

JOHN 10

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[0 : 00] Let's turn again to the chapter we read in John's Gospel, John chapter 10. I'm reading again at verse 9.

Jesus says, I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. I am the door.

Now, our text comes from this great section where Jesus is teaching how he cares for all the sheep.

And he describes himself here as the good shepherd. We know in John's Gospel that Jesus, on several occasions, makes I am statements.

For instance, he says, I am the resurrection of the life in the next chapter. He says, I am the vine. He says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. And in this particular chapter, we have two of these I am statements.

[1 : 05] Just a little further on, he says, I am the good shepherd with regard to his shepherding of the sheep. But just before that, he makes this statement where he says, I am the door.

And I want us to think just a little tonight about this. And I think the very first thing that a door would indicate or that we would think of whenever we think of a door, we think of something of access.

It is a way of entry. When you are going in somewhere, it is by the door. If you go up to a house, you head for the door. You don't head for the window. In fact, if you were seen going to a house with a ladder and trying to get in a window upstairs and at the back, people would think that you were out as a thief or a burglar.

Because that is not the ordinary way. If you are going to a house, you go to the door because the door opens to get in. Going any other way, people will straight away become suspicious.

And indeed, that is the very point that Jesus is making when he is saying, I am the door into the sheepfold. But those who come some other way, they are the thieves and they are the robbers.

[2 : 22] Because he is, he himself is the door. So, Jesus is the door. And we have to ask the door of what? Well, I think we know the answer.

He is the door of salvation. He is the door to God. He is the door to eternal life. Without him, there is no salvation.

And I am sure everybody in here tonight knows that. But it is important for us to reflect upon these things and to think upon them about just what the word of God is saying to us.

Now, I know that we live in a day that is becoming increasingly, what we might say, politically correct. And I do not know if that is actually a correct word to use, political correctness, if that is a correct terminology.

Because we seem to be reaching a state or a level where things are becoming absolutely absurd. But I worry to a certain extent about how much longer we will have the freedom to proclaim the word of God as the word of God in its entirety.

[3 : 36] Because at the very, very heart of the gospel is this message, that there is no salvation out with Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, no one comes to the Father but by me. That is the word of God. Now, there are people who will say that if we maintain that and declare that and preach that, then that this is a form of fundamentalism.

It is a form of bigotry that should not be allowed. That we live in a day where everybody is equal. That the whole area of equal rights. That we haven't the right to declare that one way is superior over another.

And it is one of my great fears that we are moving very, very close to that state or to that condition where people are beginning to interfere with what the word of God is actually saying and what the word of God permits.

And it is only a step further until we are told what we can and what we cannot declare. Because that happens in parts of this world. And it is something we have to make it a matter of prayer.

[4 : 49] Make it your prayer. May I make it my prayer that we will always be granted the state freedom to declare entirely what God's word says. And that Jesus makes it very, very clear to us that he is the only way of salvation.

No man cometh unto the Father but by me. I am the way, the truth, and the life. Of course we have to ask the question, why do we need a door?

Why is it? Why is it that you and I, in our ourselves, cannot just make our own way to God? Why is it that God just won't accept us as we are?

Well, again, I'm sure we all know the answer to that. It is because of our sin. It is because of the fall. It is because of the fact that sin has erected this great barrier between ourselves and God.

And God is so holy and so just and so pure that he cannot. You see, this is what we don't understand. But God cannot tolerate sin in any shape or form or degree.

[6 : 00] And God cannot fellowship with sin. God cannot be at one with sin. It has to be dealt with one way or another.

And so, because of the holiness of God, we find that there is this great barrier between ourselves and himself. Now, as we know, God is good to all.

He is compassionate. And yet, he cannot receive to himself any passion irrespective of how good we may judge that passion to be unless that passion has been made right with God in and through Jesus Christ.

This is the only way. And it's at this point that many people have a real difficulty. Because people, by and large, they don't feel that bad in themselves.

And I would imagine that as we view life, I'm sure most people would say, well, I'm not that bad. Can't put up my hands and claim perfection. But people, by and large, say, well, I'm a decent neighbor.

[7 : 11] I think I'm a reasonable citizen. I try and do my best. My life, as far as I'm able to judge, is all right. It's the same as everybody else round about.

And people say, I try and do my best. But that's a problem. Because God's word tells us that our best is not good enough.

And that's difficult. And that's where the problem arises. And that's not something people want to hear. People aren't queuing up to hear that. That's not the message that people naturally want to hear.

