

Community Group Discussion Guide

Step 01: Recap what our current series is all about.

Note: Remind the group what series we're currently on (since not everyone will have been at church recently) and read through the series description provided below to refresh everyone on what it's all about.

Series Title: God Promises

Main Idea: What are you struggling with? What are you hoping for? What is it you need Jesus to do in your life? In this series, we look at Jesus' words and find his explicit promises for his followers—promises that seem to always speak directly to our

Step 02: Recap of this week's message.

Note: Read through the message outline with everyone briefly. You can stop and make comments as you see fit or read straight through it. Make sure you take time to read through the main text.

Message Title: Hearing God's Voice

Main Text: John 10:2-4, 1 Samuel 3

Message Outline:

Do you ever struggle to hear God's voice? Maybe you've heard other people share testimonies of things they've "heard" from God and you're skeptical? You can never tell if it's God's voice or your own imagination. And maybe part of you wonders if one can even hear God's voice at all?

In John 10, Jesus likens himself to a good shepherd—one who watches out for his sheep, who takes them in and out to pasture, who stands at the gate and keeps watch over them, and who would lay down his life for them.

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And within this beautiful illustration of Jesus' heart for his followers comes our first promise—*we will hear (and know) his voice*. But how do we do that?

Ask God To Speak To You

- Warning: don't ask him to speak if you don't want to hear what he has to say...
 - o 1 Samuel 3:9 "Speak Lord, for your servant is listening." Samuel received a really difficult word from God when he asked him to speak.
- Just because you can't hear God doesn't mean he isn't speaking.
- The more you listen the better you will begin to recognize God's voice.

Listen To What He Says

- We meet God in relationship. Relationship requires communication—so ask him to speak to you—and be ready to listen!
 - o Jeremiah 33:3 "Call to me and I will answer you"
- How does God speak?
 - o Most reliably through His word!
 - God will never "say" anything that contradicts what he's already *said* (in scripture).
 - o Might also speak through: His spirit, open doors, closed doors, other people, internal

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peace, promptings, dreams, etc. Note these might require more discernment!

Do What He Tells You To Do

- Luke 11:28, “Blessed are those who hear the word of God and obey it.”
- Sometimes we might be struggling to hear God because we haven’t been obedient to the last thing he told us.
 - o We want to know more and more, but we shouldn’t be educated beyond our obedience.
- In order to better hear Jesus voice, sometimes we need to turn down the background noise.
 - o Slow down
 - o Find a quiet place.
 - o Turn off your phone/social/work emails/tv
 - o Prioritize God’s presence
- God sometimes speaks in a “gentle whisper” (1 Kings 19:12).
 - o Draw close to him so you can hear the still, small voice.

Step 03: Lead group discussion.

Note: Do your best to keep the discussion going. Make sure you have read through the questions beforehand and are primed with thoughts of your own. Make everyone get specific with *how* they will apply this message in their own lives and in community—*no vague ideas allowed!*

Specific to this week’s message:

1. What comes to mind when you think of “hearing God’s voice”? Testimonies? Frustration? Skepticism?

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2. How do you hear God's voice? Share your experience with this with the group.
3. Do you ever struggle to hear God's voice?
4. In your times of prayer, do you find it difficult to sit in silence? Do you always feel the need to pray?
5. Do you think of reading God's word as hearing his voice?
6. Are there any ancillary voices (or noises) in your life that might be making it tough for you to hear God's voice right now? Anything you need to turn down? Turn off?

General questions:

7. How did this message encourage you? How did it convict you?
8. What is your plan for applying this message to your personal/daily life?
9. What might it look like for us to live this out in community?
10. Was there anything about this message that stood out to you?