

THE GATE FOR THE SHEEP

John 10:1-10

Warren Wiersbe: Incident captured by *Candid Camera*: Scene took place at an exclusive prep school attended by some of our country's brightest students.

A "Career Consultant" came to advise the students on their career choices, on the basis of extensive tests and interviews.

One young man eagerly awaited the counselor's verdict. Surely the adviser would recommend that he become a university president or a research scientist.

The "counselor" had other ideas.

You should have seen the boy's face when the counselor suggested: "Son, after evaluating your abilities, I believe the best job for you is—a shepherd."

The student didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Who in his right mind would want to be a *shepherd*? Why would you devote your life to a bunch of "stupid sheep" who don't even know enough to find their way home?!

Yet that's precisely what Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth to be: a Shepherd for a bunch of dumb, lost sheep!

John 10 directs our attention to the lost sheep of Israel, & to the Good Shepherd who came to care for God's sheep.

John 1 introduces Jesus as "the Word"—*the expression of God Himself!*

The Word was present in the beginning with God.

The Word was GOD!

He "pitched His tent" among us, so we might see what God is like.

He repeatedly associates with the O.T. name of God: YHWH—

God's personal name, revealed in His relationship with Israel, is "I AM"—*the One Who always exists!*"

In John, Jesus uses that name, "**I AM**," to describe Himself. **8:58**

Jews understand His message. They try to stone Him!

Jesus includes that name in various descriptions of Himself.

We've considered two of Jesus' claims:

"I AM the Bread of life.

He provides what we need to sustain life.

He satisfies our hunger for God!

"I AM the Light of the World"

He shines in the midst of darkness to show us the way to God.

In John 10, Jesus adds 2 more "I AM" statements to the list:

"I AM the gate for the sheep" = "I AM the door"

"I AM the Good Shepherd"

Key focus of this passage is on Jesus as *the Good Shepherd*

O.T. CONCEPT:

GOD IS OUR SHEPHERD

Is 40:11 "He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; He gently leads those that have young."

Ezek 34:12 *As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. . . .*

Ps 23 Summary: ***The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.***

Because He's my Shepherd:

I lack NOTHING!

He gives me rest

He directs my path

He protects me from my enemies

He gives me victory

He gives security:

Ps 23:6—*"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

God, our Shepherd, is the source of all we need

Therefore, we're content

We rest in Him We're secure!

If Jesus is God, it shouldn't surprise us when He's called our Shepherd!

He's the One all those passages were talking about!

He IS God, our Shepherd!

In John 10, **Jesus tells us He's the Good Shepherd!**

v. 11 ***"I am the good shepherd.***

The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

v. 14 ***"I am the good shepherd;***

I know my sheep & my sheep know me

In Jn 10 Jesus affirms that He's **THE Shepherd—the good one!**

Everyone else who claims to be their shepherd is a thief & a robber.

He stands in contrast to false shepherds:

Thieves come to steal the sheep.

Hired hands are out to make a buck!

They're not concerned for the good of the sheep.

Contrast between the thief & the robber & the Good Shepherd flows out of what just happened in Jn 9.

John 9 illustrates the risk of following shepherds that don't care about the sheep,..who lead the flock to get something for themselves.

...who are in it for the money, or for power or prestige.

The blind man had been in their midst from birth.

Not only did they not cure him; their leaders didn't care about him.

They criticize him. His blindness shows that *somebody* sinned!

He's definitely a second-class citizen, born in sin.

When the blind man receives sight—both physical & *spiritual* sight, Instead of celebrating, they attack him & throw him out!

Jesus not only cares about him; He solves his problem—He heals him.

Then Jesus continues to care for him spiritually.
 Jesus came because He cares about the sheep.
 He came to die for His sheep,
 so that we might have access to God's sheepfold.
 Jesus *is* concerned for the good of the sheep.

He's the **GOOD SHEPHERD**

He leads us to good pastures.

He gives His life for the sheep.

JESUS IS THE SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP 10:1-6

The true Shepherd is recognized by the watchman

who protects the sheep **1-3a**

Contrast with the thief 1

"I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber.

