



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

May 11, 2025

Pastor James Enderle

4th Sunday of May

First Lesson: [Acts 13:15, 16a, 26–39](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 23f CW

Second Lesson: [Revelation 7:9–17](#)

Gospel Lesson/ Sermon Text: [John 10:22–30](#)

BECAUSE HE LIVES

We Know Jesus is Trustworthy and True

A VOICE YOU CAN TRUST

1. **There are many voices in the world.**
2. **What do you find hard to trust about Jesus?**
3. **Listen to the Shepherd God who saves and protects.**

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from Jesus Christ, our Lord:

I don't know if you remember this, but there were some news channels that for such a long time they would have this voiceover or this advertising campaign that would be something like "The voice you can trust." Or "A trusted voice in news." Maybe you still hear that, but that is a lot of what the news is trying to do, to get you to trust what they say.

Isn't it becoming harder and harder to know what voices to trust in the world? Think about years ago and how many news channels there were. How many channels were there, period? If you are old enough, you remember that the TV set you had was one where you actually had to go up and change the channel because you didn't have a remote. I know there are generations now that have no idea what we're talking about. You couldn't just sit on your couch and change the channel. You actually had to go and click a dial and there were a few numbers, like 1-10, and then a couple on the lower one, but not every one of those numbers even had a channel. And you had just a couple local channels and then maybe you started to get more. Then we got cable TV. But before that, before when you just had those few channels, there were only a few voices to listen to.

How did they share things with us? I think for the most part, it was "This is what happened..." or "These are the facts of what is going on..." and not so much a bias or a

spin. And now we have dozens if not hundreds of news sources where they don't really share news that much anymore because it's all opinions. There is "this" side that gives "this" bias and there is "that" side that gives "that" bias. The truth is we probably know that all of the news we listen to is biased one way or the other. Some are open about it. Some are not. So it's hard to understand who to trust. Are they sharing only part of the story or are they sharing just some opinion about what is going on? **There are so many more voices in the world.**

I think about years ago when I was growing up as a kid, what voices even came into the house. There was the TV, and one phone line coming into the house. You didn't have all the different cell phones. And the internet, even when it first came in, was just a dial up that went "Ee er er en" and there was just one computer. You could either be on the phone or the computer and everyone knew what we were doing. Now everyone has their own device and different voices coming in and maybe social media voices and all of these different voices. There are so many voices to listen to. We need a voice that we can trust.

In our reading today, we are going to see that God is that **voice that we can trust**. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is the voice that we can trust. But the problem we have in the world is that there are so many voices in the world. There are all these voices coming in and I don't think we always understand how it is affecting us. Think about how much time you are spending listening to those voices. It's not just the news. It's also the TV shows or movies that we watch. What are they trying to express? What are they trying to share and get you to believe or think or understand? Not just the media, but what other voices do we have in our life?

Today is Mother's Day—do you think we have a lot of voices of people in our life telling us different things? Hopefully you listen to your mother's voice. It's usually a good thing. One of the things that parents try to instill in their kids is that a parent can't force anyone to do anything, but they are trying to instill good thinking and good ways of looking at the world. So maybe you aren't with your mom anymore. Maybe they have gone onto heaven or they aren't in the area, but their prayer is that the guidance, those good teachings that they gave you, and hopefully God's Word, is still a part that you hear of your mother's voice.

There are all the voices in the world, good voices, like the voices of parents. But then there are also the voices of others who maybe say negative things about us, get you to question different things; question things about God or yourself. But what is one of the most dangerous voices, one of the voices you hear the most? It's your own self. Is your voice one that you can always trust? That's such an important thing to understand, that we hear our voice the most and often, and what is our own voice doing? Often it is lying to you, trying to tell you to do something selfish or beating you down and saying you're not good enough. You've made this mistake. No one loves you and all these different things, or trying to make yourself to be greater than you are. There are all

these voices that we have to listen to, but we need to find the truth, a good voice to listen to. This is what we find in Jesus' words in [John 10](#). This is actually the third part of [John 10](#) where Jesus is talking about the Good Shepherd.

My wife and I were watching [The Chosen](#), not the newest season in the theaters. There is this beautiful scene where Jesus is sitting there, watching the sheep and the shepherd. Jesus kind of says "I've got sheep and shepherds on my mind." Then He goes on to share this message about how He is the Good Shepherd. At first He talks about how the Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep—how He cares and protects. But then He talks about how He is the gate. In other sections of John it talks about how He is the way, the truth, and the life. Into the kingdom of heaven, Jesus is the Good Shepherd—the door into that pasture of living water, the green fields of heaven.

After He talks about those things, then He has been teaching and preaching this and the Pharisees, the teachers of the Law, everyone is starting to question Him and not like His teachings and they want to trap Him. They want to get Him to do/say something that they can take and then condemn Him because He has been doing these miracles and getting this following of people.

So here we see that the Jews were gathering around Him saying, ***"How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."*** ***Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."*** The Jewish people have this objection and they are saying, "Tell us plainly if you're the Messiah." It's kind of an interesting thing because Jesus has told His disciples that He is the Messiah. They have confessed that He is the Messiah in saying "The Son of Man must go up into Jerusalem to be killed, to suffer, be betrayed and rise again," but often when He does the miracles and tells them that He is the Messiah, people confess that He is the Messiah but He also tells them "Don't tell everyone this." So has Jesus plainly told the Pharisees, the teachers of the Law, that He is the Messiah? In some ways, He hasn't verbally said it to them, maybe some of them have overheard the teachings, but what He is saying here is that by His miracles, by His teachings, by everything that He has done, they should know it's true. But there is some hard heartedness in them and they just don't want to believe it. So again, they are trying to catch Him, trying to get Him to say something that they can take to the courts and say "He's blaspheming!"

