

# AM John 10:1-21 Can't find no Satisfaction

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Preacher: Mr Thomson McKenzie

[ 0 : 00 ] Our reading this morning is taken from John, John chapter 10, verses 1 to 21.

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Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers. This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

[ 1 : 28 ] So Jesus again said to them, Truly, truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 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. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own 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 cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me.

[ 2 : 32 ] Just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold.

I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me.

Because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down.

And I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father. There was again a division amongst the Jews because of these words.

Many of them said, He is a demon and is insane. Why listen to him? Others said, Those are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon.

[ 3 : 30 ] Can a demon open the eyes of the blind? Thanks be to God for the reading of his holy word. And to his name be the glory and praise. Amen. Amen. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you that we can come before you freely to study your word. We ask that the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sights.

Through Christ your Son and our Redeemer. Amen. Amen. So, a simple question this morning.

Where does your satisfaction lie? Our text this morning will be from John 10, 7.

Sorry. John 10, 7. So, Jesus said again, Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

[ 4 : 47 ] In our modern and secular world, things appear to have become extremely distorted. And therefore, we have to think about where does our satisfaction come from.

As I have touched on in prayer, this past fortnight, a humanitarian crisis has befallen the people of Afghanistan.

People have queued at an airport for day after day to flee what they see as potential death or persecution under the Taliban.

Yet, on the headlines on Wednesday, newspapers were not about Afghanistan, but about a chap called Charlie Watts dying, the former drummer of the Rolling Stones.

A band best known for smashing hotel rooms and singing about not being able to find satisfaction. One solitary drummer displaced the plights of thousands, if not millions, of Afghani nationals.

[ 6 : 05 ] Yet, this man and his group never seemed to have found their satisfaction. This morning's reading shows the sources of our satisfactions as Christians.

A satisfaction that is still available today as it was 2,000 years ago. In our reading this morning, we see the constant commitment of God to the salvation of man.

God has never changed his plan to save humanity from its sins. We read in John, Jesus' amazing teachings, and the amazing announcements that he makes to his hearers.

that Christ will lay down his life for our sins, that our sins may be forgiven, and that he will take his life up again through the resurrection.

He will defeat death, the consequence of our sins, and God's plan for our sins. And God's plan for our sins. And God's plan for our sins. And God's plan for our redemption will be completed. Jesus Christ goes beyond any human expectation.

[ 7 : 25 ] He is prepared to lay his life down for us. We read that Christ is the gate. He is the way to God. He is the only true way.

Jesus teaches the difference between the true shepherd himself and those who came before him and who will come to mislead his people.

As we start to look at this passage, we see that it is a continuation of the events that happened in chapters 9. A continuation from Jesus' healing of the blind man that he can now see.

His eyes were opened, not just physically, but spiritually, and he recognized that Jesus was of God. Yet the Pharisees, the Jewish religious leaders, claim not to know him or to know where he comes from.

In chapter 10, Jesus says, lays out before them how he differs from others, claiming to lead God's people.

[ 8 : 39 ] He lays out who he is, where he comes from, and his purpose in the world. So we can look at the three sections of this reading. The parable in verses 1 to 6, where Jesus describes his purpose.

We can see in verse 7 to 10, his description of himself as the door of the sheep. And its importance for humanity.

Its importance to you and I. And its benefits for mankind. In the final part, in verses 11 to 18, Jesus' description of himself as a good shepherd, and his laying down of his life for his people.

So as we look at this passage this morning, we'll look beyond the romantic images of Christ and the shepherd clutching young lambs to his breast.

To the romantic images that have been portrayed in heart. We may not go into verses 11 and 18 this morning, but we'll look at them the next time I have the privilege of worshipping with you.

[ 9 : 54 ] So first, let's set the scene. Let's look a little about first century shepherding in Israel. First of all, Jesus depicts two different types of sheep pen or sheep fold.

