



Sunday, March 21, 2021

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Sermon #35 from the Gospel of John

“I Am the Door”

John 10:1-10 (King James Version)

We continue our journey in the Gospel of John. This is the old disciple’s account of the high-water marks of Jesus’ life and ministry. John had served with Jesus and walked with Him three years, some fifty years before he wrote these words. Those memories, words, and healings percolated in his mind until God gave him the go-ahead to write them down and share with the world. If you recall, John had one purpose for writing this Gospel: He said I am a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, I am saved by His grace, and I write this Gospel that the world might know Him as I know Him. We’re thankful we have this book to study.

Before we start with today’s Scripture, if you simply open your Bible to this chapter, you’re going to get spiritual truth from it but you probably won’t totally understand it—the context of where this passage comes from and why it’s included in this Gospel. What prompted John to write these words? As we think of Jesus saying these words originally about being the good shepherd and door of life, you may think that means He’s talking to His disciples or maybe He’s speaking to a group of willing learners who want to understand the word and will of God and is teaching them. That is not the context of these verses.

Back up a moment to Chapter 9: It includes Jesus healing a man who was born blind (verses 1-12). We see him miraculously healed by Jesus Christ, and the man meets Jesus but didn’t know Him. When he meets Him for the first time, he’s totally blind. Light has not flooded his body since birth. This man (Jesus) sat beside him, made some clay to put on his eyes, sent him to the pool of Siloam to wash and it was there he received his sight in obedience following the will of Jesus to send him there. When he returns to his original place, Jesus is no longer there. This man has heard His voice and heard His name but has not met the man, Jesus, as Lord and Savior. All these great Jewish religious leaders and teachers are gathered there, and they hate Jesus because pointed them out as fakes and phonies. They taught the Word of God, but they did not know the God of the Word—there was no connection in spirit with the Holy Father. These men are developing a plan to kill Jesus because He brought them so much trouble. They asked the healed man “Who healed you? How did it happen?” He told them a man came to me who I didn’t know, put clay on my eyes, told me to wash in the pool of Siloam, and now I can see—it’s that simple! These men know it’s Jesus but they deny He has power from God. They say in verse 16: “Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God because he keepeth not the sabbath day.” They basically say Jesus is a criminal and law-breaker; because he made the clay and healed that man, they said that’s work on the sabbath day. They told the man he (Jesus) could not have been the one who healed him. In verse 25, the man said “Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” He knew the person was of God, but he didn’t know him as Savior at that point. The scribes and Pharisees are absolutely furious this healed man is giving the glory to Jesus and the fact that He comes from Almighty God. In their anger, they cast the man out of the synagogue; he could never again worship with his family of Israel.

As Chapter 10 opens, Jesus is not addressing adoring people or disciples who are learning and gleaned from His words—He’s talking to His enemies, the men who are planning His death.

1“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. 4And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. 6This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. 7Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 10The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” May God add His blessing to this portion of His word.

We see Jesus focusing on sheep and shepherds and the sheepfold that corrals the animals at night. Most of us know very little about sheep and shepherding; they’re both extremely important throughout the Old Testament and New Testament. The most memorized verse from Psalm 23 is “The Lord is my shepherd.” If He’s my shepherd, I better understand what it means to be a sheep because I am one of them, believer, and so are you! We are following the Good Shepherd because we are His sheep; we belong to Him and are in His fold. If you underline anything in today’s passage, underline “I am the door.” In Exodus 3, God meets Moses at the burning bush; He commissions Moses to go into Egypt and lead the Israelites out who had been in captivity and slavery for many years. Moses was a bit hesitant at first; he said if I go in and face the Israelites, they’ll ask if God sent you what is his name. What is your name? God answered “I AM THAT I AM.” In Hebrew, that’s called the tetragrammaton. Yahweh—I am that I am. It’s shortened to two words in the Old Testament: I AM. When we see these words, it’s the name of God Almighty, the Creator, the Lord, God, Sovereign, King. I AM rules the universe. When Jesus says “I am the door,” He’s saying I Am God Almighty. When we worship Jesus Christ, we’re not worshipping a prophet, a representative of God, a witness of God—we are worshipping God Himself! Jesus **is** God! He tells us that over and over again, especially in these “I Am” statements in John. He is eternal and everlasting; there is no beginning and no end. When the creation was laid down as in John 1, Jesus was there. When our history culminates, Jesus will be there for all eternity. He is the great I AM.

