

Leader's Guide

I Am the Door

John 10:1-10

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Big Idea: Many voices compete for authority in our lives, but only Jesus, the true Shepherd and the Door, leads to safety, freedom, and an abundant life. Our role is to recognize His voice, resist counterfeits, surrender control, and walk through Him in trust.

Opening (Lighthearted Icebreaker – 5 minutes)

Icebreaker Question:

If you could mute one voice in your daily life for a week (alarm clock, notifications, inner critic, sports commentators, etc.), which would you choose and why?

1. What are some of the loudest “voices” competing for your attention right now (cultural, relational, internal)? Which ones most consistently influence your mood, decisions, or sense of identity?

Follow-Up Questions:

- Are these voices mostly external (media, work, relationships) or internal (fear, shame, pressure)?
- Which voice do you tend to obey most quickly?
- When do those voices get loudest? When you are stressed? Fatigued? Successful?

Helpful Scripture:

- *Romans 12:2*
- *Proverbs 4:23*

2. The sermon described “counterfeit shepherds” that mimic Jesus’ promises (freedom, identity, abundance). Have you experienced a time when something promised life but actually produced anxiety or exhaustion? What helped you recognize the difference?

Follow-Up Questions:

- What did the “counterfeit voice” promise you?
- What fruit did it actually produce?
- How does Jesus’ voice feel different from counterfeit ones?

Clarification for Leaders:

Jesus’ voice may convict, but it does not condemn (Romans 8:1).

Counterfeit voices often:

- Rush and pressure.
- Stoke fear or comparison.
- Tie identity to performance.

Jesus’ voice often:

- Invites and leads.
- Anchors identity in love.
- Calls for surrender, not self-exaltation

Helpful Scripture:

- *John 8:32*
- *Galatians 5:22–23*
- *James 3:17*

3. The Pharisees weren’t ignorant; they were resistant. Where in your life might you be resisting Jesus’ voice, not because you can’t hear Him, but because you don’t like what He’s saying (forgive, wait, surrender, confess)?

Follow-Up Prompts:

- Is there something you already know He’s asking of you?
- What emotion surfaces when you think about obeying (fear, anger, pride)?
- What are you afraid will happen if you surrender?

Leader Guidance:

This may become vulnerable. Create safety. Don’t rush silence.

Helpful Scripture:

- *Hebrews 3:15*
- *Psalms 139:23–24*

4. Anger and the desire for control were named as real struggles. Where are you currently tempted to grip tightly instead of trusting the Shepherd? What fears might be underneath that grip?

Follow-Up Prompts:

- What does control give you emotionally?
- How has trying to be your own shepherd affected you?
- What would trusting Jesus in that area actually look like?

Helpful Scripture:

- *Proverbs 3:5–6*
- *1 Peter 5:7*
- *Psalms 23:1–3*

5. What would it look like this week to “take every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5)? What specific rhythms could help you recognize and respond to the Shepherd’s voice?

Follow-Up Prompts:

- Is there one recurring thought you need to challenge with truth?
- What Scripture could replace that narrative?
- Who in your life can help you discern truth from lies?

Practical Suggestions to Offer:

- Start the day in John 10 or Psalm 23.
- When anxious thoughts arise, pause and ask: “*Does this sound like Jesus?*”
- Invite accountability from a trusted believer.
- Practice short surrender prayers: “Shepherd, I trust You here.”

Helpful Scripture:

- *Isaiah 30:21*
- *Philippians 4:8*

Leader Encouragement

This conversation may surface anger, anxiety, or control issues. That’s good. The goal is not behavior modification but deeper trust in the Shepherd. Keep bringing the discussion back to Jesus. We want to be aware of where we rely self-effort rather than relationship with the Good Shepherd. The Door is open. Help your group walk through it.