

JOHN 10:1-10
THE GOOD SHEPHERD!
Part 1

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 10 as we continue our in-depth study of the Gospel of John.

As we move into John chapter 10 this morning most of us know this chapter as the Good Shepherd section of the Gospel of John. In fact, we will see the third “**I Am**” statement by Jesus in this Gospel. In John 10:7 and John 10:9 we see Jesus say, “**I am the door.**”

And the fourth of the seven “**I Am**” statements in the Gospel of John is found in John 10:11 where we see Jesus say, “**I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.**”

And we will look at that fourth one more next time. But what I want you to see is that this is the *EGO EIMI* (i-mee’) or Jesus is claiming, once again, that He is Almighty God!

Now here is something we need to deal with. Look at what is happening in John chapter 9, after Jesus healed the man who was born blind and his encounter with the Jewish religious leaders, and it did not end well, and then you come to this portion of Scripture!

Remember the verse we ended with last time. We concluded with Jesus telling the Jewish religious leaders, “**. . . ‘If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, “We see.” Therefore your sin remains.**” John 9:41.

Obviously that did not end well as Jesus said that these holy men of God, at least in their own minds, were in sin and they were blinded into thinking that they could see!

Now, as you read that and then move on into John chapter 10, it doesn’t seem to fit.

These two chapters don’t seem to go together, but they truly do!

Remember, in John chapter 9 Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders of Israel and because of their rejection of Him, they were in spiritual blindness to the things of God. They were the ones who were to represent God to the people and the people to God. Thus, these religious leaders were false shepherds.

Now, as we will see this morning in John chapter 10, Jesus is going to speak of the Good Shepherd, the True Shepherd compared to those false shepherds and that He is the door that they must go through.

So, you see, these two chapters fit very nicely together.

I think perspective is very important. We need to have a right understanding of the situation we are in, or we are going to be in trouble. And I think this picture of the Good Shepherd and the sheep is important for us to understand.

The reason I say that is we, as sheep, love to lead the Shepherd and that never works.

I think that we, as city people for the most part, miss out on what a shepherd is all about and what sheep are all about.

Phillip Keller, in his book, *“A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23”* gives us a good picture of what sheep are like.

In this section of his book he speaks of sheep that are *“cast down”* and the idea here is that sheep sometimes can't get up on their feet. He writes,

... even the largest, fattest, strongest and sometimes healthiest sheep can become “cast” and be a casualty. The way it happens is this.

A heavy, fat, or long-fleeced sheep will lie down comfortably in some little hollow or depression in the ground. It may roll on its side slightly to stretch out or relax. Suddenly the center of gravity in the body shifts so that it turns on its back far enough that the feet no longer touch the ground. It may feel a sense of panic and start to paw frantically. Frequently this only makes things worse. It rolls over even further. Now it is quite impossible for it to regain its feet.

- Phillip Keller, A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23, p. 61

You see, unless the shepherd comes and puts them on their feet, they will die! And the overall thrust of the book is that sheep are utterly helpless! They need a shepherd!

And as helpless as actual sheep are, so are we! We need our Good Shepherd to guide us, lead us, protect us, set us back on our feet again! And we see this picture of us being like sheep in the Scriptures.

In Psalm 100:3 we are told, **“Know that the Lord, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.”**

There is that perspective we need to have; the Lord is God, and we are not God but sheep, the sheep of His pasture!

Sheep have no natural defenses. How many of you have ever heard of killer sheep? I don't think so!

Or what about a group of sheep that were terrorizing a town? Again, I don't think so. They may cause a traffic jam, but that is about it!

And sheep get lost easily. They will follow each other over a cliff. They will put themselves in danger.

And when you think about that, I guess we are really like sheep!

I do find it interesting that there is a Christian counselor in town who wants us to see ourselves as something other than sheep. This person wants us to believe that we are not sheep, but we are to be giraffes!

What is the problem with that?

It is not what the Bible is teaching!

Listen to the perspective here. As a giraffe you can see any danger that is around you as you soar over everyone and everything.