Back to John 10:1—as Jesus speaks to these men who hate Him the most, He gives a very important example. Read verses 1-3. Picture a large enclosure, a sheepfold, where sheep are kept overnight. They’re never just herded into an open area when a sheepfold is available. If they’re kept out in the open, the shepherd has to ensure a predator can’t break through. But if a sheepfold is available, the shepherd always puts the sheep there. Rocks are rounded up in a circle, as small or large as the shepherds want to make it, and it’s not very high because sheep can’t climb or jump. In the eastern shepherding style, shepherds who owned various flocks would put all their sheep in the same sheepfold. A young man called a porter (aka under-shepherd) was hired to watch over the sheep in place of the true shepherd. He had two jobs all night

long: (1) He stands by and guards the entryway—one door—so that no sheep escape and encounter danger. (2) He watches the wall to spot a predator or thief who might climb in to steal the animals. When the morning comes, the shepherds arrive to claim their sheep. A shepherd would go to the entry and call his flock; that flock knew his voice so well they would go directly to him. Sheep won't follow a strange voice. In the west, shepherds drive the sheep from behind with dogs or prods. In the eastern style, the shepherd leads the sheep; they follow his voice and footsteps because they love him, know him, and trust him to take them to still waters and good pastures. What Jesus says here is that God Almighty sent Him, the Son, to the sheepfold of all Israel. He came exactly as God said He would. The scribes and Pharisees knew the Bible like the back of their hands. They knew Jesus was born in Bethlehem as prophesied by Micah. Isaiah said He would be Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Jesus came as the Great Shepherd that David spoke of in Psalm 23. He came as the door of Israel—remember the story of Noah and the ark in the Old Testament. The ark had one door to enter and one by which to exit. Jesus Himself is that one door—the door to life! These religious leaders were thinking of these examples but they still would not believe. But Jesus proclaimed Himself as the one shepherd, the door to life. Look at the men's reaction in verse 6. (Note this parable is not the same as Jesus tells in Matthew and Luke.) They refused to understand the words of the Savior. They would not hear Him, would not accept the witness of the blind man, would not see Him as the Shepherd, the Savior, the Door. In verses 7 and 9, Jesus says "I am the door; I am the one way to life, heaven, glory, salvation, forgiveness." The Word of God makes it so plain that there's one exclusive, solitary way to be forgiven and have eternal life and that is through Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the I AM, the door. He is the Good Shepherd, the doorway.

Read verses 8 and 10. Jesus is speaking to these religious leaders and telling them they are liars, false teachers. You're here to take advantage of people and steal from them. You're here to wear your fancy robes and have honor bestowed on you when you walk out on the streets of Jerusalem. Your hearts are in the wrong place—you're false shepherds and you're mistreating and misleading the sheep. The truth is not in you; you don't know the truth because you don't know the Father. You're rejecting the real Shepherd who has come. You fail to hear Me; you turn Me away. I Am that Shepherd; I Am that Door.

As we close the Scripture today, we close with these men of God supposedly teaching Israel and they hate Jesus all the more; their hatred can hardly be contained. They continue to develop their plan to kill Him, and sadly, soon after this, their plan comes to fruition. They think it's by their will; it really isn't. It's by the will of God that Jesus died so He could take our sin upon His shoulders. These men just fade away from the truth; they won't recognize The Door. Again, they don't want to know Him; they reject Him.

