

## **Sermon: I Am the Door**

**Text: John 10:1-10, 27 ESV**

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**John 10:1-10 ESV** <sup>1</sup> “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup> But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” <sup>6</sup> This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. <sup>7</sup> So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

**Introduction:** The word “door” is found in the text of the ESV and KJV, but is rendered “gate” in the NIV.

It is now mid-December in Jerusalem. Two months earlier Jesus had said “I am the light of the World” in **Chapter 8**, and then in **Chapter 9** Jesus heals a blind man and then here in **Chapter 10**, He is described as the door and the good shepherd. This week we want to look at Jesus’ claim “I Am the Door.”

How can Jesus be the true light, bread and living water, etc.? This is not a contradiction, but simply different traits of His personality and presence.

**Illus.** We all show different sides of ourselves from time to time. Judge Ulrich in Sault Ste. Marie, MI was tough on criminals, but gentle and kind with children coming before the court for adoption proceedings. God/Jesus is loving, kind, full of grace and mercy for those who obey Him, but will be a God of fury and wrath for those who purposefully disregard Him.

I like doors. They come in all sizes with varying amounts of color. Some doors are huge and very impressive like that of the Ark in Noah’s time. Some may be made of solid oak, with designs carved in them with no window.

**Others may be plywood or thin veneer even metal over a frame and hollow. Some you could break down or kick in easily – others you might break a shoulder or foot if you tried.**

**My favorite door has stained glass or leaded glass. Where we lived years ago in Waverly, NY, there was a street called Pennsylvania Avenue that was lined with old Victorian houses. They all had different types of ornate doors. Some would have wreaths on them. There are warm and inviting doors.**

**Church doors leave an impression. They may be heavy doors, hard to open, harder for some than others. They may have little or no glass for people to see in -sort of private.**

**John 20:19 ESV (Post-resurrection) 19 On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”**

**The Church was in hiding, locked away from the world, AFRAID!**

**Doors sometime serve as barriers to the outside world – much like in the case of the sheep in our text this morning. A sheep fold has but one door. We may see this door as a means not to let the sheep in so much, but as a way to keep others out.**

**Sheep are typically timid and defenseless tending to follow the leader. Sheep flock together. They frighten easily. Sheep can pile up against obstructions and smother each other. I have never seen that happen, but I have seen people smothered or hurt by other Christian sheep.**

**Some of the worst attacks, the deepest wounds to the sheep can come not from the wolves outside but the sheep inside. These are like the people who don't come anymore because they were hurt by the church instead of the world. A sheepfold should be a safe place. It is the world that is dangerous, especially, if you do not have the company of the Shepherd.**

**John makes it clear in our text that: There is a difference in those who enter the sheep pen and how they would lead the sheep.**

**I. There Is a Difference in Motives.**

**Illus.** A few years ago there was a story carried in various newspapers about a woman from Missouri who was startled out of a deep sleep one night by some desperate cries of “Help! Help!” You know how it is when you awake to some sound: you are not at all certain whether you really heard something, or if it was just a dream. At first she thought perhaps her husband had cried out, but he was sleeping soundly next to her. Then suddenly she heard the cries again: “Help! Help!” Finally she threw back the covers and headed downstairs to the living room. “Help!” went the plaintive voice yet again. “Where are you?” the woman replied. “In the fireplace,” came the rather shocking answer.

And sure enough, dangling in the fireplace with his head sticking through the flue was a burglar, upside down and quite snugly stuck! The police and fire department got him out eventually, though not before having to disassemble the mantle and some of the masonry. Perhaps the best part of the story was what this woman did in the meantime. She flipped on all the lights and videotaped the whole thing. I don’t know what the two talked about while waiting for the police to arrive, but had I been there, I think I might have pulled out my sermon for today and had church.

From John’s text, we understand that a thief and robber come to steal and take what does not belong to them – something they have not paid for or worked for.

Christ came to give, not to take, and that is still true today. We are His, those of us who are Christians. He has bought us, paid for us with His very life. Christ freely and consciously laid down His life for us so we might have life.

**Verse 10** reads <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Lightfoot says: “For the Lord not only gives life, but is Himself the way or means of entrance into Life.”

The shepherd comes not to destroy, but to build up. This is the calling of every godly leader.

In **John 8:44** the devil is described as a murderer and a liar, <sup>44</sup> You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

But earlier John writes: **John 3:16-17 ESV** <sup>16</sup> “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish (*be destroyed, separated or lost*) but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Jesus provides life, Satan’s plan has only death to offer you!

Motives normally become quite clear by simply watching a person’s actions.

You can also see a difference:

## **II. In Whom You Follow.**

Sheep that belong to Christ, Christians that belong to the Lord, will follow Him. They will follow Him because they recognize His voice. <sup>3</sup> To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

A person cannot possibly recognize the voice of the Lord if he does not study or listen to the WORD. For the shepherd, familiarity and ease of recognition is due to daily contact with the sheep and so it is for us. Weekly contact with the Lord is not enough. We must have constant fellowship with the Lord on a daily basis so we can recognize Him from all the other FALSE voices in our culture.

There are voices that tell us that material things will bring us happiness and fulfillment. There are voices that tell us that physical relationships will bring us the security that we crave. There also are the false prophets of our so-called enlightened culture that say: “It does not matter what you believe, as long as you believe something and are passionate about it.”

There are voices that say position and power are what bring salvation. These voices are screaming against the only true Voice, the voice of God and Scripture.

Our culture tells us that there is no absolute truth. I wonder if they are absolutely sure about that? How could they be?

