

WHAT DID JESUS TELL YOU THIS WEEK?

A Sermon About Hearing, Knowing, and Following Jesus

MAIN TEXT: JOHN 10:27

CONGREGATION: “SPEAK, LORD—GIVE ME EARS TO HEAR AND COURAGE TO OBEY!”

Opening

Church, I came with a question today. It is not a question about your neighbor, your family, or even what your pastor heard. The question is personal: What did Jesus tell you this week?

We come to church and testify that Jesus is alive. We sing that He walks with us and talks with us. We say that we have a personal relationship with Him. If that is true, then somewhere along the way Jesus ought to be speaking into our lives.

I am not asking whether you heard an audible voice. I am asking: Did He press something upon your heart? Did He bring a Scripture back to your mind? Did He correct an attitude? Did He tell you to forgive, to wait, to get up, or to trust Him again?

John 10:27: “*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*”

Notice the movement in that verse: relationship—“My sheep”; revelation—“hear My voice”; recognition—“I know them”; and response—“they follow Me.”

The evidence that we have heard Jesus is not merely that we felt something. The evidence is that we followed Him. A person can hear a sermon without hearing Jesus. But when we truly hear Jesus, His word follows us home, enters our decisions, confronts our motives, interrupts our habits, and demands a response.

THE EVIDENCE OF HEARING IS FOLLOWING.

1. Jesus Knows What Each Person Needs to Hear

Jesus was always consistent in character, but He did not give everybody the same instruction. He spoke to the hidden condition of each heart. That means we cannot live our whole life on somebody else’s word. We must learn what Jesus is saying in our own walk with Him.

To Nicodemus: “You must be born again”

John 3:3: *“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

Nicodemus was educated, religious, respected, and morally disciplined. Yet Jesus did not compliment his résumé. He told him that religion could not substitute for transformation.

Jesus may be telling somebody: “You know church, but do you know Me? You have learned the language, but has your heart been changed? You have a title, but have you surrendered?”

QUESTION: IS JESUS CALLING YOU BEYOND RELIGION INTO TRANSFORMATION?

To the Woman at the Well: “Go, call thy husband”

John 4:16: *“Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.”*

Jesus first offered her living water, but then He touched the place she was trying to avoid. He was not humiliating her. He was uncovering the wound that had been governing her thirst.

Sometimes we ask Jesus to change our circumstances, but He addresses our patterns. We ask for another relationship, but He speaks to the emptiness that keeps leading us into broken ones. We ask Him to fill us while we keep drinking from wells that cannot satisfy.

His voice does not expose us to destroy us. He exposes what has been destroying us.

QUESTION: WHAT PART OF YOUR LIFE IS JESUS BRINGING INTO THE LIGHT?

To the Man at Bethesda: “Wilt thou be made whole?”

John 5:6: *“When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?”*

The man had lived with his condition for thirty-eight years. Jesus was not blaming him for being sick. He was reaching beneath the condition to what long disappointment had done to his expectations.

After living with something for a long time, pain can become an identity. We learn to explain it, organize our lives around it, and use it as the reason we cannot move. Healing means getting up. Healing means carrying what once carried us. Healing means leaving the place where everybody knew us by our problem.

John 5:8: *“Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.”*

QUESTION: DO YOU WANT TO BE WHOLE, OR ONLY COMFORTABLE WHERE YOU ARE?

To the Rich Young Ruler: “One thing thou lackest”

Mark 10:21: *“Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest.”*

The Bible says Jesus looked at him and loved him. Then Jesus gave him a word that grieved him. The loving voice of Jesus is not always the voice that makes us comfortable.

Jesus touched the one possession that possessed the man. The ruler wanted eternal life as an addition to everything else. Jesus demanded the throne. If we only recognize Jesus when He agrees with us, we are not following Jesus—we are following an echo of ourselves.

QUESTION: WHAT KEEPS REACHING FOR THE THRONE OF YOUR HEART?

2. The Voice of Jesus Gives Grace and Truth

To the Woman Accused: “Neither do I condemn thee”

John 8:11: *“Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”*

The religious crowd wanted truth without grace: “Condemn her.” The world often wants grace without truth: “Leave her unchanged.” Jesus gave her neither condemnation nor permission. He rescued her from the stones and then called her out of the sin.

His voice said: “You are not what they called you. You are not the worst thing you have done. Because I have shown you mercy, you do not have to return to what was killing you.”

Real grace does not merely make us feel better about where we are. Grace gives us power to walk differently.

JESUS RESCUES US FROM CONDEMNATION AND CALLS US INTO TRANSFORMATION.

3. The Voice of Jesus Calls Dead Things Back to Life

To Lazarus: “Come forth”

John 11:43: *“And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.”*

Lazarus could not free himself, revive himself, or roll away his own stone. But when Jesus spoke, life entered what death had claimed. Everybody else saw a dead man. Jesus saw somebody who could still respond to His voice.

John 11:44: *“Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.”*

Jesus called Lazarus out, but the community helped remove his grave clothes. Some people have life in them but still carry old thinking, old wounds, old labels, and old habits around them.

The church must stop judging people for smelling like the tomb they just escaped. Jesus may be telling the church, “Stop criticizing their grave clothes. Help unwrap them.”

WHEN JESUS CALLS YOUR NAME, DEATH DOES NOT HAVE AUTHORITY TO KEEP YOU.

