



## John 10:1-11

### I am the Door

The message of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone is a constant reminder of man's inability to save himself. It is a message that Jesus Christ alone is able to make atonement for our sins. It is the message that there is only one way of salvation. It is a reminder that there is a future judgment against sin for all who reject Christ as the only door to salvation. How you respond to Jesus Christ in this life determines where you will spend eternity.

The Gospel of John describes a man born blind who came to a saving relationship with the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. He not only received physical sight, but he received spiritual sight as well. As the Light of the Word, Jesus caused faith to sprout and grow in that man's life. But the spiritually blind religious leaders hated the Son of God, and tried to extinguish His light. The Pharisees excommunicated the man born blind, who was now healed, from the whole order of life of the Jews. When Jesus heard what they had done to the man Jesus asked him, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" (John 9:35). The little man who is now fighting for his life responded, "And who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you." His response was, "Lord, I believe." "And he worshiped Him" (v. 38).

The blind man was confronted with Jesus Christ, and Christ became the deciding and the turning point in the blind man's life. The man believed and worshiped Jesus Christ. From that moment the man entered into eternal life. For that man Jesus Christ was the doorway into eternal life.

The critical question to be asked and answered is: What is your relationship with Jesus Christ?

After the man worshipped Jesus, Christ said to those gathered around looking on, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see; and that those who see may become blind" (v. 39). The self-righteous Pharisees rejected the Light of the World. We could paraphrase Jesus words to the Pharisees, "You who claim to have spiritual sight apart from Me may be demonstrated to be the blind men that you really are." The blind leaders of the blind seized the moment and asked, "We are not blind, are we?" (v. 40). Jesus responded, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see'; your sin remains. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep" (9:41-10:2).

These religious leaders claimed spiritual knowledge, yet they were completely blind. They rejected the Son of God. They claimed to have sight, but acted like the blind. Their sin remained and they were condemned for all eternity. It never occurred to these religious leaders that they could be spiritually blind. Jesus did not tell them they were spiritually blind, but they came to that powerful conclusion and refused to act upon it, except in a hostile manner.

in a hostile manner.

I agree with many scholars that there is no break between these two chapters. Jesus tells an allegory to illustrate the blindness of the Pharisees as false shepherds, and of Himself as both the Door and the Good Shepherd.

As the Door, Jesus is the one and only way of entrance into salvation. As the Good Shepherd He is the one who cares for the sheep and provides for their salvation at the cost of His life. He lays down His life for the sheep. On the other hand, the two figures bring out strong contrasts. When Jesus considers Himself as the Door He brands those who do not use the Door as thieves and robbers. When He thinks of Himself as the Good Shepherd He contrasts Himself to the evil hireling shepherds. They are not interested in the welfare of the sheep, but the Good Shepherd gives His life for His sheep. The essential thing in this parable is the Good Shepherd lays down His life voluntarily for the well-being of His sheep. Jesus has the power to lay it down and take it up again.

## **SHEPHERDS AND SHEEPFOLDS**

The hostility of the Pharisees against the man born blind demonstrates that they are false shepherds. Jesus, on the other hand, is the Good Shepherd.

### ***The sovereign shepherd***

Shepherds are a power image in the Old Testament for leaders, both politically and spiritually. Here Jesus distinguishes His own ministry from the false shepherds of Israel (cf. Isa. 56:9-12; Ezek. 34; Jer. 23:1-4; 25:32-38; Zech. 11; Ps. 23; 80:1; Isa. 40:10ff). A false shepherd of Israel failed to perform his divine responsibilities. However, the prophets looked forward to the divinely sent Shepherd after God's own heart who is like the shepherd David. Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd (Ezekiel 34:23). John chapter ten powerfully declares the fulfillment of this great Messianic prophecy. Jesus introduces Himself as the Shepherd like unto David. Israel's true Shepherd is the Good Shepherd.

