

The True Gate

(A Study of the Gospel of John; Message #37)

John 10:1-9

“Needless to say, when I come to church, I’m not paying attention to the décor, the smell of freshly brewed coffee, the trendy pastor on the platform, I’m desperate to hear a Word from God.” (cf. Pulpit and Pen; *Why the Church Doesn’t Need anymore Coffee Bars*; Kimberli Lira)

A. In John 10, Jesus uses the metaphor of a shepherd and sheep

“I am the Gate...” (i.e., “door”) (John 10:7)

A. The “picture” Jesus is “painting” is a common first century picture

1. “Shepherd/Sheep” is a metaphor for God and his people (Psalm 23:1; 77:20; 79:13; 80:1; 95:7; 100:3) (Isaiah 40:11; Jer. 23:1-4; Ezek. 34; Micah 2:12-13)
2. Jesus also talks about himself as a shepherd who loves his sheep (Matthew 18:12; 6:31; Mark 14:27; Luke 12:32; 15:4)

B. No flock was left to graze without a shepherd; no shepherd ever left his flock

1. Sheep wander, are susceptible to attacks, are unable to protect themselves
2. Shepherds are to protect the sheep and care for their basic needs
3. The shepherd would lead his sheep into a “fold” and place himself in the opening and literally become the “gate”

C. Now Jesus says, “I am the Gate”

“I am the Gate...whoever enters through me will be saved” (John 10:9a)

A. In Exodus, God’s deliverance began at the door (gate) of each home

1. Each family was to slaughter a spotless lamb and sprinkle its blood over the door(frame)
 - a. Anyone “going in” this door was assured of God’s protection
 - b. Those inside had to be ready to *go out* and participate in God’s deliverance
2. The other prominent “door” in Israel was the door of the tabernacle

B. Jesus came to save his people from a deeper bondage: sin

“I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name” (Colossians 4:3)

“After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice said, “Come up here...” (Revelation 4:1)

1. There is only one way to come to God and that is by the Gate (Jesus)

“For through Jesus we have access to the Father by one Spirit” (Ephesians 2:18)

2. Sadly, many miss the Gate and wander helpless outside the fold

“The thief comes to steal and kill and destroy...” (John 10:1; cf. 10:10)

- A. Who is Jesus talking to? The Pharisees and others
- B. Who is Jesus talking about? The Pharisees and “otherwayers”
- C. “Otherwayers” are thieves and wolves because they rob Christ of his centrality and rob humanity of its only Savior

“Whoever enters through me...will come in and go out” (John 10:9b)

A. “*Coming in and going out*” is a Hebrew expression for being safe and secure

1. Sheep *come in* for safety and security; they *go out* for provision
2. We, like sheep, need protection, provision, and the peace of God

“These blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God: You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out” (Deut. 28:2,6)

B. There is one message: We all need Jesus; Jesus is all we need

“...He will come in and go out and find pasture” (John 10:9b)

- A. “Pasture” in Scripture is a picture of prosperity, shalom; paradise
- B. For the one who walks “through the gate” there are blessings...

1. ...forgiveness of our failures and sins; freedom from our slavery to sin and self
2. ...being justified before God; being accepted into his family
3. ...the peace with God; being resurrected to new life, and
4. ...the “blessing” of entering eternity with thanksgiving

C. The one thing we all need is the only thing we all need: Jesus, The True Gate