4. The Voice of Jesus Restores People Who Have Failed

To Peter: “Lovest thou me?”

John 21:17: *“He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? ... Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”*

Peter had denied Jesus three times. Jesus met him with three opportunities to confess his love. Jesus returned Peter to the place of failure—not to shame him, but to heal him.

Jesus was telling Peter: “Your failure is part of your story, but it will not have the final word. If you love Me, turn your love into service. Do not spend the rest of your life staring at what you did. Care for whom I place in front of you.”

Somebody may be waiting for Jesus to punish them while Jesus is trying to restore and recommission them.

QUESTION: IS JESUS RESTORING YOU WHILE YOU ARE STILL PUNISHING YOURSELF?

5. Why Do We Struggle to Hear Him?

Sometimes the problem is noise

1 Kings 19:12: *“And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.”*

God’s quiet voice was not evidence of weakness. God did not need to compete with the wind, the earthquake, or the fire. His whisper carried authority because Elijah belonged to Him.

Our lives are filled with competing voices:

- The voice of fear and anxiety.
- The voice of comparison and other people’s expectations.
- The voice of old rejection, old wounds, and old shame.
- The constant noise of entertainment, news, and social media.

We cannot constantly feed every competing voice and then wonder why the voice of Jesus feels unfamiliar. Some of us do not need more noise. We need some quiet. We need to open the Word, sit before God, and pray, “Speak, Lord. Thy servant heareth.”

Sometimes we already know what He said

We keep asking God for another word because we have not obeyed the last one. “Lord, speak to me.” But He has already said:

- Forgive them.
- Tell the truth.
- End the compromise.
- Make the call and apologize.
- Serve without needing credit.
- Return to prayer.
- Wait on Me.
- Trust Me.

Sometimes heaven appears silent because God will not entertain us with new revelation while we ignore present obedience.

WHY ASK FOR ANOTHER WORD WHILE THE LAST WORD IS STILL WAITING FOR OUR YES?

Sometimes pain distorts what we hear

A wounded heart can mistake correction for rejection. A fearful heart can mistake delay for denial. A proud heart can mistake personal desire for divine direction. That is why hearing Jesus requires Scripture, prayer, humility, healing, and wise spiritual community.

6. How Do We Recognize the Voice of Jesus?

Not every inner impression comes from Jesus. Some thoughts come from fear, desire, ego, woundedness, temptation, or imagination. The voice of Jesus:

- Will never contradict the written Word of God.
- Will reflect the character of Jesus Christ.
- May convict you, but will not crush you with hopeless condemnation.
- Will lead toward truth, love, holiness, humility, and obedience.
- Can stand up under prayer, patience, and wise spiritual counsel.
- Will glorify Jesus rather than inflate your ego.
- Will often require faith instead of merely confirming your comfort.

Condemnation says, “You are worthless, and you will never change.”

Conviction says, “This is wrong, but bring it to Me and let Me change you.”

Condemnation pushes you away from God. Conviction calls you back to God.

Jesus corrects us because He loves us and because there is somewhere He wants to take us.

The Central Challenge

Church, what did Jesus tell you this week?

Did He tell you to forgive? Did He tell you to wait? Did He tell you to release something? Did He tell you to stop hiding? Did He remind you that you are still called? Did He ask you, “Wilt thou be made whole?”

And after He spoke, what did you do? Hearing without obedience can become another form of spiritual entertainment. We do not need merely to be impressed by the voice. We need to follow the voice.

THE VERSE DOES NOT END, “MY SHEEP HEAR.” IT ENDS, “THEY FOLLOW ME.”

Celebration

I am glad that Jesus still speaks.

When fear speaks, Jesus says, “Be not afraid.” When shame speaks, Jesus says, “Neither do I condemn thee.” When death speaks, Jesus says, “Come forth.” When failure speaks, Jesus says, “Lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep.” When weariness speaks, Jesus says, “Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.” When the storm speaks, Jesus says, “Peace, be still.”

One word from Jesus can restore your hope, break a chain, call you out of hiding, resurrect a dream, and remind you who you are. But when He speaks, you must follow Him.

Altar Appeal

Bring this question before the Lord: “Jesus, what are You saying to me?” Not to my spouse. Not to my children. Not to the person sitting beside me. What are You saying to me?

Maybe He is saying, “Come closer.” Maybe He is saying, “Release it.” Maybe He is saying, “Forgive them.” Maybe He is saying, “You are forgiven.” Maybe He is saying, “Get up.” Maybe He is saying, “Come forth.” Maybe He is saying, “Follow Me.”

Do not harden your heart when He speaks. Do not keep asking for another confirmation when His instruction is already clear.

THE QUESTION IS NO LONGER, “DID JESUS SPEAK?” THE QUESTION IS, “WILL I OBEY?”

OUR RESPONSE TO JESUS

ASK THE LORD:

“Jesus, what are You saying to me—and what must I do with what You said?”

CLOSING PRAYER:

“Lord Jesus, quiet every voice that competes with Yours. Give us ears to hear, faith to believe, and courage to obey. Where fear is loud, speak peace. Where shame has held us, speak grace. Where disappointment has paralyzed us, tell us to rise. Do not allow us to be hearers only. Speak, Lord—Your servants are listening. In Jesus’ name, **amen.”**