It is true the shepherd provided care for his flock, but he was also a powerful sovereign. He was absolute ruler over his sheep. He determined their coming and going into the fold, and where they would eat. He determined when they would be sheered, how they would be provided for, and even decided which ones would be sacrificed for the sin of the shepherd and his family.

John chapter ten sets forth Jesus as the true Ruler and Shepherd of His own people. Jesus is the ideal messianic ruler. He is the very opposite of the false shepherds. Here we see the nature and purpose of the Good Shepherd. He provides for His sheep even to the extent of laying down His own life for them. He alone has this power to choose the manner of His own death, when He will die and when He will rise again from the dead. No one else has that

He will die and when He will rise again from the dead. No one else has that kind of sovereignty.

### *The rightful shepherd*

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep (John 10:1-2). For certain, for certain, literally, Amen, Amen, is always used in the Gospel of John when Jesus is introducing a very important and power statement regarding our salvation. The word amen means to confirm, therefore it was used to give one's assent. It is the response of the congregation to a prayer which just been uttered in worship of the living God. Listen carefully because Jesus is going to make a significant statement that relates to your eternal life. It is a solemn, true and significant statement. It always implies something regarding our knowledge of Christ. It is in truth, the very truth. It is a most solemn truth that must be believed about Christ. Your response to that truth determines your eternal destiny.

Jesus uses the expression, "Amen, amen" like the prophets who declared, "As I live, says the Lord." He speaks with all the authority of the Kingdom of God.

During the time of Christ the sheep were herded in a walled enclosure, with briars and long thorny vines growing on top, mostly open to the sky, but providing protection from thieves and wolves at night. The actual word Jesus uses means a courtyard, thus a place where sheep are herded, a sheepfold. There was one door that was guarded by a door-keeper.

Jesus said if a man does not enter by the door, and climbs over the wall, he is up to no good. He is castigated as a thief and a robber. The word thief means a sneak-thief using deception to get to the sheep. He steals cunningly or by stealth. Robber is one who is eager to engage in violence to plunder the sheep. He steals by violence. However, the Good Shepherd enters by the door because He has a right to enter through that door. He is recognized by the door-keeper as the legitimate shepherd. Jesus pictures a large fold where several flocks find shelter. One door-keeper can thus look after a large number of sheep composed of several flocks. The Good Shepherd goes in through the door as opposed to the thieves who climb over the walls to rob and destroy. It is His right to enter because He owns the sheep and He has come to claim them. The Shepherd comes to call His sheep and they hear His voice and they follow Him out to pasture.

Keep in mind those who are gathered around listening to the allegory as Jesus tells it. Note the climax to the evil of the false shepherds, he is a thief and a robber (v. 1). That is what the Pharisees were doing to this blind man in chapter nine.

When the shepherd arrives in the morning, even before dawn, he calls out his sheep, who hear his voice and respond only to his call. The Palestinian shepherd had an individual call for each of his sheep. Thus, the individual sheep know their shepherd's voice and recognize his call to each of his own. They come to their shepherd and he leads them out to pasture. It is significant that the shepherd does not call sheep in general. He calls his own sheep with a distinct call that they recognize and respond to.

Many travelers to Palestine have described sheep and their shepherds going to the sheep pens to get their flocks. The sheep were all mixed together in a common pen for the night. When the morning came one of the shepherds stood some distance from the sheep and began to call his sheep. First one, then another, then four

shepherds stood some distance from the sheep and began to call his sheep. First one, then another, then four or five animals ran towards him. In a few minutes he had counted his whole flock and headed off to the luscious green fields with them.

When all the sheep are together the shepherd leads them out to their destination. The sheep hear his voice and follow their shepherd. They follow because they know their shepherd's voice.

The man born blind heard the voice and responded to the call of his shepherd, even while the Pharisees were climbing over the walls of religious activity to steal, plunder and destroy God's fold.

Jesus presented Himself to Judaism to call out a body that the Father had given Him. He will later call out sheep from other folds that there might be one great flock.