We who are Christians, His sheep, know His voice and follow Him, but many are misled because they cannot distinguish between God and Satan, who many times is in disguise.

There are voices dressed up in their religious finery saying: “It is this way to the Lord; Follow Me! Just believe and you will be saved.” Well, my friends, this does not agree with the true voice of Scripture. Scripture says, you must also repent, confess Jesus as Lord, and be baptized. And it does not end there! Faithfulness to the end is required.

There are other voices clothed in the cloak of Religion and Spiritualism, claiming to be Watchtowers. They call themselves Christians but do not even believe in the deity of Christ. The Jehovah Witnesses are not a true or genuine witness for Jehovah at all, nor are they Christians and many others are just as misguided. Many of these cults have climbed over the wall. They have not come in through the Door which is Jesus.

With all the “Reality TV,” it is almost as if we all are on a game show like: “Let’s Make A Deal”

**Door #1 - Voice of man-made tradition that claims equality with God’s Word**

**Door #2 – Voice of Man’s church where the Holy Spirit isn’t even in attendance**

**Door #3 - Voice of Scripture – the only certain foundation for a Christian Church**

People are giving up everything to get what is behind Door #1 and 2, and getting confusion and disappointment for their efforts.

There is only one voice which WE MUST FOLLOW.

Jesus’ words, if followed, will produce LIFE! At the end of the day:

**III. There Is Only One Legitimate Way to God.**

John says that it is through the DOOR, which of course is Jesus. Every other way is false! Jesus talks in parables and figures of speech. **John 10:6** - Jesus used a figure of speech of being the Door, in His teaching, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

Listen then to: **Mark 4:10-12 ESV** <sup>10</sup> And when he (Jesus) was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. <sup>11</sup> And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, <sup>12</sup> so that ““they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.””

There is a request made of Jesus in **John 10** to speak plainly. **John 10:24-27 ESV** <sup>24</sup> So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” <sup>25</sup> Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

You realize “that understanding is just as much about character and trust as it is about intelligence (Craddock, *John*, p.76).”

Later Jesus would speak plainly. **John 14:6 ESV** <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Back in our text: **John 10:7-9 ESV** <sup>7</sup> So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

There will be no universal salvation. There are *many* images of doors in the N.T. Some are positive, some negative. The idea of a door is heard in Luke: **Luke 13:22-30 ESV** <sup>22</sup> He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. <sup>23</sup> And someone said to him, “Lord, will those who are saved be few?” And he said to them, <sup>24</sup> “Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. <sup>25</sup> When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know where you come from.’ <sup>26</sup> Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.’ <sup>27</sup> But he will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!’ <sup>28</sup> In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. <sup>29</sup> And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. <sup>30</sup> And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”

In the book of Revelation, we see an open door to heaven connected with a heavenly voice. **Revelation 4:1 ESV** <sup>1</sup> After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.”

An open door is a common metaphor for opportunity. Opportunity knocks, and sometimes, only once.

In contrast, a “closed” door represents the irrevocable loss of opportunity.

**Matthew 25:10-13 ESV** <sup>10</sup> And while they were going to buy (oil), the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup> Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ <sup>12</sup> But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ <sup>13</sup> Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

We can be ill-prepared for life like the virgins in Matthew’s story and wait too long to go in through the once-open door and be left outside forever.

Going back to more of the imagery of our passage in John, AND

#### **IV. Why I Am in the Sheep Pen.**

Christ as the door provides for our security eternally. He can keep us safe. He also provides for our freedom. We can go in and out with Him.

To be together with other sheep can be a wonderful thing. On the way up to the Temple for worship this was recited by the people of God: **Psalm 133:1 ESV**  
*A Song of Ascents. Of David.* <sup>1</sup> Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!

(Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, p. 20.) “It is true, of course, that what is an unspeakable gift of God for the lonely individual is easily disregarded and trodden under foot by those who have the gift every day. It is easily forgotten that the fellowship of Christian brethren is a gift of grace, a gift of the Kingdom of God that any day may be taken from us, that the time that still separates us from utter loneliness may be brief indeed.

Therefore, let him who until now has had the privilege of living a common Christian life with other Christians praise God’s grace from the bottom of his heart. Let him thank God on his knees and declare: It is grace, nothing but grace, that we are allowed to live in community with Christian brethren.”

Some of us get the idea that we should stay in the sheep pen and never go out, but if that were so why would it be necessary to even recognize the Shepherd’s voice? We are supposed to go out, but not on our own. Jesus is with us. He leads us and protects us.

The image changes again in John's book of Revelation. **Revelation 3:20 ESV** <sup>20</sup>  
Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

That invitation was for the members of the Laodicean church (describe). It was described as having lukewarm, apathetic Christians.

**Conclusion:** The tenth chapter of John tells us that Jesus said, "I have come that you may have life, and have it abundantly." We miss the significance of these words unless we put them in the context of the preceding chapter. In the earlier chapter, Jesus healed the eyes of a man born blind. Traditionalists objected, because Jesus healed on the Sabbath. First-century religious leaders felt that keeping the letter of the law was more important than a man's sight. Jesus refers to their understanding of religion as that of robbers and false prophets. Their religion takes from people rather than giving them something special. In contrast to their unsatisfying, unloving form of religion, Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly."

"Jesus insists that it is not more evidence the religious need but a different relationship to God. As Chrysostom expressed it, they do not follow Jesus, not because he is not a shepherd but because they are not sheep."

**Invitation:** Are you ignoring the voice of Jesus, the Good Shepherd?  
I pray not!

You must respond to the voice of Jesus. It is a kingdom requirement!  
No response is in fact a response... and a deadly one at that!

**PRAYER**