Here is the problem besides not being Biblical. I don't need God any longer because I can see for myself, and I can go where I want to go. You don't have to rely on the Lord any longer, you got this. No you don't and please understand that this is not Biblical. And this was taught at a Christian church in town!

Why in the world does God call us sheep?

I have told you but just in case you did not get it, listen to this true story that helps illustrate what we will be talking about this morning.

The story goes like this,

The Camden, Maine, Herald ran two photos on the same page: one of Camden's board of selectmen and town manager; the other of a flock of sheep.

Unintentionally the captions were reversed.

Under the picture of the sheep the caption identified them, left to right, as town officials; the one under the photo of the town fathers grouped around a table read, "***The Sheep Fold – naive and vulnerable, they huddle for security against the uncertainties of the outside world.***"

- Down-East

I think the caption fits the picture perfectly, don't you? ***“The Sheep Fold – naive and vulnerable, they huddle for security against the uncertainties of the outside world.”***

That is truly how we are whether we believe it or not!

You see, like I have said, sheep are defenseless animals.

They are dumb, they get lost easily. Sometimes they fall and they can't get up.

And the Lord calls us, man, sheep, which is a very fitting description for us.

The exciting thing for me is we have a Shepherd, not a hireling, but someone who is always watching over us, caring for us, protecting us if we will only enter His sheepfold.

I have called our study this morning, obviously – ***THE GOOD SHEPHERD!***

And I have broken down the verses we will be looking at into four main points. They are,

ENTER THROUGH JESUS – JOHN 10:1-3

FOLLOW JESUS – JOHN 10:4-5

CONFUSION – JOHN 10:6

LIFE AND DEATH – JOHN 10:7-10

So with that as our introduction, let's begin reading in John chapter 10, beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word and look at this topic – ***THE GOOD SHEPHERD!***

JOHN 10

VERSES 1-3

Here in these verses we see that there is the true Shepherd of the sheep as opposed to the false shepherds that Jesus spoke of in John chapter 9.

Since I don't think any of us are shepherds or care for sheep, let me explain what is going on here and what took place in Israel at this time.

These Jewish shepherds had two different kinds of sheepfolds or places that they would keep their sheep during the night for protection.

During those periods of time when there was a lot of rain, usually in winter and early spring, they would have their sheepfold in town or close to town as there was an abundance of green grass during this period of time.

During the dry summer months they would have to go to areas where there was more green grass for the sheep, and this was farther away from town.

The sheepfold area was a stone-walled enclosure about 6 or 8 feet high, without a roof or door and it was located just outside the city.

Within this enclosure several different flocks would be kept, kind of a communal sheepfold. And one person would serve as the door, sleeping there to protect the sheep from thieves and robbers.

After a day of the sheep grazing in the fields the shepherds would lead their sheep to the sheepfold and there would be several different flocks there, as I have said, and then the shepherds would go home for the night if the sheepfold was in town.

The only one left to care for the sheep was the doorkeeper and his responsibility was to protect these sheep from animals getting in to kill them or thieves and robbers climbing over the walls to steal the sheep.

To do this it was a two-man job as one man climbed over the wall and got a sheep and then that sheep was handed over or tossed over the wall to the other man!

And what is implied here is that a thief would do this quietly, secretly. But a robber would come and with violence try to steal the sheep, which meant he was going to attack the doorkeeper.

What is the point that Jesus is making here with this picture that He is painting for us?

It is really very simple.

The only way into the sheepfold is through the door, there is no other way.

Think about what these false shepherds were doing, these false teachers you might say. They are leading people away from God, stealing them away, and it was deadly for them as we will see.

Now for the true shepherds of God, those who are caring for the people of God, bringing them to the God of the Bible, they come to the doorkeeper, they don't climb over the walls of false religious systems!

Clarke gave us this perspective in regard to ministry.

He wrote, "Whoever, therefore, enters not by Jesus Christ into the pastoral office, is no other than a thief and a robber in the sheepfold. And he enters not by Jesus Christ who *enters* with a prospect of any other interest besides that of Christ and his people. Ambition, avarice [greed], love of ease, a desire to enjoy the conveniences of life, to be distinguished from the crowd, to promote the interests of one's family, and even the sole design of providing against want-these are all ways by which *thieves and robbers enter into the Church*. And whoever enters by any of these ways, or by simony [the buying or selling of ecclesiastical privileges], craft, solicitation, . . . deserves no better name."