### ***Jesus knows His sheep***

To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers (vv. 3-5).

The following verse informs us that the blind religious leaders listening to the allegory still did not understand this spiritual truth in this allegory.

It is a great Biblical truth that those who respond and follow Jesus Christ will not lack any good thing they need for a right relationship with the Lord God. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. Not only does He provide us with all good things we need, but we will also dwell in the house of the Lord forever. We will enjoy eternal fellowship with Him.

Moreover, We are His people, the sheep of His pasture (Ps. 100:3). The Lord God, 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 (Isaiah 40:11). No wonder we have no need.

Our Good Shepherd is pictured walking before His sheep. He is always leading us into green pastures of spiritual refreshment. He knows where to take us and make us lie down and rest. He does not drive His sheep, He leads them. The sheep follow because they know their shepherd's voice. Why, they are accustomed to His voice. They are in the habit of following Him.

However, when a stranger appears on the scene and attempts to call the sheep out, they absolutely will not follow him. Jesus used a double negative (*ou me*) in the Greek. When the stranger comes whom they do not recognize they flee for their lives. They do not know the voice of the stranger and will not respond to his call.

### ***Have you heard His voice and responded to His call?***

The Lord Jesus Christ knows His sheep and they respond to Him. Jesus calls His sheep by name. Jesus comes to the door of the sheepfold and, knowing His sheep in advance, calls them and leads them out. All those are saved whom God has given Jesus.

Jesus saw a man named Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Jesus (Matt. 9:9). Here was a lone sheep of Christ. The Shepherd called him; he recognized His voice, and promptly *followed* Him.

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Jesus looked up into a tree and said, Z'accheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house ” (Luke 19:5). Here was one of the sheep, called *by name*. The response was prompt, for we are told, And he hurried and came down and received Him gladly (v. 6).

Jesus "found Philip." And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me" (Jn. 1:43). This shows us the Shepherd *seeking* His sheep before he called him.

John chapter 11 supplies us with a still more striking example of the drawing power of the Shepherd's voice as he called His own sheep. There we read of Lazarus, in the grave; but when Christ calls His sheep *by name* —Lazarus, come forth ”the sheep at once responded.

Jesus said His sheep *know* His voice. Mary Magdalene was in the garden and she found the stone rolled away, and the body of Jesus gone. Suddenly as she stood there weeping in the cemetery the risen Christ stands by her and she knew not that it was Jesus. He spoke to her, but the thought He was the gardener. Then she identified Him and said, R'abboni! Jesus said, Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren, and say to them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God (v. 17). No one believed her testimony that day until they saw Jesus themselves. A. W. Pink says, The moment He *called His sheep by name* she *knew* His voice! ”

Grace, marvelous, beautiful, saving grace! God doesn't call us any differently today than He has always called sinners to Himself. This is how He calls you. He knows you. He knows you with all your failures and sin. But He also knows what He is going to make of you through His saving grace. His goal is to make you like Himself. Do you hear His calling? Have you responded to His voice? Your eternal destiny is determined by how you respond to His calling.

Have you gone through the door?

## **JESUS IS THE DOOR**

Christ changed the image slightly as He clarified His powerful message. Jesus said, Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep (v. 7).

Jesus compels his listeners to hear and respond. For certain, for certain, ”truly, truly, ”amen, amen ” beckons us to be quiet, be alert, listen with rapt attention to His words. Those who hear His voice and respond follow Him through the door into eternal life.

### ***I am the Door of the sheep ”***

Go back to the sheepfold imagery once again. The sheep are with their shepherd inside the stone enclosure during the night. There was no door of any kind in these enclosures. In place of the door there was just an open space. At night after the shepherd called in his sheep and herded them within the fold, and then the shepherd himself lay down across the opening and entrance into the sheepfold. The shepherd was the door. No sheep could get out and no enemy could come in except over his body. In a very literal sense, the shepherd was the door. There was no way in or out except through him.