The first is a large enclosure in a public area like a courtyard or a village square that would take several flocks from a number of different shepherds.

And it's guarded at night by a watchman, so it would have a porter who would be there during the evening to take care of the sheep. The second is much smaller and would be built in the countryside of stone.

It would be on the hillside somewhere. And the shepherd would lead to sheep inn in the evening. And it would be a formation of stones with no proper gate or door.

The shepherd himself would sit to lie across the entrance, so protecting and completing the fold for the sheep. And the second point is in the herding of the sheep.

[ 11 : 09 ] First century shepherds would lead their sheep and the sheep would follow. Something far different from the image in Scotland today. The image we might see in one man and his dog where he would drive sheep before us using dogs and perhaps in modern day a quad bike.

Today as a shepherd would have calls to command his different dogs to call them to him or send them out from him. So the biblical shepherds would have calls which the sheep would recognise and follow.

He would cry out to them, the sheep would hear him and they would follow him. Small holders still use similar methods today although they might also use some bribery with a pail and some feed.

So Jesus starts this chapter with the parable. Contrasting the intruder into the fold with the true shepherd of the sheep.

And here he's talking about the first of those two sheep folds of the larger sheep folds which would be watched over at night by the watchman. The shepherd of the flock would enter by the gate and he would call the sheep and they would hear him and they would follow him out and he would lead them to pasture.

[ 12 : 41 ] But Jesus doesn't just call them out. He doesn't use one call to call the full flock. Jesus goes beyond that.

He calls them by name. He calls them Thompson Norman Fiona. He calls us by name.

He knows us personally. Jesus however begins the parable not about himself but about warning about those who come before him.

That the shepherd would enter by the gate but the thieves and the robbers will enter under darkness over the walls.

They will not present themselves at the gate. And it's interesting that Jesus uses the word is. Tiny wee word but a major important fact.

[ 13 : 45 ] He places the story in the here and now in his day then and there. And just as it was real for Jesus at the time so the same dangers lie for us today in society.

That there will be those who will come not by the door but by other means to try and lead people astray. As elsewhere we find that people are so wrapped up in their conceptions about the Messiah that they miss the point of Jesus' parable.

They have their own images about who the Messiah will be. The role that he will play and how he will restore Israel back to glory with God.

That they don't understand the picture that Jesus paints in the parable. So Jesus uses two further images to enlighten them. he compares himself to the gate and he compares himself to the good shepherd.

So first of all the gate. Jesus now uses the image of the smaller sheepfold in the country. Similar as we may sometimes see in the Scottish hillside where you have a large circle of stones with a small opening that the sheep would have been driven into.

[ 15 : 12 ] First in verse 7 and 8 Jesus states I am the door to the sheep that all came before him are thieves and robbers.

We have looked previously at the significance of the phrase I am. This phrase immediately links Jesus to God.

So Jesus is setting out his divinity and his power to do things he is about to tell them. A reference that would not have been missed by his hearers.

Jesus is saying that there is only one entrance. Any other means of entry is not for the sheep but for those looking to cause harm for the sheep.

So if we are to become part of Christ's flock we must come through him alone. Not by actions not by good works long prayers or acts of hardship and denial but through Christ.

[ 16 : 20 ] Jesus warns again about those who would cause harm in the present tense. It is in Jesus here and now and it is not a past event.

Those who have been entrusted with the care of God's sheep are interested in themselves we learn in chapter 9 that are interested in themselves.

The Pharisees are worried about their own position their power rather than those they are supposed to lead. Are things any different for us today?

Do we put our position above the service of God? In verses 9 and 10 Jesus restates the image of himself as a gate and reiterates the warning of those who would try and enter the fold by any other way.

John records 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 to steal and kill and destroy.

[ 17 : 36 ] I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. Jesus spells it out simply and clearly. There is only one entry to the fold and that is by the door.

Jesus Christ is the door and all who enter by it will be saved. They will have eternal life through God through Christ. Jesus also highlights the contrast with the thief who sneaks in to steal to murder and destroy.