May the love of Christ constrain us in all that we do for Him and for His people. It is not about us. Don't lose sight of that as you serve Him!

I want you to listen to John 10:2-3 once again and then I will expound on it. Jesus said,
“But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.”

Keep in mind that this is the period of time when there was a lot of rain and the grass was green, so these sheepfolds were in town and thus, the shepherds went home for the night and the doorkeeper watched the sheep.

In the morning the shepherds would return, and they would come to the door of the sheepfold, keeping in mind that the doorkeeper knew who the true shepherds were and only opened the door to them, and the shepherd would call their sheep and they would come to him. They knew his voice and he called the sheep by name, and they came out and followed him.

Think about that for a minute. In this sheepfold there were several flocks of sheep all mixed together.

How in the world did the sheep know when to go and who to follow, which shepherd?

Because they knew their shepherds voice and they followed only him!

What is interesting is that if a stranger tried to call the sheep, they would not follow and many times they would run away! They only followed their shepherd!

What an important lesson for us to follow. That we follow our Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

What is tragic today is so many people follow other shepherds.

What do I mean by that?

“You have to listen to this teaching by this teacher. We have it all wrong and he knows Hebrew and Greek, and it is amazing what he has to say. You need to listen to this teacher!”

I am sorry, I am going to follow my Shepherd who is leading me according to His Word!

Let me show you what I mean.

When the children of Israel were in the wilderness, wandering those forty years, what or who was guiding them?

It was the Shekinah glory, the presence of God by a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day. When it was time to move, the Lord would show them the way to go. When it was time to stop, the Lord would show them by this pillar of fire or this cloud!

After those forty years of wandering in the wilderness, as they were preparing to enter the Promise Land under the leadership of Joshua, was the Shekinah glory or the presence of God leading them into the Promise Land?

No, that is not what was leading them or who was leading them, at least not by a pillar of fire or a cloud! The Shekinah glory did not lead them into the Promise Land.

I know, some are shocked by that, but read in Joshua how they entered into the Promise Land.

As you read of that event, you will find that the priests were to lead the children of Israel with the Ark of the Covenant and when their feet touched the Jordan River the waters were stopped, and they could cross over on dry land just as they did as they came out of Egypt and crossed through the Red Sea. And the people were not to crowd around the priests and the Ark of the Covenant so that all the people could see the Ark of the Covenant!

What was in the Ark of the Covenant?

The Ten Commandments or the Word of God.

So what was now leading them into the Promise Land?

It was the Word of God!

What is to lead us as we live out our faith today, in this land that God has given to us?

It is the Word of God and what is interesting is that we are told in John 1:1, “**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**”

John is telling us that Jesus is the Word of God and what that tells me is that as I study God’s Word, as I read God’s Word the Lord is guiding me in all that I do!

Something we need to remember!

Now what is this sheepfold all about?

First let me start out by saying what the sheepfold is not.

It is not the church, even though some like to see it that way.

The reason it can’t be the church is because why in the world would Jesus lead the sheep out of His church, that would make no sense.

Others see that this sheepfold is speaking of heaven but again, if you think about it, that is a problem. Why in the world would Jesus lead His sheep out of heaven, that would make no sense.

You see, we need to think these things through.

Remember what we talked about in John chapter 9 and how it flows into what Jesus is saying here.

If you think about it, the man born blind in John chapter 9 was rejected by who?

He was rejected by the false shepherds or the Jewish religious leaders, the Pharisees and they put him out, in a sense, of their sheepfold or the sheepfold of Judaism. They had made it into something that God did not want it to be.

So here is this lost sheep, this man who was born blind and now he sees, and who comes to him?

The Good Shepherd comes to him, finds him and makes him part of His sheepfold, ultimately the church.

That means that the sheepfold is Judaism and what they made it into, like I have said.

Then who are the thieves and the robbers?

They are all the false teachers, false prophets, even false messiahs who lead people away from God throughout the years!