Jesus is alone the door. He, and He alone, is, and is always, the door. For every true under-shepherd Jesus is also the door to the sheep. For the sheep Jesus is the door to all the blessings of eternal life.

Jesus is saying, "I, and I alone, I and no other am the Door of the sheep. Jesus is the one and only gate into heaven. Jesus Christ is the sole way to God. There is no other way. In John 14:6, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If there is no Christ, there is no way to God. If He is not the Door, there is no entrance into God's presence. As the Door Jesus is the one way of entrance into salvation. As the Good Shepherd He is the One who cares for the sheep and provides for their salvation at the cost of His own life.

The image of the door conveys to the listener a certain exclusivity. There may conceivably be more ways than one of getting to a place. However, by the use of the door Jesus has already made it clear that there is but one door. There is only one exit into eternal life. It is through Jesus Christ. Once you have entered through the Door it is impossible to be tolerant of the various false ways which can lead only to eternal condemnation in hell.

How can Jesus make such claims as to be the only door to salvation and eternal life? What makes Him so unique? How can He make such a statement of sovereign grace?

### *I am "*

Jesus can make such remarkable claims because He is the "I AM" (v. 7). "I am the door of the sheep. " Everything He said makes good sense since He is who He said He is and He is who He claimed to be. In this great awesome statement Jesus claimed to be God. We deserve to die for our own sins, but the perfect Son of God was without sin. He was the holy and righteous God who came to save His people from their sins. He came and died as our substitute. By means of His death for our sins and His resurrection He literally became the Door or Gate by which sinful people can come into the presence of God. He is the "new and living way" (Heb. 10:20), and it is "through Him we . . . have access . . . to the Father" (Eph. 2:18).

There is only one Door and Christ Himself is that Door! And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

### *Your eternal destiny*

All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; if anyone enters through 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 (vv. 8-11).

The individual who puts his trust in Jesus Christ is made alive spiritually. He receives life, a spiritual life that begins the moment he puts his faith in Christ, and that new life in Christ continues throughout eternity. It is the kind of life Jesus Christ has. It is a contented life, a life of peace with God, knowing all of your sins have been forgiven, and security that you will be with God all your life, even when you die physically.

"I am the door, if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (v. 9). A second time Jesus says He is the door. "By me or through Me" are in the emphatic position in the original. It is Jesus Christ and no other who enables men to enter salvation. There is a certain exclusiveness about "the door." The politically correct world does not like those words of Jesus. If there is one door then men must enter by it or stay outside. They cannot demand another door. He makes it clear that salvation was the purpose of Jesus' coming (3:16-17; 5:34; 12:47). Salvation is the comprehensive term for the whole process whereby men are delivered from the consequences of their sin and brought into an eternal saving

process whereby men are delivered from the consequences of their sin and brought into an eternal saving relationship with God. John uses the term *saved* much the same way he does for a person having eternal life. ”

Moreover, it is a life that is filled with the confidence that your Shepherd is equal to every emergency and supplies all your genuine needs according to the riches in glory in Jesus Christ. Such peace comes only through the hands of the Good Shepherd.

### ***Abundant life today***

The abundant life Jesus gives is one that overflows. I came that they may keep on having life, and may keep on having it abundantly. The word abundant means to have a surplus, superabundance, till it overflows. The Greek word translated abundant (*perissos*) is a mathematical word meaning a surplus. Jesus had a surplus of leftovers after He fed the 5,000. These 12 baskets of leftovers were in abundance. Our Shepherd always gives in abundance. The English word abundance comes from Latin meaning the rise in waves or to overflow. It is the picture of unceasing rise of waves upon seashore, with waves rising again and again in the incoming tide. It is also the picture of increasing abundance like that, which causes the river to overflow its banks as a result of increasing rains.

The life Jesus offers us for each day is a life that overflows from a surplus of confidence that God is equal to every emergency and does supply all our genuine needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:13, 19; Matt. 6:33). The abundant life is the life of the sheep who finds himself in the hands of the Good Shepherd.

