



REMEMBER WHAT IS REAL

"The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ... for they know his voice. ... The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:3-4, 10

Homework.

Expectations from coaches.

Hard conversations with parents.

Busy schedules.

Anxiety.

Youth group commitments.

Friend drama.

Doubts and questions.

Fear of failure.

The list could go on and on of all the things that occupy your thoughts each day. Good things. Hard things. Confusing things. It all piles up. The lines between truth and lie get blurred, especially as our enemy, Satan comes into the pictures, and soon we may find ourselves saying, "Enough! I can't take it anymore." Sometimes that feeling is so strong we aren't sure we can or want to keep on trying to put one foot in front of the other and live through another day.

John 10:10 describes this enemy. He's called a "thief" and a "liar" all throughout Scripture and John tells us here in chapter 10 that his only desire is to steal, kill, and destroy in our lives. He's not just out there trying to get us to cuss or something. You have an enemy of your soul, and He wants to DESTROY you. In the middle of all the pressures piling up he wants you to believe you can't handle it, you're all alone, and there is nothing that will ever change how you're feeling right now.

However, thanks be to God, that is not the only truth we hear in these verses. We have an enemy of our souls, but we also have a SHEPHERD for our souls. We hear from Jesus who reminds us that He has a part to play and He comes into our lives to bring LIFE... full, joyous, abundant life. He has rescued and saved us. He also talks about how He leads us as our Shepherd helping his voice cut through all the other noise.

One of the ways we can hear God's voice a little clearer in the middle of all the pressures of each day is when we find moments to rest, to be still. Those slower moments allow us to sort through all of the expectations, questions, doubts, conversations, and thoughts to remember what's real again, what's true: Jesus. Rest is vital because if we keep going, going, going, it becomes harder and harder to know which voice is which. As we read God's Word, as we connect with him and his Church, we become sheep who know the voice of their Shepherd and can start to see the ways that he brings us LIFE!

Discussion/Journal Questions

- What activities, people, or situations seem to add clutter and make it harder to hear God's voice in your life?
- What activities, people, or situations help you quiet the voice of the enemy and hear the voice of Jesus, your Shepherd?

Prayer

Jesus, help me hear Your voice today. Give me time and space to slow down and sort through all the things that demand my attention. Protect me from the lies of the Enemy who longs to destroy me and instead speak words of hope that bring LIFE! Amen.