Jeremiah even speaks of this, these false shepherds coming out of this religious system as we are told in Jeremiah 23:1-2, **“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!’ says the Lord. 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.”**

Think about those today who are teaching against the blood atonement, denying that Jesus is God, and the like. They are false shepherds and leading people away from God, scattering them.

And here is the thing. A pastor who is not feeding his flock the Word of God is not doing what he was primarily called to do. I can’t understand that.

What happens is that those sheep that are not feed, well nourished, will become spiritually malnourished, they are susceptible to disease you might say, the false doctrines that are blowing through the church they will catch, and we see that happening today.

We need to feed the people with the truths that are found in God’s Word so that as the lies of the Devil are spoken, they will be exposed as counterfeit because the sheep have the Word of God as a part of their lives, and they will not be susceptible to these false doctrines that are all around them!

And when you read through the Old Testament you will see that throughout the history of Israel, they were plagued with false teachers, false prophets that lead them into all kinds of idolatry and immorality.

But there was always a faithful remnant of believers in the Old Testament who did not listen to these false teachers, these false prophets, they listened to God according to His Word!

Remember what we are told in I Kings 19:18, “**Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.**”

God always has His faithful remnant who will follow Him, follow their Shepherd because they know His voice and they follow Him!

So look again at what Jesus is doing here. He is calling out His sheep from the sheepfold of Judaism and they are coming out to follow their shepherd! They did not listen to those thieves and robbers who were trying to steal their faith away and lead them away from God.

What a great reminder to us, follow Jesus and we will see that as we move on, but how important that is for us to not only understand. But apply to our lives!

As Jesus said in John 10:8, “**All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.**” Praise God for that!

In regard to this, one writer put it like this, “*Israel’s True Shepherd had now come to the door of the sheepfold of Israel to call His sheep out of the restrictive, legalistic walls of Judaism into the Green Pastures of Christianity.*”

And one more, *“God had His true sheep in the sheepfold of Judaism and Jesus as the Good Shepherd, the Messiah, had come to lead them out of Judaism into a new covenant relationship with God. Into a new sheepfold called Christianity thru Him. Over the centuries, many false messiahs and prophets had climbed the walls and carried off many sheep - but those shepherds were thieves and robbers and the sheep only listened to them because they weren’t God’s sheep and proved it by following these false shepherds.”*

How true that is!

Now, we see that within the sheepfold of Judaism were many sheep, believers and unbelievers, but who is the doorkeeper?

That is interesting and it may represent John the Baptist who had come to prepare the way for the Messiah, and he was watching over the sheep of Israel until the Messiah had come!

Once He came, he allowed the Good Shepherd to call for His sheep and take them out of the sheepfold!

As you can see, this is very Jewish territory you might say. But what about Gentiles, what about us? Did Jesus leave us out?

You know the answer to that. He does not leave anyone out unless they want to be left out!

Can I prove that?

You bet and in this chapter.

Listen to what we are told in John 10:16, **“And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.”**

The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, “**And I have other sheep [beside these] that are not of this fold. I must bring and impel those also; and they will listen to My voice and heed My call, and so there will be [they will become] one flock under one Shepherd. [Ezek 34:23.]**”

Who is Jesus speaking of?

Gentiles, you and me.

We were not of the fold or in the sheepfold of Judaism, but we are from another fold, we are Gentiles, and the Lord is not only going to bring us into the same flock as came out of Judaism, but He will be our Shepherd!

Isn't that amazing! It just warms my heart to see the love that God has for us and for all people!

So we enter through Jesus, He is our Shepherd and we follow Him!

Next, we are going to look at – ***FOLLOW JESUS!***

VERSES 4-5

Now this is something that is important, and I have seen this abused many times with spiritual leaders, shepherds you might say. What am I talking about? I am speaking of leaders or so-called leaders trying to drive the sheep. That is not Scriptural!

You see, shepherds never drove the sheep, never beat the sheep, never pushed the sheep. They led the sheep.

People get upset with me because I don't let people do things, but I do them. One of the reasons is that when I ask people to do things, they feel pressured to say that they will when they don't want to do it. Some have even felt like I was driving them or pushing them to do something.

