

INTRODUCTION

Please take God's Word and turn with me to John chapter 10.

We are considering this morning verses 7-21.

In our last study we saw the first "figure of speech" that Jesus used when speaking to the Jewish leaders and Pharisees.

Now we're seeing the second.

In verse 2 Jesus refers to Himself as "a shepherd of the sheep."

In verse 7 He now refers to Himself as "the door of the sheep."

Let's read verses 7-21 together as we prepare to study them.

Read John 10:7-21.

As we begin this second section in John chapter 10, we notice that it is because of the Pharisee's and Jewish leaders lack of understanding to what Jesus said in verses 1-6.

Verse 7 begins with, "So Jesus said to them again."

He begins the same way He began verse 1 with "Truly, truly."

But this time we hear the statement "I am."

This is the third of seven statements where Jesus says, "I am" and then follows it with a predicate nominative.

He also says it again in verse 11, "I am the good shepherd."

We see it early in John's Gospel.

Jesus says in John 6:35 "I am the bread of life" and in John 8:12 "I am the Light of the world."

We find it also in John 11:25 where He tells Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life" and in John 14:6 where He says to Thomas, "I am the Way, and the truth, and the life."

And lastly we see it in John 15:1 where He says, "I am the true vine," and verse 5, "I am the vine."

These "I am" statements, first of all, reveal Jesus' deity because God is the only One who used this statement to speak of Himself (Ex.3:14).

Second, because Jesus uses a predicate nominative after each of the "I am" statements, each of these tell us something about Jesus.

He is a shepherd, door, the bread of life, the resurrection and life, the Way, the truth, and the life, and the true vine.

He is the source of all these things.

Therefore, if you want to have eternal life then you have to come to Jesus.

There is no other way to enter heaven.

In John 1:12, The Apostle John says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

So you have to be born "of God."

And each narrative that John gives here in his gospel, reveals that truth.

And for that to happen, you have to come to Jesus.

The same is true here in John chapter 10.

Verse 9 says, "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture."

This sounds like Psalm 118:20, which says, "This is the gate of the Lord; The righteous will enter through it."

Now there are two points Jesus makes in verses 7-16: Jesus is the only door to the fold and Jesus cares for the sheep.

And then verses 19-21 close with John telling us about the division that "occurred again among the Jews because of these words."

Verse 7 begins with Jesus responding to their lack of understanding of what He said in verses 1-6. Now we're told...

Jesus is the Only Door to the Fold (vv.7-10)

He says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep."

Again, in His first analogy He said He was "the shepherd to whom the gatekeeper opened the door. Here He said, 'I'm not only the Shepherd who leads the sheep in and out of the sheepfold, I am the door'" (R.C. Sproul, John, 189).

The "door" is a reference to salvation!

And what He is saying is He is the only way to heaven.

And His message is the only true message because He speaks only what the Father tells Him.

Up to this point, they heard the message but they did not hear it with saving ears!

That's what Jesus meant in Revelation 2:7 when He said, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (ESV).

That's what James was referring to when he said in James 1:19-21, "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man

does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls (ESV).

The religious leaders and many of the people were only listening in order to trap Him.

They weren't listening in order to be saved.

So here, He changes the metaphor slightly.

While in vv. 1-5 He was the shepherd, here He is the gate.

While in vv. 1-5, the shepherd led the sheep out of the sheep fold, here He is the entrance to the fold (v. 9) that leads to proper pasture.

This section echoes Jesus' words in 14:6 that He is the only way to the Father.

His point is that He serves as the sole means to approach the Father and partake of God's promised salvation.

As some Near Eastern shepherds slept in the gateway to guard the sheep, Jesus here pictures Himself as the gate (John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible: John*).
Jesus is the only way to the Father.

Peter said in Acts 4:12, "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

Peter told Cornelius and his men in Acts 10:42-43 that Jesus "ordered [them] to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. 43 Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

Paul echoed this same thought when he told Timothy in 1 Timothy 2:5-6, "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time."

That's why we also hear the apostle John say in 1 John 5:11-12, "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life."

So when Jesus says, "I am the door of the sheep," He is saying that He alone is the way to heaven.

He further emphasizes this in verse 8 by repeating again what He said in verses 1 and 3.

He says, "All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them."

"All who came before Me may hint at messianic pretenders who promised their followers freedom but instead led them into armed conflict and doom (cf. Acts 5:36–37; 21:38)" (ESV Study Bible).

He was not saying that Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha or others like them were "thieves and robbers," He was saying the ones who "climb up some other way" (v.1), like the Jewish leaders and Pharisees, were "thieves and robbers."

The "sheep did not hear them" (v.8) because they only hear the voice of the Shepherd.

Jesus now summarizes in verse 9 what He has already stated in verse 7:

"I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture."

Notice Christ did not say, "I am the door: if any man enter in, he shall be saved," but, "by me if any man enter in."

Man cannot enter of himself, for being by nature "dead in trespasses and sins" he is perfectly helpless.

It is only by Divine aid, by the impartation to us of supernatural power, that any can enter in and be saved. Without Christ we can do nothing (John 15:5) (A.W. Pink, John).

So, belief in Him as Messiah and Son of God is the "only way of being 'saved' from sin and hell and receiving eternal life.

Only Jesus Christ is the one true source for the knowledge of God and the one basis for spiritual security" (The MacArthur Study Bible: John).

Notice again the contrast in verse 9.

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

The thief kills but the shepherds gives life.