In their lives, it was maybe their strict religion, their religious traditions; maybe it was their human thinking because there were some issues they had of thinking *could God become man?* They struggled with the thought so then they struggled with what Jesus says later, "I and the Father are one." There are these different things that they were probably struggling with but probably the hardness of heart was a huge one. They were the religious leaders. They had the power and Jesus was getting the following. So they didn't WANT to believe. There were all these miracles, all the teachings that were

pointing to Jesus as the Savior, but they didn't want Him. They didn't want to trust Jesus and His works.

We can condemn them but we maybe want to look at our own lives and say "Where do we do the same thing? The question to ask is **what do you find hard to trust about Jesus?** What I mean by this is there are all the promises that Jesus has. He says "My sheep listen to my voice, and they know me." We know Jesus and His works. We know what He has done. We know His promises. But are there things that we still struggle to believe to be true? I think one of them has to do with that voice in our head and sometimes we might say it's that voice of the devil, as well. After you sin, or after you've done that sin over and over and over again and you say "Can God really forgive me? I've done this thing..." or "It's such a great thing that I've done. These people don't seem like they are forgiving me. Why should God forgive me?" Do we question and say "Is my sin too great that Jesus can't forgive me"? Jesus promises that He forgives every one of our sins, but do we hold onto the guilt and the burden and worry that it's not good enough, that we have to make up for it or we're not worthy? The truth is we aren't worthy, but God still loves us and forgives us. So maybe in our hearts we don't trust that God can really forgive some of our sins. But He can!

Or maybe it's the things that have happened in your life. God, as the Good Shepherd, leads us forward and says He is with us through all things. Did you notice in [Psalm 23](#) that yes, He anoints our head with oil. He gives us this great meal. But did you see where He also leads us? It says He leads us through the valley of the shadow of death. The new translation I think says through the darkness, the valleys. If He is our Good Shepherd and we are His sheep, we are following with Him through difficult and dark times. Those are going to come because of the brokenness of the world, the sinfulness. There is death. There is sadness. There are horrible things that happen. We look at that and say "God, where is your love? How can you let this happen? What is the good that you are bringing out of this?" So we start to question and say "Are you really a Good Shepherd?"

But can we hold onto the promises? Can we know that our God is good and loving? We know that He is, but the sins of our own heart, the sins and brokenness of the world, they want us to doubt Him. They want us to fear and wonder if He can do what He says He can and that He keeps His promises.

Jesus comes to us and tells though that we can trust Him. Notice He says, **"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."** How can we know that He is trustworthy? How can we know that Jesus can be trusted? He says that He gives us eternal life. No one can snatch us out of His hands. That beautiful picture of a shepherd holding that baby sheep, the sheep that are so foolish, the sheep that are in the ditch and they jump

out and jump right back into the ditch, the sheep that wander off. Jesus says no one can snatch you from His hands.

The encouragement is to **listen to the Shepherd God who saves and protects**. He is trustworthy. He says "My sheep listen to my voice." It's not that we can look at this and say those who are not His sheep and those who are His sheep but the important thing is that the sheep listen to His voice, because He has laid down His life for us to give us eternal life. He saves us by His love and redemption. He took on every one of our sins. When we doubt, when we are fearful, we can look to that beautiful cross and say our sins were nailed to the cross. All of our sins put Him there, but then He rose from the dead and took them away, just as we read in Revelation that our robes have been washed clean by the blood of Christ. So we don't have to fear. He says He protects us and He is with us. So all of those voices, all of those enemies, He is guarding and protecting you from them, keeping you safe in this world that is filled with so many attacks on your soul, on your heart, on your mind. He's saying "I'm here. Come to me." But in that encouragement, listen to Him more and more.

I think about one of the books we read. It said that those voices, especially like the news, on a not busy day of news, do they just stop sharing news? Do they tell good stories about puppy dogs and cats and rainbows and things? No, but there is still more news. There are still more attacks and getting you to fear and be afraid. The social media things are tricky. They get you to want more, to not be satisfied, or push you to believe this or that.

On your phone there are the things that will tell you how much you use your phone and even what things you watch and listen to. Do you ever take a look at that? The point of that is not to say "Okay, you shouldn't be watching or be on your phone at all," but imagine putting that chart next to how much time you spend listening to your Shepherd. We spend so much time with other things—with TV, with all sorts of different voices—but the way we get this comfort and peace is by spending time with our Savior, to listen to His voice, to hear that peace, to know that we are His sheep, that He has redeemed us, that He is here to save us and protect us. The more we grow in that and the more we are in that, the more confident we can be.

The truth is there will be the valleys of darkness, but the time to prepare for those is before they come; to be knowing and being with your Lord, listening to your Savior, so that when those other voices, when the dark times come, you know that you're right next to your Lord and He is there still speaking to you and guiding you. We see the beauty of it, that He and the Father are one. Our Shepherd is our God—the one who lays down His life for us to love us and protect us, to think how amazing it is that your God loves you so much that He calls Himself "your" Shepherd and He is watching over and guiding.

So we listen to His voice because the world speaks with condemnation and law and fear and it wants you to be anything else but at peace. But every time I read [Psalm 23](#) and I think it's for you, every time you read [Psalm 23](#) and know what the Good Shepherd means, it means peace—peace and hope that your Shepherd God saves you and protects you.

My prayer is that you go forward, knowing there are so many voices in this world, so many voices trying to get you to doubt and fear and worry, but your Shepherd God is with you always. Listen to His voice, the voice of the Gospel, the good news—that He saves and protects you and gives you eternal life. Amen.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. [\(Philippians 4:7\)](#) Amen.