So I try to avoid that and what I do is I led by example. People see what I am doing, serving, whatever the need may be and I pray that if someone else would feel lead to do it, praise God, I will let them.

I don't want anyone here feeling that I am forcing them to do something, I am not. It is not that you have to do this or do that, but you truly get to and what an honor to serve the King of kings and Lord of lords!

Now, if you go to Israel today you will see shepherds just walking along with a stream of sheep following right behind them.

We saw this when we went to Israel, and it was amazing to watch how they followed their shepherd!

I like the way one writer summed this up for us. He wrote,

. . . Jesus, the Good Shepherd, doesn't drive me. He *leads* me. In other words, He goes first through the valley of the shadow of death before He ever asks me to go through it. Scripture declares that Jesus, our Shepherd, our Leader, was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). Consequently, there is nothing you will ever face He hasn't felt . . . Gang, Jesus doesn't send you into battle or drive you into any given trial. He doesn't pontificate or preach. He *leads*.

- Jon Courson, Jon Courson's Application Commentary New Testament, p. 521

As you serve in ministry don't drive people to do things, lead them, let them see your example and follow after you because you are following the Lord!

Now in verse 4 we see Jesus speaking of the shepherd calling for his sheep. We might miss what is going on here but back then the shepherds would come for their sheep in the morning and the doorkeeper would allow them to come and call their sheep, like I have said.

And as each shepherd called, the sheep recognized the voice of their shepherd and followed him.

In fact, he knew them by name, and he not only leads them but as he goes before them, he encounters beforehand what his sheep will encounter.

Now this last point here is important because many are being taken in by false shepherds. You see, Jesus tells us that the sheep will not follow a stranger's voice, but will move away from it, flee from it, just as a child does when he does not recognize the person who is calling him.

Make no mistake about it, this is a beautiful picture of Christ, the Shepherd, and His sheep, you and me!

As He calls us, we hear His voice and follow Him.

In fact, He calls us by name; He doesn't forget who we are. That is our God! So, we know His voice and He doesn't drive us, but He leads us. Cattle are driven and sheep are lead! Also, He doesn't ask us to go places or do things that He has not done.

Hebrews 4:15 tells us, "**For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.**"

Folk's, when false prophets try to sway you to their side, don't follow them but flee from them. Listen to the voice of Jesus as He speaks to you through His Word!

Today, this is a big problem in the church as the world has infiltrated the church with its philosophies and wisdom and it is weakening believers and keeping unbelievers from the faith!

Now you may not see this because we are not shepherds, as I have said. But let me give you this true story that will drive home the point of listening to our Shepherds voice.

We are told,

During World War I, some Turkish soldiers tried to steal a flock of sheep from a hillside near Jerusalem. The shepherd, who had been sleeping, awoke to find his flock being driven off.

He couldn't recapture them by force, so he called out to his flock with his distinctive call.

The sheep listened and returned to their rightful owner. The soldiers couldn't stop the sheep from returning to their shepherd's voice.

- David Guzik

May we heed the call from our Shepherd, Jesus Christ and follow Him - ***FOLLOW***

JESUS!

As we read on, we will see – ***CONFUSION!***

VERSE 6

Remember who Jesus is speaking to, the Jewish religious leaders, the Pharisees!

And as Jesus finished speaking here, this part of his discussion, we are told that these Jewish religious leaders didn't understand what He was saying, what He was talking about!

Keep in mind that these were the religious leaders of Israel who thought of themselves as men of God and yet, they did not understand the things of God. These men who were to be bringing God to the people and the people to God had no clue of the things of God!

Why couldn't the religious leaders understand this very simple illustration?

Remember what Jesus said in John 9:41, "**... 'If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.'**"

You see, they were not only blind to the things of God, but they were also deaf! They didn't want to hear anything or see anything that went against what they believed even if they were wrong!

In John chapter 8 listen to what Jesus said of them, "**Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. . . . He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.**" John 8:43, 47.

This is a choice on their part, and it is a choice today.

In Psalm 119:130 we are told, "**The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.**"

I love that. You don't have to be a theologian to understand the Bible you just have to read it and allow God to speak to you.