The one who is selfish, the thief driven by self-gain rather than the well-being of the flock. But this teaching was 2,000 years ago, so what is the significance for us today?

Well, let's look at three points from Jesus' allusion to himself as a gate for the sheep. First, Jesus is the only way.

Second, anyone may enter in through Christ. And third, we must make the choice to enter. First, Jesus is the only way.

[ 18 : 55 ] This is central to Christianity. certainty of the route to salvation, to being saved. Jesus, unlike other religious leaders, does not claim to know the truth.

He is the truth. He doesn't say, follow me, and I'll show you how to earn salvation, or where to go. He is the way.

We're not just to simply follow his example, but to know him in person. We're not to imitate him, but to accept him into our lives.

If there is no Christ, there is no way to God. No truth about God, and no life with God. Our actions are fruitless without acceptance of Christ as our Saviour.

He is our way, the only way to God. Jesus came to earth as God incarnate, as God in human form, to die for our sins.

[ 20 : 05 ] We deserve to die for our own sin, both physically and spiritually. We deserve to be separated from God. It was us who decided to rebel against him.

But we are the ones who still break his commandments daily. But Jesus died in our place. We could not pay the price of our sin.

Jesus who was sinless could and he accepted the guilt of our sin and died for us. Paul writes it so sorry so Jesus became the gate by which sinful people can once more approach God the father.

Paul writes that through him we have access to the father. In Ephesians 2 verse 18 he writes for through him we both have access and one spirit to the father.

So Jesus is the only way to God. To anyone may enter in through Christ. In verse 9 Jesus states if anyone enters by me he will be saved.

[ 21 : 26 ] God's priorities are in contrast to our own. God does not worry about a person's position or power. Therefore any man regardless of who he is or where he comes from or what he has done may be among those who enter the kingdom of God.

Think of some whom God has called and they have accepted Christ as their saviour. Of course the writer of the hymn Amazing Grace John Newton was a slave trader yet God called him and he was cleansed of his sin in the blood of Christ.

My only story of coming to Christ was at a Nicky Cruz rally. Nicky Cruz a New York gang member whose life was turned around when he accepted Christ as his saviour.

When he acknowledged Christ was the only way of entering back into the presence of God. God's call is not restricted by race, education, social class.

Nor is it promoted by good deeds or wealth. Therefore there is no reason why you, whoever you are, should not be among those who God draws to Jesus.

[ 22 : 52 ] But do you hesitate? Do you believe that anyone can enter? Or other conditions? Look at the man in chapter nine who was blind.

He was a beggar. He was nothing. No one paid any attention to him. If anybody did pay attention to him, it was basically to shove him out of the way so they could get to the pool first.

This man was saved by Jesus. If the beggar can enter, anyone can enter. You and I can enter. And thirdly, you must make a decision to enter.

It means that you require to believe in him and to trust in him. This is a crucial two sided coin. To believe and to trust in him.

It's not an academic study of probabilities. It's about being in a personal relationship with him. About having a personal experience of him in your life.

[ 24 : 02 ] Even Satan and his hordes know of Christ and his power as the son of God. But they refuse to have a personal relationship with him. To acknowledge him as their saviour and their lord.

So we have three truths. Jesus is the only way to enter into God's presence. Anyone can enter and we must make a decision to enter and to accept Christ as the saviour.

And in those three truths there are also three important promises. promises. The first one and the most important. If we enter through Christ we will be saved.

We have looked at verse 9 and Jesus promises that anyone who enters in will be saved. It is not a limited promise and it's not about some time in the future with that put down of Christianity as pie in the sky when you die.

salvation is undoubtedly a future aspect when Christ returns and we come before God. It also is a past and a present.

[ 25 : 22 ] It affects who we are day by day. The Holy Spirit works within us changing us to be more Christ-like. We can look at it in terms of sin's penalty, sin's power and presence and sin's defeat.

