

**Series: Jesus 7 'I AM' Statements**

"I AM the Door"

John 10:1 - 10

Big Idea – Jesus Christ is the door-way to Heaven.

This sermon grew out of our Lord's confrontation with Jewish leaders, following the excommunication of the beggar (John 9). Jesus has been confronting the religious leaders as false shepherds of Israel. They didn't care about the sheep, only themselves, and cast out sheep who disagreed with them like they did the beggar Jesus healed.

(John 9:28-34) 28 Then they cursed him and said, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses!

29 We know God spoke to Moses, but we don't even know where this man comes from."

30 "Why, that's very strange!" the man replied. "He healed my eyes, and yet you don't know where he comes from?"

31 We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will.

32 Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind.

33 If this man were not from God, he couldn't have done it."

34 "You were born a total sinner!" they answered. "Are you trying to teach us?" And they threw him out of the synagogue.

Jesus had briefly spoken to them about light and darkness, but now He changed the image to that of the shepherd and the sheep.

Why? Because to the Jewish mind, a "shepherd" was any kind of leader, spiritual or political. People looked on the king and prophets as shepherds. Israel was privileged to be "the flock of the Lord" (Ps. 100:3).

Jeremiah 23: 1 "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the LORD.

2 Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel against the shepherds who feed

My people: "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings," says the LORD.

Similar warnings about false shepherds are given in Ezekiel 34; and Zechariah 11

Let's look at this text, verse by verse

John 10:1 Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, the person who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber.

### **1. What was the sheepfold – vs. 1**

In Palestine there was a common sheepfold in each village. The sheepfold was usually an enclosure made of rocks, with an opening for the door. There was a man hired, called the porter would guard the flock, or flocks, at night while the shepherds returned to their own homes in the village. Before going home the shepherds checked their sheep for injuries, ticks, or disease and applied salve or ointment when it was needed.

Because it was communal, it was not unusual for several flocks to be sheltered together in the same fold. In the morning, the shepherds would come, call their sheep, and assemble their own flocks. Each sheep recognized his own master's voice.

Thieves, who stole sheep, and robbers, who slaughtered sheep right in the fold would climb the walls to get in, not going in the door.

It is unfortunate that John 10:1 is often used to teach that the sheepfold is heaven, and that those who try to get in by any way other than Christ are destined to fail. While the teaching is true (Acts 4:12), it is not based on this verse. Jesus made it clear that the fold is the nation of Israel (John 10:16). The Gentiles are the "other sheep" not of the fold of Israel.

John 10:2 The one who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

### **2. What is the door? – vs. 2**

In this illustration the door refers to Christ's right, or Messianic authority to lead Israel out of the bondage of legalism. No one else could claim this right. He fulfilled all the prophecies about Messiah, He was the virgin born Son of God, at His baptism God had said, "This is my beloved Son", and His own words and works and many witness testified to Him being the Messiah.

In John 1:41 Andrew told his own brother Simon Peter that he had found the One who was the Christ, the Messiah.

Once out of bondage, the Messiah lead the flock of Israel into a new flock of blessing, called His church.

### **3. Who were the thieves and robbers? – vs. 1**

The thieves and robbers were the religious leaders of Israel, the Pharisees.

Matthew 23: 15 “What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you cross land and sea to make one convert, and then you turn that person into twice the child of hell you yourselves are!

Ezekiel 34:1-10

There are also false shepherds among the Gentiles

2 Corinthians 11:13 These people are false apostles. They are deceitful workers who disguise themselves as apostles of Christ.

Jude 12. They are like shameless shepherds who care only for themselves. They are like clouds blowing over the land without giving any rain. They are like trees in autumn that are doubly dead, for they bear no fruit and have been pulled up by the roots.

There is coming an ultimate false shepherd, known as the anti-Christ, who will rise up during the Tribulation and mislead both Jews and Gentiles (Zechariah 11:15-17)

### **4. Who is the true Shepherd? -vs. 3, 4, 5**

(Jeremiah 23:1-4; 25:32-38; Ezekiel 34)

Jesus Christ is the true Shepherd -vs. 3-5

He leads His sheep out of the common village fold into the hillside fold, where He provides for them green pastures, and still waters.

This is of course a beautiful picture of salvation, as the Shepherd leads us out of either the pagan fold of the world, or the legalistic fold of false religion and bondage of sin, into a relationship with God through faith in Him.

## 5. How is Christ the door? Vs. 7 – 9

(John 10:9,10; Romans 10:13; Luke 16:14; Mark 12:40)

That's why He now changes the simile and calls Himself the Door.

When the shepherd took the sheep out of the village into the hillsides, he would build another sheepfold made of stones and He would lie down in the opening where the door was at night to guard and protect His sheep.

Jesus Christ is saying that He is the door into God's presence and you cannot go in any other way except through the broken body of Jesus Christ crucified on the cross for you.

He came to give us life – abundant pastures which for the child of God is now found in the Word of God. He will keep us safe and give us abundant life.

He said, "I am the Door." He is the Door of the sheepfold and makes it possible for the sheep to leave the fold (the religion of Judaism) and to enter His flock. The Pharisees threw the beggar out of the synagogue, but Jesus led him out of Judaism and into the flock of God!

But the Shepherd does not stop with leading the sheep out; He also leads them in. They become a part of the "one flock" (not "fold") which is His church. He is the Door of salvation (John 10:9). Those who trust Him enter into the Lord's flock and fold, and they have the wonderful privilege of going "in and out" and finding pasture. When you keep in mind that the shepherd actually was the "door" of the fold, this image becomes very real.

As the Door, Jesus delivers sinners from bondage and leads them into freedom. They have salvation! This word "saved" means "delivered safe and sound." It was used to say that a person had recovered from severe illness, come through a bad storm, survived a war, or was acquitted at court. Some modern preachers want to do away with an "old-fashioned" word like "saved," but Jesus used it!

Jesus was referring primarily to the religious leaders of that day (John 10:8). He was not condemning every prophet or servant of God who ever ministered before He came to earth. The statement "are thieves and robbers" (not "were") makes it clear that He had the present religious leaders in mind. They were not true shepherds nor did they have the approval of God on their ministry. They did not love the sheep, but instead exploited them and abused them. The beggar was a good example of what the "thieves and robbers" could do.

It is clear in the Gospel record that the religious rulers of Israel were interested only in providing for themselves and protecting themselves. The Pharisees were

covetous (Luke 16:14), took advantage of the poor widows (Mark 12:40), turned God's temple into a den of thieves (Matt. 21:13), and they plotted to kill Jesus so that Rome would not take away their privileges (John 11:49-53).

The True Shepherd came to save the sheep, but the false shepherds take advantage of the sheep and exploit them. Behind these false shepherds is "the thief (John 10:10), probably a reference to Satan. The thief wants to steal the sheep from the fold, slaughter them, and destroy them. We shall see later that the sheep are safe in the hands of the Shepherd and the Father (John 10:27-29).

When you go through "the Door," you receive life and you are saved. As you go "in and out," you enjoy abundant life in the rich pastures of the Lord. His sheep enjoy fullness and freedom. Jesus not only gave His life for us, but He gives His life to us right now!

John 17:3 And this is eternal life: that people know you, the only true God, and that they know Jesus Christ, the One you sent.

1 John 5:11 And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God's Son does not have life.

13 I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life.