One writer put it like this,

Why do we think we can find wisdom or truth from other sources than Scripture? Is it because our culture has convinced us that the Bible is just a book of stories that don't matter? I am always shocked at how people who claim to be Christians treat the Bible. If we say we're believers, we need to be reading Scripture.

If we have a question about life, we don't need to ask Oprah or Dr. Phil or Dr. Oz or the news agencies. We need to look in the Bible. Because if it's something we need to know about life, it's in there.

I think the majority of confusion in a Christian's life can be eliminated if he or she will just make a habit of reading and learning the Word of God.

If we are daily - shoot, hourly - comparing events in our life to the truth of Scripture, we'll know for sure whether what we're thinking about doing is wise or unwise. We'll know what God says about the future. We'll know what God says about right now. We'll know because everything we need to know is in the Bible.

And it doesn't matter who you are or what your background is, the Bible is easy to understand. . . .

. . . when you read Scripture, God gives you light. He gives you truth. He gives you understanding. That's what this verse says. God grants His light to people who read His word, and it's not complicated.

The truth in the Bible is very very simple.

Profound, of course. But oftentimes I've discovered that the most profound truths in life are inherently simple. So easy to understand that even a child can grasp the concept.

So it doesn't matter if you have a doctorate or if you're some indigenous tribal person in a village in the middle of Guatemala, God's Word is for you.

Don't buy into the lies our culture tells that Scripture is just a bunch of made-up stories about morality.

What is written in the Scripture is alive. You can read the same passage over and over again for a week, and it will mean something different to you every day. Because as we grow in our walk with God, the Bible broadens and deepens for us . . . or maybe it's better said that our understanding of Scripture broadens and deepens. The Bible grows with us.

And don't believe it when people tell you that the Bible is hard to understand. Don't think that only pastors and scholars can make sense of the Bible. Don't read more into it than you think is there. The Bible is literal. Trying to make a figurative story out of a literal truth is confusing.

When the Bible says God created the world, it means that He created the world.

When the Bible says that God destroyed the world with a flood, it means that He destroyed the world with a flood.

When the Bible says that Jonah survived three days and three nights in the belly of a giant fish, it means that really happened.

It means David really killed Goliath.

It means Elijah really called down fire on Mt. Caramel.

It means Jesus really did miracles.

Now, are there figurative stories in Scripture? Yes, but you can usually tell those because the characters aren't named. A good example is the parable of the Prodigal Son. Now, it might have really happened, but that is one of the stories Jesus told that was figurative - but He used it to explain a literal truth.

The Bible is easy to understand. It's just us who make things complicated. And if you've had trouble understanding Scripture before, try reading it again.

And if you simply can't understand it, come find someone who you know does and ask for their help. If they're any sort of mature believer, they will be eager to help you dig deeper into Scripture because they are still learning about it too.

- bit.ly/3ufhiNW

The Bible is so easy to understand that a child can grasp the simplicity of the Gospel. And yet, the Bible is so deep, so rich that the most brilliant mind will never grasp all that is in it.

So the problem is not that these Jewish religious leaders couldn't understand all that Jesus was saying, they just didn't want to understand and they closed their eyes and refused to hear!

As we read on, we will see Jesus give to us another illustration or really a different point from another sheepfold in a different area, and in the end, it is all about – ***LIFE AND DEATH!***

VERSES 7-10

Now this seems confusing. First, we were told that Jesus is the Shepherd leading the sheep and now we are told that He is the door, so which is it.

He is both and the reason we miss what is going on here is because we are not shepherds, and we were not living in Jerusalem at this time.

You see, Jewish shepherds had two kinds of sheepfolds, as I have said.

If they were in town or close by the area the sheep were kept in was much larger, as we talked about already. And they would be in town during the time there was green grass in the fields, during the rainy season, winter and early spring.

But as things heated up, as the land became dry and the grass dried up, they moved farther out into the country, or areas that there were greener pastures.

Now, if they were out in the country, the sheepfold was a low-walled corral made of stone with a narrow opening in the front.

So, here in these verses Jesus is speaking of another sheepfold.