The Good Shepherd's banks are always overflowing with waters of abundance. His grace is always more than enough for all our needs. Nothing can suppress the unending all sufficiency of His provision for His sheep. Such is the God we serve. "My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

Before we can know the life of abundance, we must know the life itself as it comes to us in Christ. We must first be made alive through faith in Christ. Jesus said, I have come that they may have life. That life is found by going through the Door. Christ is the Door to eternal life. Only after we go through the Door and receive His life can we have His kind of life in abundance. ”

Are you aware that you have this life in Christ? How do you live the abundant life the Shepherd gives to all who go through His Door? We reckon upon the grand provisions of Christ Himself. He leads us into the fullness of this new life in Christ. He always gives His very best, and He gives it in abundance. It is a walk of faith. He leads us in and out to find good pasture. His sheep are well fed and are provided with all good things now and will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. The sheep who follow the Good Shepherd will not lack any good thing.

The awesome truth of Christianity is that Jesus Christ crucified declares that man is incapable of saving himself. It declares the supremacy that Jesus alone is able to make atonement for our sins and because of that fact He is the only way of salvation. Because of personal sin and failure to live up to God's expectation of man, every person will face a future judgment against sin. Those who have come through the door of Jesus Christ to eternal life will be saved for all eternity and enjoy fellowship with him. To all who reject Him it is eternal separation from God in a place called hell.

## **SOME ABIDING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS**

The cross of Christ is the turning point in life and what you do at that point determines where you spend eternity. Will you pass through the Door into eternal life? Those who believe on Jesus Christ enter into eternal life and enjoy God's presence for all eternity. Those who reject Him and refuse to pass through His Door go into eternal separation from him forever in hell.

Your response to Jesus Christ as the Door determines your eternal destiny. Will you walk through that door by faith today and receive His gift of eternal life?

### ***The Lord Jesus Christ knows His sheep and they follow Him.***

In chapter seventeen, Jesus said that He knows His sheep because they have been given to Him by the Father (17:29).

But he not only knows us individually, He knows all about us. He knows that we are sinners and went ahead and died for us on the cross. For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us " (Romans 5:6-8).

B. F. Westcott candidly writes: "nothing in His flock is hidden from Him: their weaknesses, their failures, their temptations, their sins, the good which they have neglected when it was within reach, the evil which they have pursued when it lay afar. All is open before His eyes. He knows them . . . and He loves them still. "

### ***The good Shepherd died for His sheep.***

"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. . . I lay down My life for the sheep. . . For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father (vv. 11, 15, 17-18). The shepherd provides substitutionary atonement for His sheep. He died on behalf of or instead of sinners.

### ***There is only one door.***

There are not many ways to God. There is only one Door. I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture (v. 9).

To enter through the door is the same thing as to eat Jesus, drink Jesus, or to come to Jesus. You must believe on Christ or trust in Him personally to be saved. We are not trusting in things to be saved. The Door is a person, the Lord Jesus Christ. He becomes ours through believing on Him. The only thing necessary is to believe or trust in Jesus Christ. Have you believed or trusted in Him for everlasting life?

It helps us to imagine that the cross has a door in it. Jesus invites us to go through it. Above the door is written the great invitation to all: "Whosoever will, may come." Every sinner stands there before the door. When you enter in by faith you discover that all of your sins are forgiven and you are safe within His fold. Rejoicing with all the saints in heaven you then turn around and see written on the backside of the cross those wonderful words of grace, "Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world." Oh to grace, how great a debtor!

### ***You may enter the door right now***



*You may enter the door right now*

The man born blind had nothing; he was a beggar. He was noting; people pushed him out of the synagogue. But this is the very man Jesus called and he heard His voice and responded. The man whom everyone despised was the man Jesus saved. He passed through the door to eternal life. There is no greater security than this because the sheep are in the care of the Good Shepherd.

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Title: John 10:1-11 "I am the Door"

Series: The I AM sayings of Jesus

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