whole passage slowly, then read it again. Write out by hand the one verse that stood out. Writing it slows you down enough to actually see it.

O is for Observation. Write what you notice before you interpret it. Who is speaking and who is listening. What is repeated. What comes before and after. What surprised you.

A is for Application. What does this show me about God, and what is He asking of me today? Keep the second one small enough to actually do before the sun goes down.

P is for Prayer. Pray the verse back to Him in your own words. Then take one thing you are carrying and run it through the four tests. Write down what you find.

Day 1 John 10:1-18

The Shepherd, the sheep, and the stranger. Watch how often knowing shows up.

Day 2 Psalm 139:1-18

Every verb is already finished. Underline what He already knows.

Day 3 Isaiah 8:11-20 and Acts 17:10-12

Two rooms deciding what to do with a word.

Day 4 James 3:13-18 and Galatians 5:16-26

Two kinds of wisdom and two kinds of produce.

Day 5 Colossians 3:12-17 and Philippians 4:4-9

Peace as umpire and peace as a guard at the gate.

Day 6 Proverbs 11:14 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Counsel and testing, side by side.

Day 7 Romans 8:1-17

No condemnation. Read it out loud over yourself.

Closing

1 Corinthians 13:12

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.