

When Monday Comes
John 10:1-10 – A Different Way to See It

It's easy to hear this passage and think it's about what we should do, which voices to follow, which ones to ignore. But Jesus starts somewhere else.

He doesn't begin with our actions. He begins with **who He is**. "*I am the gate.*"

Before anything else, before we filter voices, before we make better choices, we are invited to **believe**. To trust that Jesus is not just a guide but the **way in**.

And if He is the gate then everything that leads to life comes through Him. That's what makes Him the safe place. The place where life begins by trusting in Christ First.

This isn't about managing your life better. It's about this question:

Do I trust that Christ is my way... my Savior... my gate?

Because when that becomes real everything else begins to change.

When we truly believe Christ is the gate, we begin to see life differently. We start to realize what leads to Him and what doesn't.

And that changes everything, we begin to realize that what shapes us, our hearts, thoughts, choices, and our life's direction is worth protecting. Our belief in Christ begins to guide us and even changes our desires. We don't have to force ourselves to be careful about what comes into our lives – We begin to want to, a choice we want to make.

Not out of fear, but out of our trust and thankfulness for what Christ has given us. Like someone protecting the door of a home they love.

We start to notice:

- What we're letting in
- What we're listening to
- What we're allowing to shape us

Not because we *have to*,
But because we now know **what leads to life—and what doesn't**.

The Difference is without Christ first life becomes pressured:

“I need to try harder”

“I need to filter better”

With Christ first life becomes response:

“I trust the Shepherd”

“I recognize His voice”

What Jesus offers is:

Not more rules, not more noise.

But a life that is:

- Protected
- Directed
- And **full**

A life that comes from knowing Him, not just managing everything around us.

Bridge to the Week

So, this week, don't start with: “What should I do differently?”

Start with: “**Do I trust the One who is leading me?**”

Because when we trust the Shepherd, we naturally begin to guard what comes through the gate.

You don't guard the gate to earn the Shepherd—you guard it because you already know Him.

Prayer for the Week

Lord Jesus,

You are the gate and the way to life. Help me to trust You first before anything else.

Teach me to recognize Your voice and to turn away from what pulls me from You.

Shape my thoughts, my choices, and my direction, not out of fear, but out of trust

in You. And when I wander, bring me back again.

Amen.

Faith Between Sundays

Monday – Recognize the Noise

(Read: John 10:1–5) Take a moment today to notice what’s filling your head. Is it worry? Pressure? Anger? Comparison?

Action: Pause once today and ask: “Is this voice leading me closer to God or pulling me away?”

Tuesday – Learn the Voice

(Read: Psalm 23) The more you hear God’s voice, the more you recognize it.

Action: Spend 5 quiet minutes reading Scripture slowly.

Don’t rush—just listen.

Wednesday – Don’t Follow Strangers

(Read: John 10:5) Not every voice deserves your attention.

Action: Identify one “stranger voice” (news, social media, negativity).

Turn it off—even for just part of the day.

Thursday – Follow, Don’t Just Listen

(Read: James 1:22) Hearing isn’t enough. Following is what changes us.

Action: Do one thing today that you *know* God has been nudging you to do—even if it’s small.

Friday – Trust the Shepherd’s Lead

(Read: Proverbs 3:5–6) Sometimes the Shepherd leads where we didn’t plan to go.

Action: When something unexpected happens today, pause and say:

“Lord, I trust You are leading—even here.”

Saturday – Rest in His Care

(Read: Matthew 11:28–30) Sheep rest because they trust the shepherd.

Action: Take 10 minutes to step away from everything—no phone, no noise—just rest in God’s presence.

Prayers for the week

Monday – Noticing the Voices

Lord, help me become aware of the voices I'm listening to today. Give me the wisdom to recognize what draws me closer to You and what pulls me away.
Amen.

Tuesday – Learning His Voice

Lord Jesus, teach me to recognize Your voice. Slow me down enough to hear You clearly and help me not rush past what You are saying.
Amen.

Wednesday – Turning from the Wrong Voices

Lord, give me the strength to turn away from voices that don't lead to You. Help me not just hear what is right but follow it.
Amen.

Thursday – Following in Action

Lord Jesus, show me one thing today You are calling me to do. Give me the courage to follow through, even in small ways.
Amen.

Friday – Trusting the Shepherd

Lord, when things don't go the way I expect, help me trust that You are still leading me. Even here... You are with me.
Amen.

Saturday – Resting in His Care

Lord Jesus, help me rest in You today. Quiet the noise, slow my thoughts, and remind me that I am safe in Your care.
Amen.

Sunday – Coming Ready

Lord, prepare my heart to hear You. Help me come ready—not just to listen, but to recognize Your voice and follow.
Amen.

From the Pew – The Frequency Bird Dog Hears

There's a small bell in our shop that rings every time someone walks in.

And no matter what she's doing, even if she's sound asleep, Bird (our dog) is up and moving before I can even look up. Because to her, that sound means one thing:

Someone just came in... and they matter.

But what's always amazed me isn't just that she gets up to meet everyone. It's how she understands people, family, friends, or even strangers.

If someone walks in smiling, she's excited, tail wagging, ready to play. If a child comes in, she softens and meets them at their level. And if someone walks in carrying something heavy, not physically, but emotionally, Bird knows.

She slows down, she stays close, she doesn't demand anything. She just offers presence. And I've caught myself thinking:

How does a dog get this right so naturally...when we struggle with it so much?

I think the answer has something to do with what she's tuned into. Because the truth is, we're all listening to something.