That you and I, in and of ourselves, are not good enough. And that our best does not do. And the problem is this.

That our assessment of ourselves and God's assessment of ourselves, is incredibly different. Just as his ways are so much higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts, his assessment of us is completely different.

[8 : 21] Because God sees us as we really are. And what does his word tell us? All have sinned. And all have come short of his glory.

That's all without exception. There is none righteous. No, not one. That's what the Bible tells us.

So that means you means me. That none of us are righteous. That before God, in and of ourselves, not one of us has attained his glory.

We have all come short. We have all missed the mark. None of us are righteous. And so as we see, this is God's assessment of us.

And when God will show us and reveal a little of ourselves to ourselves, we begin to see deep down that there is within us so much that we don't, we've never, maybe not really discovered, or we don't want to discover.

[9 : 31] But if we could delve down in, within us, what is our iniquities? Iniquities really is the twistedness, the twistedness of sin.

Within lying and lurking away within us, there is perverseness, there is hatred, there is anger, there is bitterness, there is resentment, there is pride.

There are so many things. And every so often, these things within us will affect our attitude, affect our thinking, the way we think about issues, the way we think about people, the way sometimes we stop and we say, my word, what am I thinking there?

How am I thinking about this person in that way? How am I, my attitude, and you see, our attitudes are often, when we really strip it all down, we begin maybe to get a little glimpse of what we're really like down under.

When if we were to strip away all the veneer and all the different coats that are there, and we begin maybe just to get a little glimpse of what is lurking down there.

[10 : 41] And of course, this is what God sees and what God knows. So you see, as we are by nature, as we stand before God, as we live out our lives before God, we are all under condemnation.

Now, the fact is this, that if God had left us to our selves, it would be an awful situation we'd be in, but God hasn't. in His grace, in His mercy, in His love, we know what God has done.

And God has sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into this world. And God has made this way of salvation by sending His Son to become one, like ourselves, to go in nature.

So that as Jesus, the human nature, was formed in the womb, He was formed of the substance of Mary. so that He became exactly as Jesus, the baby was being formed and the womb was formed.

The growth over that period was exactly the same as it would be in any mother. And so the Holy Spirit, wonderfully put, overshadowed Mary.

[11 : 57] And so that the Holy Child, Jesus, and yet this is one of the wonderful things that the Holy Spirit, kept the Son of God from any defilement, so that although He was made of human flesh, human nature, yet there was no impurity, no defilement upon Him.

He was free from sin. That apart, He was exactly the same as you and me, and had to be. Because every step that Jesus took in this world, as our mediator, He took for us.

Every day He was honoring the law. Every day He was obeying the Father in our place. And if Jesus at any point had disobeyed, then our salvation would have gone.

He had to give perfect obedience every single day, and He did. And that obedience took Him all the way to the cross, where as a sacrifice for sin, Jesus laid down His life, and God placed upon His Son the punishment that sin deserves.

Because that's God's righteousness is such that He can't just turn away from sin. His righteousness demands that sin is dealt with. The judgment of God has to come into play.

[13 : 22] And so, God just cannot ignore and pretend that something hasn't happened. He has to deal with it. And so, that's what Jesus did. Jesus went in our place.

And Jesus stood there and died there in our place. And so, God made this wonderful provision. But, His mercy is so great that not only has He made this provision, but He's told us about it.

And that's a wonderful thing. This is the great news that Jesus Christ is the Savior of sinners. But God has gone even further because the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, comes and convicts us in our heart.

Brings home that message personally to us. You see, there's what we call the general call of the gospel where it goes out to everyone. everybody hears.

Everybody in here tonight can hear the same words, can hear the same message. But the Holy Spirit, His work is to apply that personally, individually, into people's hearts, into people's lives.

[14 : 35] And if you've never heard, if you've never heard personally this before, if this has not spoken into your heart and life, even ask just now that the Lord will reveal this to yourself so that you will see A, your need, and B, him as a Savior.

And so Jesus says, I am the door. And this door is open. This door is for any man or woman. It doesn't matter a person's age. It doesn't matter a person's status in life, whether a person is rich or poor or young or old.

It doesn't matter a person's language. It doesn't matter a person's culture. It doesn't matter a person's skin color. It doesn't matter anything. Here is this great gospel and the door is open.

And that's the beauty of the gospel, is that this door tonight is open for you. This door is not a closed door. Jesus says, I have set before you an open door.