That is the markable difference between Jesus and the religious leaders.

Because the religious leaders only cared for themselves and thought of themselves as the source of eternal life, what they had to offer was only death.

But Jesus, on the other hand, being the true shepherd, gave abundant life.

The word "abundant" (perissos) describes something that goes far beyond what is necessary.

The matchless gift of eternal life exceeds all expectation (John MacArthur, John).

Notice in verse 11 another contrast Jesus gives.

Now Jesus picks up another expression from vv.1-5, i.e., He is the "good shepherd" in contrast to the present evil leadership of Israel.

Now we hear the fourth of the 7 "I am" statements of Jesus.

The term "good" has the idea of "noble" and stands in contrast to the "hired hand" who cares only for self-interest.

So now we see in verses 11-16 that...

Jesus Cares for the Sheep (vv.11-16)

He demonstrates this by laying "down His life for the sheep" (v.11).

Being a shepherd was not only hard but also dangerous. Jesus mentions in verse 10 that "the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy."

If that's what they're willing to do to the sheep, think of what they are willing to do to the shepherd who gets in their way.

Prior to David killing Goliath, he told Saul in 1 Samuel 17:32-36, "Let no man's heart fail on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." 33 Then Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth." 34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant was tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, 35 I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him. 36 Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God."

The "good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep" (v.11).

"The is a reference to Jesus' substitutionary death for sinners on the cross" (John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible: John).

Jesus states this again in verse 15 where He says, "I lay down My life for the sheep."

He has already alluded to this in John 6:51 when He said, "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

Caiaphas, who was high priest, said in John 11:49-51, "You know nothing at all. 50 Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish." 51 He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation" (ESV).

Just a footnote: This is a good example of Scripture speaking of who Jesus died for. It says he laid "down His life for the sheep."

Who are the sheep? Believers.

Who did Jesus die for? Believers. He died for those who would believe in Him.

This is what the Reformers referred to as limited atonement or particular redemption. He died for those who would believe.

A.W. Pink says, "This is one of the many scriptures which clearly and definitely defines both the nature and extent of the Atonement. The Savior "gave his life" not as a martyr for the truth, not as a moral example of self-sacrifice, but for a people. He died that they might live. By nature His people are dead in trespasses and sins, and had not the Divinely-appointed and Divinely-provided Substitute died for them, there had been no spiritual and eternal life for them. Equally explicit is this verse concerning those for whom Christ laid down His life. It was not laid down for fallen angels, but for sinful men; and not for men

in general, but for His own people in particular; for “the sheep,” and not for “the goats.” (John)

Jesus continues to show His care for the sheep by contrasting "the good shepherd" with the "hired hand" in verse 12.

Because "the hired hand" is "not a shepherd," or "the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep" (vv.12-13).

Do you remember that the "hired hand" is not the shepherd but is only the "doorkeeper" who looks after the sheep.

But even in his job of protecting the sheep it only goes so far.

Because he is not the shepherd, when trouble arises, he flees.

Because Jesus has been speaking to the religious leaders, it's likely that he is also referring to them here.

They perform their duty in good times but who never display sacrificial care for the sheep in times of danger.

They stand in contrast to Jesus, who laid down His life for the flock (John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible: John).

Jesus says again in verses 14-15, "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, 15 even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep."

Jesus continues in verse 16 by speaking of "other sheep, which are not of this fold."

He says He "must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd."

This is a reference to the Gentiles "who will respond to His voice and become a part of the church.

Jesus' death was not only for Jews, but also for non-Jews whom He will make into one new body, the church.

During Paul's ministry, he stated that because the Jews had judged "themselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, 'I have placed you as a light to the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the end of the earth. When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed'" (Acts 13:46-48).

It has always been God's intention to save Gentiles whom He chose before the foundation of the world (Eph.1:4).

Jesus illustrates His care for all His sheep, Jew and Gentile by stating they "will become one flock with the shepherd. For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father" (vv.17-18).

Here Jesus is speaking of both His death and His resurrection.

Scripture says that God resurrected Him. He resurrected Himself. The Holy Spirit resurrected Him (Acts 2:24; Jn.2:19).

That was the work of all three members of the Trinity.

So in verses 17-18, Jesus is warning those who already were busily plotting His death.

He basically says to them: "You can't take My life from Me. I give My life for My sheep, but you have no power over Me unless I give it to you.

On the night of His arrest, when one of Jesus' disciples drew a sword to fight for His freedom, Jesus said: "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels. How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?" (Mat.26:52-54).

At that moment Jesus could have stopped His execution.

He could have prayed to His Father, and just as a myriad of angels surrounded Elisha in the Old Testament (2 Kings 6:17), they could have come to Calvary, brought Jesus down from the cross, and slain all of His enemies.

But the Father had given the Son a cup to drink.

The cross was the Father's command; it happened in fulfillment of the Scriptures.

It is important for us to remember that the death of Christ, His perfect sacrifice for us, was voluntary.

Pilate had no power over Him.

Caiaphas had no power over Him.

Annas had no power over Him.

The Roman emperor had no power over Him.

He laid down His life for His sheep, to save His sheep from something far worse than wolves, thieves, or robbers--the judgment of God. (R.C. Sproul, John, 190-91).

John ends this section in verses 19-21 by telling us "a division occurred again among the Jews because of these words."

CONCLUSION

What about you?

Does Christ bring peace or a division?

Does He have a demon and is insane?

Or is He one who opens the eyes of the blind?

Who is He?

Let's pray.