You see, the weather is getting warmer, and the shepherds are moving their flocks farther out and thus, they would stay out all night in the wilderness.

To protect the sheep, they once again had a walled off area for protection and the difference this time, instead of a professional gatekeeper at the door, as we saw when they were in town, now the shepherd himself would keep only his sheep in this sheepfold and he would be the door, sleeping across the entrance so no one could get in or out.

What I want you to notice is that Jesus doesn't say "I am a door" or "I am one of many doors" but He says, "I am the door" of the sheep.

Over and over we have seen in the Gospels and especially here in John that Jesus is the only way. To say that all roads lead to God you have to deny what the Scriptures say and guess who is wrong, and I will give you a clue, it is not God!

Remember what Jesus said in John 14:6, "... 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" *PERIOD!*

You can accept that or reject it, but it does not change the facts that Jesus is the only way to the Father, there is no other door for you to go through!

G. Campbell Morgan speaks of one of the greatest Old Testament scholars, Sir George Adam Smith. And one of the stories he told was this, as Morgan re-tells it,

He was one day traveling with a guide, and came across a shepherd and his sheep. He fell into conversation with him. The man showed him the fold into which the sheep were led at night.

It consisted of four walls, with a way in.

Sir George said to him, "That is where they go at night?"

"Yes," said the shepherd, "and when they are in there, they are perfectly safe."

"But there is no door," said Sir George.

"I am the door," said the shepherd.

He was not a Christian man, he was not speaking in the language of the New Testament. He as speaking from the Arab shepherd's standpoint.

Sir George looked at him and said, "What do you mean by the door?"

Said the shepherd, "When the light has gone, and all the sheep are inside, I lie in the open space, and no sheep ever goes out but across my body, and no wolf comes in unless he crosses my body; I am the door."

- G. Campbell Morgan, *The Gospel According to John*, p. 177

That is exactly what Jesus is saying here. That we can't get in unless we go through Him, the Door!

And He is our protection and our way to pasture, to life! He protects and provides for us! What a beautiful picture that is being painted for us of what our Lord has done for us!

Now as we look at verse 8, we see Jesus speak of "**thieves and robbers**" and the idea here again is that those religious leaders were nothing more than tools in Satan's hand!

It is as Tasker wrote, "Because the Pharisees are blind leaders, they are also bogus shepherds, and come under the category of those designated in John 10:8 *thieves and robbers.*"

And think about this for a minute. A thief uses deception, trickery to get what he wants.

A robber uses violence to get what he wants.

Therefore, they didn't add to life, but they did take it away.

That is what John 10:10 says, "**The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. . . .**"

Let me give you this illustration and you will see what I mean. We are told,

When I was a freshman in high school, I tried out for the varsity basketball team. On the first day of tryouts, the coach ran a scrimmage, periodically sending players into the game to see how they played.

When my turn came, I intercepted a pass on the very first play. Then I took the ball the length of the court, skyed over every other player and made the prettiest layup you ever saw.

The coach instantly blew the whistle, stopped the game and called me over to the bench. I was walking 10 feet off the ground. I just knew my shot was so good that he had to stop the game just to tell me.

I envisioned that ESPN had called and wanted the footage, and that Sports Illustrated had every intention of running a photo of me on the next cover. The shoe deal with Nike was only a matter of time. So I walked - actually, strutted - to the sideline.

My coach said, "White, that was a great shot. Your form was great; your intensity was great. Only thing is, you went to the wrong basket - but it was a great shot!"

Is there a right and a wrong basket in the spiritual game? Is Christianity the only way to score with God or simply one of many ways?

For today's unchurched person, this is hardly academic. The religious landscape of modern American society can be nothing less than bewildering. Religious groups, sects, cults, movements, philosophies and worldviews abound in incredible numbers and diversity.

Add to this mix one of the most pervasive, fundamental convictions of contemporary American society: All roads lead to God, and to say that one way is right and all the other ways are wrong is narrow-minded, bigoted and prejudicial. What is true for you is true for you, and what is true for me is true for me.

Searching for God is like climbing a mountain. Since everyone knows there is not just one way to climb a mountain - mountains are too big for that - each person can choose from a number of paths. All the ideas about God contained in the various religions of the world are just different ways up the mountain. In fact, though different religions have different names for God, the names all refer to the same God.

