

“I Am the Gate”

09-28-14

In Jesus' day, sheep were kept safe two ways. In cities and villages, there was a large holding corral where shepherds would bring their flocks to secure them at night. There was a porter whose duty was to guard the gate during the night and to admit the shepherds in the morning.

The shepherds would walk into the pen, call their sheep and the sheep would respond to the voice of their shepherd who would lead them out to pasture. Sheep have to be trained to respond to their shepherd's voice! Unless they know the shepherd's voice, they can so easily be led astray. Sheep easily get caught up in the crowd! Sheep for the most part are rather dumb!

But out in the country, a shepherd would herd his sheep into a low walled enclosure of piled rocks with a small opening. At night, since there was no gate, just an opening, the shepherd would lie across the opening to keep the sheep in and the wild animals out. He would literally become the gate!

Look at verse 7, *“So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.”* Jesus is saying, *“I am the door! To go into the fold or go out to pasture, you must go through Me.”* As the gate, Jesus is the protector. He keeps His sheep safe. He is provider. He makes sure He takes them exactly where they need to go. He's the only gate! Everything happens only through Him!

When you come in the gate, you're not only saved, but you're safe and secure. When you go out to pasture, you're nurtured and satisfied.

Look at verses 8-10, *“All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”*

Jesus is the one and only gate. He's the only way to God. This is a fundamental truth of Christianity. If there's no Jesus, then there's no way to God, no truth about God, and no life with God. Jesus made an incredible claim. He said, *“I am God! I am the only way to God.”* This made the leaders mad! No other religious person had ever made such a bold claim and were able to back it up. Why? Because they were men, but Jesus was and is God in the flesh!

If anyone enters by Jesus, He gives salvation. Salvation is available to anyone who believe in Him. It's not based upon effort, ability, looks, or works, it's based solely upon the work of God in Jesus Christ!

It's available to all, because Jesus came to earth to die and rise for all! Remember, it was part of God's plan to send His Son for all! John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”*

Jesus gives security. There are two kinds of security. First, there's a security of your eternal life. Listen to John 10:28, *“I give them eternal life, and they will never*

perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.” As you walk with Him by faith and believe in Him with all your heart, He gives you eternity in heaven with Him!

Second, there’s a security of earthly life. God wants you to know that no matter how great the trial or temptation, you’re safe in His care. He asks you to trust Him. Proverbs 3:5–6, *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”*

He asks you to cast all your cares on Him because He cares about you. You need to consider all things as joy in Him no matter what they are because whatever comes, it will make you stronger. Believe He will supply all your needs. Philippians 4:19, *“And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”*

God wants you to know He calls His child because that’s what you are! In the waters of Baptism He calls you His own. He says, *“I have called you by name, you are Mine!”* In the Lord’s Supper as He gives His body and blood, He calls you His disciples, and tells you to continually share Him, with each other here in church and in the world around you.

Jesus gives you an abundant life. The term “abundantly” in John isn’t a word we use every day. Many times you’re satisfied if you have what you want. But your God is greater and more powerful than that. He gives you more than you can ever imagine!

“I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” We do have an abundant life through Christ if we will let Him lead us from the sheep fold to the pasture and then return again, to gain strength and comfort. That’s why we’re here!

Jesus wants to give you true love in a world of hatred, inner peace in a world of chaos, joy in a world where happiness comes and goes, and purpose in a world that many times seems to be going the wrong way.

Jesus is the only gate. Listen to His voice, not the voices of those who deceive. Follow Him and trust Him with all your heart no matter where He leads you. May you be strengthened as you walk in His safety today and always.