Tonight he says, I am the door. Imagine if preaching was telling people how it used to be.

[15 : 53] Wouldn't that be awful if I was here tonight telling you, you know, there was a time some years back when the way of salvation was open.

A few years ago, the door of salvation was open and people were able to go in and find security and safety in Jesus and Jesus would save people from their sins.

But not any longer. The door is closed. That time is over. Imagine if that was the message. It would be despair, despondency.

There would be no point in giving that message. Nobody would want to hear it. But tonight, that door is open. The gospel door is open.

Jesus says, I am the door. Maybe the door of your heart is closed to the gospel. That's another thing. But the fact of the matter is, the door of the gospel is open.

[16 : 56] And it says, yet there is room. There's room for you tonight. And you know, it's an awful thing to be standing beside an open door.

A door as wonderful as this and never to go through it. It's like standing beside the well and never taking a drink when you're thirsty. It's like standing beside the way and never stepping onto it.

It's like standing beside the light and yet still turning to the darkness. Well, here is Jesus giving this great invitation and Jesus giving this great statement where he says, I am the door.

And then he says, if anyone enters by me, he will be saved. Well, as I said, that door is open tonight. Anyone who enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

Now, it's very obvious that Jesus is here talking about the sheep. That once a person has gone in through that door, that person now becomes one of his flock and will go in and out.

[18 : 03] And that is, I believe, that this is talking about the pasture land, the shepherding work of the shepherd. Now, you and I know that sheep don't spend all year round on the same grazing.

They might be in the summertime, they might be out in the hills, they might be out on common grazing or whatever, but very often in the winter, they'll be taken in. And many will be hand-fed or at least the croft or whatever will feed with hay and feed with the food for the sheep and the troughs so that it's more a sort of a hands-on.

And, you know, that's the way the Lord deals with us because there are many periods in our life. It's as if we're out in a common grazing or out on the hill. The shepherd is still watching, but it's not, like as it were, so much hands-on.

And it's like the sheep are grazing away and there are periods in our Christian life where it's very much everything is just the same. Days and weeks and months go on and we come and we go and there's nothing outstanding and there's nothing.

We're just going through the motions, as it were. And we're getting enough and we're getting by. But then there are other periods where it's maybe more intense and it's more personal.

[19 : 33] And the Lord's dealing more intimately with us. And, you know, the funny thing about it is that often as the Lord deals more intimately with us that it's often in the difficult times.

Not always, but it's often in the difficult times. And sometimes just as a shepherd will lead the sheep taking them from one feeding ground to another, so the Lord takes us and He moves us.

He's always moving us about. And why is the Lord always moving us about? Why are we never allowed to settle down? You know, sometimes we say, I just love to settle down and for everything just to remain the same all the time.

No, it can't. because the Lord doesn't want us to allow our roots to go down too deeply in this world. He doesn't want us to become too content in this world because once that happens to us we will lose our spiritual edge.

Abraham, the father of the faithful, he was always on the move. He was promised the whole land and yet he was always on the move. He didn't even have a spot that he could say, oh, that's mine when he came to bury Sarah.

[20 : 43] He had to purchase a piece of ground in the land that was all his. And the Lord was showing us we're moving to a city whose builder and maker is God.

We're moving to an everlasting rest where everything will be beautiful and everything will always be the same. Well, when I mean this, I believe there will be movement in glory as well.

of a different sort. But here we're going through trials and difficulties and it's often in these times that the Lord is like the shepherd feeding by hand.

And sometimes you don't notice it all afterwards because sometimes when you're going through it you're saying, oh, I don't know where the Lord is in all this. And you know, afterwards you say, my, the Lord was right beside me.

Just like Jacob said, surely the Lord was in this place and I knew it not. I didn't realize how close the Lord was to me. That's what Jacob said afterwards.

[21 : 47] After the dream, after the revelation, he wasn't aware at the time of just the intimate presence of the Lord until afterwards. And that's often how it is with God's people that it's afterwards we say, truly the Lord was in that.

And we're able to see his hand and able to see the way he led us and touched us and fed us and nourished us and took us along. So we see here they will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

So we've always got to remember that the Lord knows the whys. He knows the whys. He knows the hows. He knows the whats. I am the door. Time's moving on.

A door also speaks to us of safety, security. That's what you do at night when you're, you often ask, have you, throughout the day the door probably is unlocked, but at night before you go to bed you lock the door.