By entering through Christ as a gate we immediately escape sin's penalty. Sin's power of death has been defeated and we need not fear our sin can rise back up and sting us.

Christ knows all about us. Jesus knows Jesus knows all about us. He knows each part of our hearts. He knows our thoughts, our strengths, our weaknesses, our actions.

He knows all about us. Nothing is going to spring up to break that relationship. He knows the depths of our sin and the depths of our sin are forgiven in Christ.

We also enter into life which we are increasingly delivered from sin's power. The Holy Spirit works within us daily to renew us and to make us more Christ-like.

[ 26 : 46 ] Remember we are called to take off the old self and put on the clothes of Christ to clothe ourselves in his righteousness.

Thirdly, the future element that we look forward to. Yes, there is a future element. There is a part after death. The day of Christ's return or of our dying and passing into his eternal presence.

Then our being will be perfected. then our transformation will be completed. For the non-believer to the person who pauses and doesn't receive Christ into their hearts, the Saviour, death still holds a fear.

Death is not lost its sting. It still means eternal separation from God. Yes, death for the Christian who loses family and friends will still feel grief.

We will still mourn their passing as we lose our lives companions. But we have a hope eternal that we shall be reunited in glory when our time to go home to Christ comes.

[ 28 : 10 ] Because death has lost its sting, we are free from sin. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15 verses 57, 54, sorry, 57.

Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the only entrance into God's presence and we enter that gate by faith alone, not by our works, our acts of piety and devotion, but by faith in Christ alone.

We, by God's grace, that is by God's mercy, we come to faith acknowledging our own fallen nature, that we have strayed from God as we cannot keep all his laws, no matter how we try.

But through the gift of Jesus who died for us on the cross, we have victory over death. Christ, on the cross, bore our sins. The one person who was sinless, who had fulfilled all that God asked of him, took on our sins.

[ 29 : 35 ] He took on all the sin, all the ugliness and depravity of each of our lives. He took on all that separates us from God, took it upon himself and carried it to his death on the cross.

But that was not the end. And after his crucifixion and three days in the tomb, Christ rose from death at his glorious resurrection. He defeated death.

Death has lost its sting and Christ is now the gate that brings us before God. Has death lost its sting for you or is death still a fear?

two other benefits that we'll quickly look at is that of safety and satisfaction.

In verse nine, the image of going out and coming in symbolises the security which we have in Christ.

[ 30 : 42 ] if you think of a walled city in biblical times, if the city was under threat, the doors of the city would be closed and people would be trapped within.

When things were at peace, the doors would be open and people could go out and in. People would be safe to enter and to leave.

And so it is with Christ, we have the safety to enter his rest. And we have the satisfaction that we require in life.

If we look to the words of the psalm that we just sang in verses, in Psalm 23 verses two and three, he leads us to green pasture. He provides water for his sheep and restores our soul.

If we enter by the shepherd, we will be provided with all we need. And that may very well be different from what we want.

[ 31 : 51 ] But is that not good parenting? That you don't get what you want, but get what we require. And God provides us all that we require.

All that we require to do his work. and to praise his name. So we see that Christ is the only way to union with God.

He is our gate and our bridge. And we must come by him. We are still to look at Jesus as the good shepherd. And I think, given the time, we will look at that when we come next month.

God's love. So, remember that we have a route back to God. It is a route that is open to all.

And it is a route that people must choose if they wish to come back into communion with God. And that is through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

[ 32 : 54 ] Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the sacrifice of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

That he took on our sin and broke the power of sin. That he conquered death. We give you thanks that by entering into Christ, by accepting him as our Saviour, we once more come into your presence and we can have union with you forever.

For anyone who is questioning commitment to you or the way to you, we ask that you pour out your grace that your spirit may guide them and soften their heart to make a decision to ask Christ to enter their lives, that they may repent of their sins and they may accept Christ as their Saviour.

We ask this in the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.