The true shepherd 2-3a

The man who enters by the gate is the Shepherd of His sheep. ³The watchman opens the gate for Him, and the sheep listen to His voice.

The watchman recognizes the True Shepherd. **3a**

The sheep recognize His voice.

The true Shepherd calls His sheep by name 3b

He knows each one intimately!

The true Shepherd leads us along the path of life 3c-4a

"He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out. When He has brought out all His own, He goes on ahead of them,

His sheep follow Him 4b

"His sheep follow Him because they know His voice."

His sheep recognize His voice 4c-5

⁵But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice."

Jesus wants them to understand the difference between their "shepherds" and the GOOD Shepherd—God's Shepherd.

[*They don't get His point!*—so He goes back over it again **6-7a**

⁶"Jesus used this figure of speech, but they didn't understand what He was telling them.

⁷Therefore Jesus said again, . . ."

[He uses a different figure of speech to help them understand the truth:]

JESUS IS THE GATE FOR THE SHEEP 10:7b-10

He introduces a parable within a parable, to show that **Jesus is the way** by which sheep enter the sheepfold to safety under the Shepherd's care.

He is THE door (gate);

there's only one door!

The gate is the way sheep get into the Shepherd's fold—into His safe-house—His pen, where they're safe and secure; where they're protected by Him!

G. Campbell Morgan repeats a story told by O.T. scholar Sir George Adam Smith: He was traveling in the Middle East and struck up a conversation with a shepherd. The man showed him the fold where the sheep were led at night. It consisted of four walls with an opening for them to enter. Smith asked the shepherd: "That's where they go at night?" "Yes," said the shepherd, "and when they are in there, they are perfectly safe."

"But there's no door!"

"I am 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.**"

Jesus is telling us that He is the Door into the Shepherd's fold.

If you want to enter His fold, you must go through Jesus!

No better visual shows how desperately we need Jesus than the image of the Shepherd and His sheep.

Sheep are prone to wander into danger.

Sheep have no defensive tools to protect themselves from enemies.

The only way they can survive the night is to rest in the security of the Shepherd's pen.

Jesus is the Door into the Shepherd's pen.

The only way we can enjoy rest & security is to come to Jesus.

You can tell *what kind of people* are entering the fold by the way they get in.

Thieves and robbers don't go in through the door.

Contrast with the thieves and robbers 7b-8

*"I tell you the truth, **I am the gate for the sheep.**"⁸ All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.*

Jesus isn't attacking ALL previous prophets and teachers.

He's talking about their leaders who are trying to stop Him & turn the people against the Good Shepherd, so they can profit from the sheep.

They aren't true shepherds; they don't care about the sheep.

Their treatment of the blind man demonstrates what they're like.

Jesus is the way to eternal life 9a

⁹***I am the gate;** whoever enters through me will be saved.*

Jesus makes clear that whoever trusts Him will be saved.

The sheep all get in the same way.

All the sheep get into the Shepherd's pen through the door.

There's ONLY ONE DOOR by which sheep can get into the Shepherd's fold!

Jesus is THE WAY to enter the Shepherd's pen!

Jesus is the way to fellowship with God 9b

He will come in and go out, and find pasture.

We approach the Father *through Him*.

God provides luscious, green, satisfying pastures *through Him*.

BIG DEBATE ABOUT JESUS: TWO ALTERNATIVES 19-21

for them, there are only *two* possibilities!

[C.S. Lewis: Liar, lunatic, Lord]

Either He's CRAZY! 19-20

People have no problem coming up with excuses to reject Him!

At these words the Jews were again divided. ²⁰Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed & raving mad. Why listen to him?"

Or, He has come with supernatural power–i.e., **God sent Him 21**

But others said, "These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

CRITICAL QUESTION: HOW WILL WE RESPOND TO JESUS? 22-30

Jesus is the gate by which we enter into the Lord's sheepfold.

Through Him the Lord becomes our Shepherd.

He provides everything we need.

He is the source of life, of peace, of security

Have YOU trusted Him?

God has provided safety and security, shelter and salvation to those who enter through the gate for the sheep.