

Passages: John 10:24-27, Psalm 119:105, 2 Timothy 3:16–17, John 16:13-15, Acts 15:28, Romans 8:26-29

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### Sermon Big Idea

Our proximity to Jesus is what produces hearing, not a technique.

### Head: Grasping the Text

*Goal: To grasp the theological concepts and historical context of the text.*

1. Read John 10:24–27. Notice that Jesus uses three present-tense verbs — hear, know, follow — describing not a one-time event but the ongoing, normal reality of anyone who belongs to Him. He also uses completely unqualified language: He doesn't say 'my spiritually mature sheep hear my voice' or 'my sheep occasionally hear my voice when conditions are right.' What does that unqualified claim tell us about what Jesus expects for every believer — not just a gifted or elite few? And honestly — does that match your experience? If not, what questions or struggles do you have?
2. **Hearing God through Scripture:** Read Hebrews 4:12-13. Notice the direction of the sword: it doesn't cut outward, it cuts inward — reaching the deepest interior of who we are, the thoughts and motivations we haven't fully admitted even to ourselves. And verse 13 extends the image further: nothing is hidden from the One whose Word this is. Most of us come to Scripture as readers — we open it, extract what's useful, and close it. Hebrews 4:12–13 suggests something more unsettling: you came to read it, but it came to read you. You are not the subject doing the examining. You are the object being examined. With that in mind: what is the difference between approaching Scripture as an analyst looking for information and approaching it as someone who is about to be addressed, exposed, and known by a living God? And what would have to change about the posture you actually bring to Scripture this week?
3. **Hearing God through Community:** In Acts 15:28, the Jerusalem Council describes its decision as 'the Holy Spirit's decision — and ours.' The conjunction 'and' places the Spirit and the community as co-agents. What does this tell us about how God designed the Spirit's leading to work in community? Why can't the Spirit's role and the community's role be separated in the discernment process?

4. **Hearing God through Circumstances:** Read Roman 8:28-29. What is the difference between God improving circumstances and God redeeming circumstances? Why does it matter that the 'good' of Romans 8:28 is defined by being "conformed to the image of his Son (v. 29)? How would you describe conformity or Christlikeness?

### Heart: Grasping the Internal Transformation

Goal: Examine how the text reshapes our identity, affections, and motivations to bring about honest self-examination.

5. Name one circumstance in your life right now that is genuinely difficult. Have you been approaching it asking "'why isn't God fixing this?" or "What is God forming in me through this?" What change could you make to help you listen to God more carefully and attentively?
6. The sermon described two dangers: mishearing God's voice — accepting a counterfeit — and not hearing at all — giving up on the conversation entirely. Between these two extremes, there are many other concerns and questions that most of us actually live with day to day. What is your personal barrier to hearing God more clearly? Is it fear of being wrong? Busyness that fills every space He might use? Past disappointment with how 'God told me' language has been misused? A self-sufficiency that doesn't leave much room for a voice other than your own?

### Hands: Grasping Your Next Step

*Goal: To move from hearing the Word to living it out as a disciple with specific, practical, and achievable steps for the coming week.*

7. "The sermon quoted Spurgeon: "Certain men who talk so much of what the Holy Spirit reveals to themselves should think so little of what He has revealed to others." Where in your life are you most prone to trusting your own spiritual discernment over the input of people around you? What would it look like this month to actively seek out what God might be saying to you through someone else — not to validate what you already think, but genuinely open to being redirected?"
8. How does your small group foster hearing God together? Also, what's one change, if any, your group could make to give more room to discerning and hearing from God together?
9. How well does your group currently function as a place where you discern God's leading together? And what is one specific change — however small — your group could make to create more room for hearing from God together rather than just about God?" Is there a simple step you'd like to implement in your group?