

The following is a rough transcript, not in its final form and may be updated.

The Door John 10:7-10

Intro: Jesus is painting a word picture in ch10; using the imagery of sheep husbandry to reveal the heart of His ministry to the people of Israel and contrasting it with the supposed ministry of the religious leaders of His day. In the 1st section (v1-5), Jesus implies that He is the legitimate Shepherd of all those in Israel that the Father has given to Him and refers to the current religious authorities of Judaism as thieves and robbers or illegitimate impostors. The image of the sheepfold He uses in this passage refers to a pen or enclosure set up in a city or village that securely houses several flocks overnight, watched over by a porter. The legitimate Shepherd is evidenced by the fact that He knows His sheep, He calls His own sheep by name and He leads them out of Judaism. It's both a picture of the work of Jesus among His sheep and the instructions that those who seek to serve among His sheep should focus on.

This story of the Good Shepherd is relatively familiar to us and generally understood by most believers because it's been told and taught so many times. But when this story was first given, it wasn't understood at all (6). So, to further develop the image, Jesus directly applies this saying to Himself. There are 2 ways of viewing Him in the rest of the passage: as the door and as the Good Shepherd. Jesus also changes the imagery slightly. In the previous section, the sheep pen was in the city. It was a fairly large, substantial pen open to the public. This next type of pen Jesus refers to was not public or in the villages. It was found out in the countryside; a place where shepherds would keep their flocks in good weather. It was really nothing more than a circle of rocks piled into a wall with a small opening, a gate, through which the shepherd would drive his sheep at sundown. There was no gate to close, just an opening. Thus, the shepherd would sleep there, becoming the gate himself; keeping the sheep in the pen and predators out!

7-9- Here, Jesus is the door. The imagery is also slightly different in that He speaks of leading His flock in rather than of leading them out. Here, He's talking about the church itself rather than calling the church out of Judaism as we saw in the previous section. Thus, Jesus is now dealing with a

particular body of people who've been committed to His care and He's revealing the type of intimate and critical relationship He has with them.

What does this image teach us about Christianity? What does the door teach us about Jesus and His relation to the church? The most obvious thing about this image is the fact that there is only one door. This is most evident from the type of the sheep pen Jesus is referring to: if it had more than one gate, it would have been useless. Of course, this truth is backed up by many of Jesus' other sayings: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" in [14:6](#) being just one of the many.

This is the crucial truth that separates Christianity from all other religions. In other religions, it makes no difference who the founder was, if they even had one. They're all just belief systems made up of various claims to spiritual truth and methods, which continue to exist without the founder. This is the nature of the world's religions. But, Christianity is different. Jesus didn't just claim to know the truth; He said He is the truth. He didn't just show the way to God; He is the way. So, in Christianity, if there's no Jesus, there's no way to God, no truth about God, and no life with God.

How could Jesus make such claims? If He were just a man, they'd be ridiculous. But, if He is who He says He is and if He did what He said He would do, they make perfect sense. Jesus claimed to be God Who came to earth to die for our sin. We deserve to die for our own sin, both physically and spiritually. We deserve to be separated from God. But Jesus died in our place. He who was sinless accepted the guilt of our sin and died for us. No one else could do it, but He could do it and He did. He literally became the door by which sinful people can now approach the Father. The author of [Hebrews](#) called Him "a new and living way" ([10:20](#)). Paul further explains this glorious truth in [Eph 2:18](#) by saying that, "through Him we . . . have access . . . to the Father."

Of course, this claim of Jesus to be the door was not without controversy. You might say it was a contested claim in His day – contested by those He refers to as thieves and robbers. This is a direct reference to the Jewish religious leaders of the day. This is not a slight on the prophets or patriarchs of the OT, evidenced by the fact that they "are" thieves and robbers not "were". The Jewish hierarchy was not interested in the well-being of the

sheep under their care; they were only interested in their own advantage. The Sadducees were known to make quite a lot of money off the temple worship while both the Pharisees and the scribes are denounced by Jesus for their covetousness.

There are 2 different kinds of impostors; Jesus uses 2 different words to describe them. 1) kleptes – one who steals with cunning or by stealth. It's the Greek word we get kleptomaniac from. 2) leistes – one who steals by violence. There's no English equivalent to this word but just imagine that the first word refers to someone who carries off retail merchandise under their coat and the second refers to someone who might use guns to rob a bank.

Both types of people are prominent in religious circles. The first type uses cunning just as Satan did in his approach to Eve in Eden, "Has God...said?" ([Gen 3:1](#)). These are all those who raise doubts about the truth in the minds of others. People who have acquired religious authority (unbelieving ministers, teachers and theologians) who, by their questions; turn the minds of their hearers away from Jesus and instead cause them to rely on the supposed wisdom of the teacher. Paul describes them as "traitors (treacherous), headstrong (rash), haughty (conceited), lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power." His advice, "Have nothing to do with them" ([2 Tim 3:4-5](#)). The other type is violent, someone who thrusts themselves into a place of authority in the church and demands that others follow him. The Bible refers to this ecclesiastical tyranny as the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which God hates ([Rev 2:15](#)).