Once everybody's in you lock the door or you'll say to the last, whoever's going to be last in, lock the door after you when you come in. Because that's what you do to give an element of security and safety.

[23 : 00] If somebody had beautiful jewels they would go to a safe. They would open the door of that safe, put it in and they would lock it. They would have the key or else a code to opening.

Nobody else is going to know this is mine, it's secure, it's safe, I have the key, it's in my pocket or I have the code for it's in my head. That's Jesus. I am the door.

I have the key. As we know, it says that in Revelation, remember how they had the keys of David and that's what Jesus, he is the one.

And that's the beauty is that once we are in Jesus we're safe forever. In the days of Jesus in the land of Palestine, very often the sheepfold was a large enclosure and there was just a gap and the sheep were taken in.

And supposing it was at night because I've got to remember there were wolves and there were things, maybe robbers lurking about. And the shepherd often slept in the gap at night.

[24 : 08] That's where he would stay so that nobody could get in or nobody could get out. The sheep couldn't get out because he was in the doorway. And that's why Jesus is indicated that's the very idea that we have here.

He is the door. And anybody else who's going to get him into that sheepfold has to climb in some other way. And anybody who's going to climb in is a thief or a robber but he is the good shepherd.

He is at the door. And that's where Jesus is as well. He is the one who gives us security. He gives us peace. And you know that's the beauty about when we're in Jesus that we're kept.

You know how it tells us in 1 Peter we are kept and the word literally is we are kept like an armed guard who are kept by the power of God unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

And who is the guard? Who is the sentry that is round us? It's Jesus. He is the one who is holding. He is the one who is keeping guard of our lives.

[25 : 17] And that's why later on in this chapter he says my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

My Father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of their Father's hand. I and the Father are one.

And you see this is a wonderful thing. Here's the security in Jesus. Safe forever and ever. You have that picture in Revelation where the church is safe in heaven.

And I'm sure there's always this what if an enemy gets in? What if an enemy gets in? Well it says in Revelation nothing unclean will ever enter into it nor anyone who does what is detestable or false.

Jesus. And so there's this wonderful security in Jesus. We can never think of this door and the door of Jesus and the safety and the security of it without if we go back to an Old Testament picture without thinking of the flood and thinking of Noah.

[26 : 35] And you remember when God took Noah into the ark it came the time for that door to be closed and it was God who closed the door.

God shut him in. God shut the door. It wasn't Noah who shut the door. It was God who shut the door. And that gives us this picture and there was carnage and chaos outside and Noah and his wife and family were so safe and they were so secure in that ark.

and that's how it is for us if we trust our life to Jesus. Yes, we might go along a rocky road. There might be troubles and difficulties in life but our soul is safe forever in Jesus.

Now there's many other things you could say. One last thing and that comes very just I suppose moves naturally that our door also separates those who are in and those who are out.

Again, if you think of the picture of the ark and when the Lord shut that door that was it. Those who were out were out and those who were in were in and those who were in could no longer get out and those who were out could no longer get in because the Lord was the one who had closed that door.

[27 : 56] My friend, there's a separation taking place. There's a separation taking place in this world even just now. Now it's not always a really obvious separation.

It's obvious to a certain extent but we live together, we work together, we mingle together, we share together and there's so much interaction but there's still a separation taking place but one day that separation will be incredibly marked.

One day the door will shut. It's like that, it's a very solemn picture that we have of the ten girls who were bridesmaids and they were waiting for the bridegroom to come and remember how five were wise and five were foolish and the foolish didn't take oil for their lamps and they had to go off and get some more when the bridegroom came and the wise went into the wedding with the bridegroom and the door was shut and then the others came afterwards and they wanted in but they couldn't get in just like those outside at the time of the flood they couldn't get in because it was the Lord who had shut the door.

Imagine if that was the message tonight the door is shut but that's not Jesus says tonight I am the door and tonight that door is open the gospel door is open you're beside it you're being asked to come in let us pray.

O Lord our God we pray that we do not turn away from the invitation and from the pleading of the gospel our life is short and one day it will soon be over very soon and we pray that none of us in here tonight will ever be shut out from the eternal joy and celebration of the marriage supper of the Lamb that we will all be there together with him.

[30 : 04] O Lord watch over us and keep us bless our homes and our families bless all whom we love be merciful and gracious to us we pray take us home safely and forgive us our sin in Jesus name Amen.