Certainly, we live in a world today that is extremely different from the world of Jesus' day. Shepherds and shepherding still exists, but it's not the way of life like it was in the Bible. It's a much smaller market; it's not predominant and prevalent in our society. Shepherds and sheep have gone the way of huge leaps in technology and modernization. The world has changed in modern ways; people have not. Many multitudes are listening to false shepherds—those of the Muslim faith, false gods of the Hindu religion. There are religions in our society and even in our community that masquerade as a Christian faith, and they are not! People are following false teachers of a false faith. If they follow that until the end of their lives, they're going to end up in hell. This is what the Bible says! We have to point to the Good Shepherd constantly as

the church of Jesus Christ. All the false gods and teachers will say this is the way to happiness, peace, and fulfillment which results in a world full of misled, false sheep. Sheep without the true Shepherd, without life, are exposed to the wiles and snares of Satan and evil and the lies of the world.

As I stand before you today, I am nothing more than a porter—an under-shepherd. I have two jobs: (1) I watch for the enemy because I need to warn you this world is full of thieves, robbers, and enemies of your faith. You must constantly be on guard that you are following the Lord Jesus Christ as your Shepherd and not following any other form of joy, peace, happiness but Him setting the footsteps. I warn you to keep your eyes on the Shepherd because you're going to walk out in an evil world that does not know Him. Even believers can be misled by thieves and robbers. Be wary! Be careful! Keep your eyes on the Savior and in His Word so you can recognize a false shepherd and know who the Good Shepherd is in your life. (2) I constantly point you to the truth that there is One Way, One God, One Shepherd, One Door, and His name is Jesus Christ. He knows your name, and just like the shepherd walks to the opening door of the sheepfold and calls his sheep out, they know his voice, they love him and follow him. Believers, listen for your name; listen for His call. Listen for Him to give you the steps you're to follow this week. Listen for His will in your life, for the appointments He gives you to share as a witness for Him to lost sheep. You and I are going to cross paths with lost, misled sheep this week. By your life and witness, you honor Him and Him alone—represent Him well. That's my prayer for us this day. I need to respond to the Good Shepherd's voice as well. Everything else will fail the world; only the Good Shepherd is going to take us to the pastures where we need to be. No matter how the world might change, no matter the fad or wisdom this week, no matter where might go, this is the rock and anchor of life. Jesus is the Door, and He is the Shepherd. Believers, rededicate your life to listening for your name and following Him only.

Today, if you've never given your heart to Jesus as Lord and Savior, I want to assure you of this: He is the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Door, the Shepherd. This is what the Bible teaches us. He is the one way to forgiveness and eternal life. In the weeks to come, we're going to celebrate His death on the cross and His resurrection from the grave. He took our sin on His own shoulders as the Shepherd, the Son of God. As the sacrificial lamb, He died for us. The perfect lamb died for sinners like me and you so we might be forgiven. He rose from the grave to give all believers the opportunity to live with Him in all eternity. If you're really still and really quiet, you'll hear Him call your name. If you need Him, you respond and say: Lord, I want You as my Shepherd, my Lord, and I accept You as my Savior.

Let Us Pray: Our Father, our God, thank You that You taught us beyond the shadow of a doubt that You are the Good Shepherd who David spoke of in Psalm 23. You are the doorway to life as we learned in Genesis and the story of Noah and the ark. Father, I pray we who are believers will know that You call our names and we're to follow You. You don't push us or force us; You lead us that we may follow You. I know sometimes, Lord, I've been a very disobedient sheep—out of Your path and Your way. Thankfully, like the Shepherd always seeks out His sheep, You brought me back. Perhaps there's someone here today who just needs to come back. I pray we will make that commitment to You today. For that one who's never come to You, if he or she remains still and quiet, they will hear the Shepherd calling their name and inviting them into Your fold. Come in through My Door; I want to be your Good Shepherd who will give you life, purpose, hope and blessing. This doesn't mean we'll never have a problem, but it does mean we'll have a Shepherd who will lead us through every day of our life. Bless us in these moments. In Jesus' name, Amen.