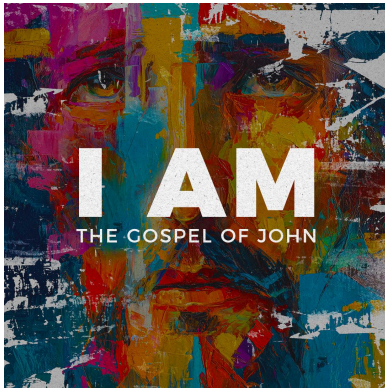


Title: The Voices We Trust

Series: I Am

Speaker: Kevin Sneed

Date: October 25, 2026



Key Texts: John 10, Ezekiel 34:1-6, Ezekiel 34:11-16

Introduction:

There are many competing voices telling us who we are and what will give us life. In John 10, Jesus draws a clear contrast. The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, while the Good Shepherd knows his sheep by name and lays down his life so they may have life to the full. The gate is narrow, but the Shepherd is good. Kevin reminded us this week that Jesus' invitation to be attuned to his voice, rest in him, and trust his leading.

Icebreaker:

Who is someone whose advice you've learned to trust over the years? What did they do to earn that trust?

Discussion Questions

1. Take some time to read John 10:1-42 aloud as a group. As you do, make some initial observations about the text and write them in the space below. What words, images, or details capture your attention? Is there anything you find surprising, confusing, or challenging?
2. What does this passage reveal about God, and what does it reveal about humanity?
3. Kevin started out his sermon by sharing how we live in the age of choice. There are so many paths we can choose from. Each choice we make, and every path we choose, comes at the exclusion of others. Kevin posed two important questions for us to individually consider: *What is the path I am on leading to – is it leading to the fullness that Jesus describes in this passage? Does the "gate" I choose, and the shepherd I am following, actually care for me?* What paths or voices are you most tempted to follow right now? Using John 10:10 as a filter, how do you think you can tell when they are leading you toward life or quietly taking you from it?

4. Read Ezekiel 34:1-6 and Ezekiel 34:11-16. Ezekiel describes shepherds who fed themselves and let the flock scatter. God promises to be a different kind of shepherd: he searches for the lost, brings back the strays, binds up the injured, strengthens the weak, and gives his sheep rest in good pasture. In John 10, Jesus reveals that He is the fulfillment of that promise. He calls his sheep by name, goes ahead of them, stays when the wolf comes, lays down his life for them, and holds them so securely that no one can snatch them away. Which of these pictures of the Shepherd's care stands out to you most right now, and why? When have you experienced this kind of care before, from God or from someone who reflected his care to you? Where have you longed for this kind of care in the past (or experienced wounds from human shepherds who have failed you), and where might you be longing for it now?

5. In Kevin's sermon and in baptisms on Sunday, we were reminded of the fact that Jesus willingly gave up His own life for us. It was "for the joy set before Him" that Jesus endured the cross (Hebrews 12:2). In Jesus we see the beautiful and loving character of God. Take some time to recall as a group the ways that you have experienced and been reminded of Jesus' self-giving love. How did hearing Kevin's sermon and witnessing the baptisms impact and encourage you in your own journey?

6. Kevin said that "the gate is narrow, but the Shepherd is good." Jesus' claim to be the only gate can feel restrictive, yet he says those who enter "will come in and go out, and find pasture." How do you think the narrowness of the gate and the goodness of the Shepherd fit together? Do you have an example of where you have found real freedom by following Jesus' way rather than your own?

Key Takeaways

- Not every voice leads to life. Many voices try to tell us who we are and what we need. The thief takes, while the Shepherd gives. Jesus came so that we may have life, and have it to the full.
- The gate is narrow, but the Shepherd is good. Jesus is the one way in, and the way leads not to confinement but to pasture, safety, and freedom.
- The Good Shepherd is different than the hired hand. He lays down his life freely, and in that self-giving love we see the beauty of God himself.
- God himself is the Shepherd we have longed for. Where human shepherds have failed, wounded, or scattered us, God comes looking, binds up the injured, and brings back the strays.
- We are known by name and held securely. No one can snatch us out of the Father's hands. Our security rests on his grip, not ours.

Practice: This week choose one simple habit (you may want to refer back to your customary card if you wrote anything on there) to help you tune your ear to Jesus amid all other voices. Pray through John 10:27 - "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." Ask God which of these three invitations might specifically be for you: attuning to the Shepherd (hearing His voice), resting (resting in His care), and trusting (taking one small step of faith / following the direction you sense God might be leading you in).