When I earned my amateur radio license, call sign KC0UMZ, I was ready to talk to the world. Communication suddenly had no limits. I could reach across the country, across oceans, even bounce signals off the moon and back.

But what I didn't expect was the frustration. Sometimes the signal would be clear, strong, easy to hear. Then slowly, almost without noticing, interference would creep in. Static. Noise. Fading. We'd try everything to fix it, adjusting dials, fine-tuning, trying harder to stay connected. Sometimes it worked. Often it didn't.

Being a HAM operator eventually taught me something that applies far beyond radios:

Not every problem can be solved by trying harder on the same frequency. Sometimes clarity doesn't come from effort, it comes from adjustment. Sometimes the only way to hear clearly again is to change the frequency.

In amateur radio, there are simple shorthand codes.

QRN means static or interference.

QSY means change frequencies.

That contrast has stayed with me. Because life works the same way. Most of us want to live well. We want to treat people with respect, speak with care, and make good choices.

For a while, the signal in our lives can be clear. Then the noise begins, slowly, subtly. The voices around us begin to reshape how we think. What once didn't feel right starts to feel normal. What once gave us pause barely registers anymore.

It's like static filling the air. And if we listen to that static long enough, it changes us. And maybe that's the difference. Bird doesn't live in the static. She responds to what's right in front of her. She pays attention. She meets people where they are.

The important thing I've learned is this: *Interference doesn't mean the message has stopped. It means the conditions have changed.*

And staying on the same frequency, just trying harder, usually doesn't fix it. It just leaves us tired. Sometimes the wisest thing we can do is stop and admit:

"I can't hear clearly right now."

And then, intentionally, **change the frequency.**

When the static builds (QRN).

Sometimes the faithful move is QSY:

Q = Quiet – pause the noise around you

S = Shift – change what you're listening to

Y = Yield – let God's guidance have the right of way

We live in the real world, we work here, love here, and struggle here. Avoidance is not an option or realistic.

But we do have choices.

We can notice when something is reshaping us.

We can step back from the noise.

We can return—again and again—to what helps us hear clearly.

Because God's voice hasn't stopped. It can just get harder to hear because of all the noise.

And God's voice often comes in very ordinary ways:

- A passage of Scripture that suddenly speaks.
- A conversation that hits exactly when you need it.
- A quiet nudge that says, *"Don't go that way."*
- Through prayer and studying the bible

God's voice usually is Not loud, not dramatic. But steady, if we're willing to listen.
And maybe part of the challenge isn't just the **frequency** we're on,
but **how we're listening**:

Bird hears everything in the shop.

She hears the bell.

She hears conversations.

She even hears things we don't notice.

She doesn't understand the words the way we do, and yet, she understands something. She picks up on tone, on emotion, on presence.

She knows when someone is joyful, when someone is nervous, when someone is hurting. Not because she processed the words, but because she was paying attention on a different frequency.

And maybe that's not just about how she listens, but how she **communicates**.

Bird doesn't use words; she doesn't operate a radio.

But somehow, she still connects.

She sends something out, through her presence, her posture, her attention and people pick it up.

And the truth is, we're doing that all the time. Every day, we're sending out messages on our own "frequency":

Through our tone, our reactions, our body language, our attention — or lack of it.

And people are picking it up, even if we never say a word.

Which raises a deeper question: *What kind of signal am I sending?*

Because communication isn't just about what we say. It's about what people experience when they're around us, and just as important, what we choose to receive.

We all hear things every day. But what we allow to shape us – that's up to us.

And Christ didn't just teach us how to listen; He showed us how to communicate:

With love, with patience, with understanding,

with compassion, with kindness and encouragement.

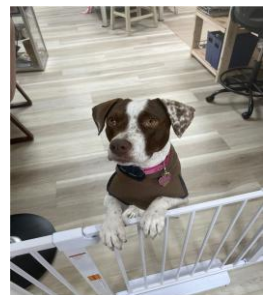
Not reacting to the noise but responding with intention.

And maybe, just maybe:

changing the frequency isn't just about hearing better...

it's about living differently.

Like hearing a bell, and already knowing:



Someone just came in... and they matter...and how we respond matters too.

God's Fuel

What Is God Fuel?

Each day, God gives us a certain amount of “fuel”— the energy to think, speak, act, and respond to people around us. We don't control how much we start with each day, but we do control how we use it. **God's Fuel** is about using that daily energy to make small, meaningful choices that reflect God's love in our everyday lives. Not big gestures just faithful steps. Here are a few real, practical ways to put your God Fuel to work this week:

The 10-Second Pause: Before you respond to something stressful—stop for 10 seconds. No speech. No reaction. Just pause. Most bad moments don't come from what happens...they come from reacting too fast.

One Person. Fully There: Pick one person each day and give them your full attention. Don't fix. Don't rush. Just be present.

- Put the phone down
- Make eye contact
- Actually listen

Turn Down One Source of Noise: Pick one thing that adds stress or negativity — news, social media, a certain conversation...and step away from it for part of the day. Not forever. Just long enough to notice the difference.

Change the Tone of One Moment: When a situation starts going sideways — at work, at home, anywhere — be the one who lowers the temperature. You'd be surprised how much one person can shift a room.

- Speak calmer
- Slow things down
- Don't escalate

Do One Thing You Won't Get Credit For: Help someone... quietly and don't tell anyone you did it.

- Pick something up
- Lend a hand
- Encourage someone

End-of-Day Check (30 seconds): Before bed, ask with no guilt, just awareness.

“Where did I use my fuel well today?”

“Where did I waste it?”

Please Remember – Use what you've been given by God. Don't wait for a better day. This is the fuel you've got—run it well.

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