Is it true that a lot of roads lead to heaven, which means we really don't have to worry about which road we're on?

Is it true that no person, no religion, no group, no book has a handle on the truth?

Is it true that all religions are basically the same and all religious leaders are essentially of one mind so that ultimately all spiritual pursuits lead to the same place?

If so, people need not look for spiritual truth. They just need to decide on spiritual preference.

If you embrace the idea that multiple paths lead to God and you turn out to be wrong, the consequences are enormous.

- bit.ly/3IAKoMG

There is a book, one book that contains all the truth we need to come to saving faith and that is – ***THE BIBLE!***

There is only one way to heaven, one way to God the Father and that is – ***THROUGH JESUS!***

So if you make the wrong basket you will lose the game.

If you climb up the wrong path on a mountain, you can die.

And if you don't come to Jesus you will die in your sins and be eternally separated from God.

You see, that is what Jesus gives to us. The true Shepherd gives us abundant life if we enter by Him!

That is what Jesus said in the last part of John 10:10, “**. . . I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**”

Now, in John 10:9, when Jesus says that we “**will go in and out and find pasture**” the idea is the liberty we have in Christ.

Clarke puts it like this, “*This phrase, in the style of the Hebrews, points out all the actions of a man's life, and the liberty he has of acting, or not acting.*”

And Dods wrote, “*To 'go out and in' is the common O. T. expression to denote the free activity of daily life. Jeremiah 37:4, Psalm 121:8, Deuteronomy 28:6.*”

There is that liberty that we have in Christ, that freedom we have in Christ, we are not weighed down by the law or rules and regulations, but we can come and go!

You see, our relationship with Him is based on love and like my marriage relationship or any marriage relationship should be, I am free to do whatever I want.

Now that may shock some of you, it may scare some of you, but my wife does not worry.

Why?

Because even though I am free to do whatever I want, even bad things, things that would hurt her, I don't because I love my wife. It is not because she has a list at home of all the things I can and can't do, because that is not what our marriage is based upon! Our marriage is based in love and not just any love, but the love of Jesus Christ.

And that is just as true with our Lord, we love Him and thus, we serve Him because of that love and don't do things that would dishonor Him!

Now let me also say this. If you go and sin, and sin; and sin is just the way you live, it is a habitual sin, you are not saved.

Sorry, but you should, as a child of God, be convicted of your sin and if you just do whatever you want, no conviction, then there is no relationship there, just empty words by you.

Make no mistake about it, Jesus gives to us life, He protects us, watches over us and for pastors, we are to do the same with the people God has entrusted to us.

But it seems like today that many pastors allow anyone and everyone to come into their church and bring in all kinds of false teaching as well as the pastor's teaching it themselves.

They are wolves who come in and devour the sheep, they do not give them life!

So, as we have seen in John 10:7-10, Jesus is the door to the sheepfold, the door to life!

The thief, the false teachers, those who are only looking out for themselves, are workers of Satan and they have come to destroy your life and many of you were in situations like that before the Lord came and saved you and now you have that abundant life in Christ.

Jesus is our **GOOD SHEPHERD** who leads us and guides us.

He is also **THE DOOR** we must enter into to have that abundant life.

Let me close with this because we think we are so smart, we know all the answers to life and yet, we are nothing more than sheep.

Paul Morphy was the world's champion chess player in the 19th century. One day he was invited by a friend to look at a valuable painting titled, "The Chess Player."

In the painting, Satan was represented as playing chess with a young man, the stake being the young man's soul.

The game had reached the stage where it was the young man's move; but he was checkmated. there was no move he could make which would not mean defeat for him and so the strong feature of the picture was the look of utter despair on the young man's face as he realized that his soul was lost.

Yet Morphy, who knew more about chess than the artist, studied the picture for a time, then called for a chessboard and pieces.

Placing them in exactly the same position as they were in the painting, he said, "I'll take the young man's place and make the move."

Then he made the move which would have set the young man free.

Jesus not only knows the move to make to set us free, He is the move that sets us free!