

### Discussion Guide

*Use this guide by yourself, with a friend, or in a group to help you pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus this week!*

#### Open

As we start our churchwide focus on prayer, this week Pastor Don helps us understand how prayer provides us with the opportunity to communicate with God from our hearts - in honesty and trust. And while we may initially think about prayer mostly as a chance for us to express ourselves to God, the truth is that it's also about us choosing to listen for what He's saying to *us* - which will be the focus of our study today. So to get your group started today, let everyone share what things (maybe even good things) can make it more difficult to hear God's voice in our lives...

#### BIG THOUGHT

Because God wants to communicate with us,  
we need to learn to listen to  
His voice in our lives.

#### Dig

1. Read John 10:1-5. In Jesus' time, several flocks of sheep would spend the night together in a common pen. In the morning their shepherd would come, the gatekeeper would open the gate, and the shepherd would then call his sheep out to go with him. Why does Jesus say the sheep will follow their shepherd? (v. 4) How can we learn to hear Jesus' voice? When did you first recognize Jesus calling to you in your own life - or sometimes do you feel like you're still waiting? Share your thoughts with the group...
2. What other "voices" does Jesus talk about in v. 5? What about in v. 8? Why can it be so difficult to discern which voices to pay attention to? What role does prayer play in helping us learn how to hear Jesus' voice in our lives?

3. Now read 1 Samuel 3:1. How is the Bible's description of Samuel's time similar to our world today? Where do you yourself sense God's voice to you most clearly - during your personal devotional times? In worship? While serving others? Some other situation? Explain.
4. Read v. 2-9. Why doesn't Samuel recognize God's voice? (v. 7) How is that similar to our experience, too? And have you ever had an "Eli" in your life who helped you learn how to discern God's voice? (v. 8-9) Have you ever been that person for someone else? Tell what happened.
5. To finish, read 1 John 4:1-3 as a biblical caution for discerning which of the voices around us should have our attention. What is one of the ways we can know whether or not God is speaking to us through someone else? (v. 2-3) What does this imply about how we should interpret advice from people who aren't followers of Jesus?

#### Take it Further

Take time to get by yourself and evaluate how well you're building in time to listen to God. Ask Him to open your eyes to distractions that keep you from hearing His voice, and then schedule two pauses during each day of the upcoming week to stop and listen for God.

#### Daily Readings

Day 1: Jeremiah 33:3

Day 2: Psalm 119:105

Day 3: 1 Kings 19:11-13

Day 4: Psalm 32:8-9

Day 5: Isaiah 30:21

Day 6: John 14:26

Memory Verse: John 10:27



**GATEWAY**  
BAPTIST CHURCH

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