It's not difficult to identify the religious robbers of our day. One only has to consider the likes of Jim Jones and David Koresh and others of the same mentality. But not all ministries of robbers end in a massacre. Some continue on in the shadows, lording over their flock; directing every aspect of the lives of their people for their own benefit. Usually, they look like normal churches full of normal people led by normal ministers. But, when you see the level of control that is wielded by the leaders – the nature of their ministry becomes evident. The kleptes are even more difficult to spot. They look good, smell good, speak well and are very entertaining but if you listen long enough, you'll discover that the focus of their ministry is – them! Oh, they talk about the Bible and refer to Jesus quite a bit but they never really teach from the Bible. They just pull out some parts that fit the latest

religious fad to keep the folks entertained. When it comes down to brass tacks, the Bible is irrelevant; what they say and teach is all that matters.

The next thing we notice is that, although there is only one door, anyone can enter it. God's no respecter of persons so: anyone, regardless of who they are, where they've come from or what they've done can enter through the door! In other words, the call of God to salvation is not restricted by anything we can think of. It's not restricted by race, gender, education, social standing, wealth, achievement, good deeds or bad deeds or anything else. If you find that hard to believe, just consider the state of the man born blind that Jesus had just healed in the previous chapter and for whose sake this teaching is being given. He had nothing; he was a beggar. He was nothing; no one would have paid attention to him for more than a moment, and then normally only to push him out of the way. Yet this man, who was despised by every one else, was *saved* by Jesus. If this beggar could enter in, then any one can.

Finally, the most important thing this passage teaches us is that you must enter in. In this verse, to enter by the door is the same as to eat of Jesus, drink of Jesus or to come to Jesus, all of which we've looked at and discussed before. It means to believe on Him or trust Him for salvation and do this personally. If you will, there are 3 great benefits promised to those who enter God's flock through Jesus Christ.

First, Jesus says that anyone who enters in will be saved. This is not the limited promise that we often make it out to be; meaning, it's not just future, as if Jesus is simply offering "pie in the sky in the sweet by and by." Salvation is partly in the future but it also deals with our past and present. It affects who we are and what happens to us from beginning to end, especially if considered in relation to sin's penalty, power, and presence. By entering in through Christ we immediately escape sin's penalty, we need never fear that our sins will ever rise up against us. This is justification. Also, we enter into a life in which we're increasingly delivered from sin's power. The Bible calls this sanctification. Finally, we look forward to a day when even the presence of sin will be gone and our salvation will be perfected. The Bible calls this glorification and what a day that will be!

Second, Jesus promises that anyone who enters in will be safe. That's the point of His reference to going in and out. This is in no way a reference to

entering and leaving the church or salvation. To be able to go in and out simply means security. In Christ's day when a man could go in or out without fear it meant that his country was at peace and that the ruler had the affairs of the nation under control. When danger threatened, the people were shut up in the cities under siege. Thus, Jesus promises safety for those who trust in Him.

Third, He also promised that they would be satisfied because they would be able to go in and out and find pasture. Palestine is a barren land for the most part, and good pasture was not easy to find. Thus, to be assured of good pasture was a wonderful thing. It spoke of prosperity and contentment, of health and happiness. It's what David was talking about in the 23rd Ps when he said "He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul" (Ps 23:2-3). It's what Paul wrote about to the Philippians in 4:19. This doesn't speak of all our desires. We often desire things that are wrong or not good for us. This speaks only of our needs, but even that is a great promise. It's the promise that the one who enters in by Christ will not lack any good thing.

10- A famous verse, one that's become very popular in modern religious circles. Primarily, this verse serves as a contrast between the care of the legitimate shepherd and that of the thieves and robbers. The interest of the thief is entirely selfish. He steals or kills for food and will even destroy the sheep if benefits himself. The sheep are merely collateral damage to feed his ego. He only comes to harm the flock and shows no interest in its welfare. By contrast, Jesus came solely for the benefit of the sheep. He came that they may have life and not just life, but a more abundant life. There is nothing cramping or restricting about life for those who enter into His fold.

But, this stark contrast is not what makes this verse so famous. It's the promise of the abundant life. Many a book has been sold explaining this promise. Many an offering has been received based on this promise. Many a soul has been misled pursuing this promise. What is Jesus actually promising here? What is the full or abundant life?

It's not necessarily a promise of long life nor is it, as some suggest, a promise of a life free from sorrow or sickness either. True, God does spare us many sorrows we might otherwise have and often preserves us from

sickness but that's not implied by Jesus here. The abundant life the Bible speaks of it is, above all, the contented life, the life in which contentment comes from the confidence that God is equal to every emergency and really does supply all our genuine needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. The contented life is the life of the sheep who finds himself in the hands of a good shepherd. There may be dangers; in fact, there will be dangers. There may be storms at times, even drought and famine. Still, in the hands of a good shepherd the sheep is content and life is bountiful.

Contentment means satisfaction, which means to have enough. Our English abundance comes from 2 Latin words which mean to rise in waves or to overflow. 1's a picture of the unceasing rise of waves on the shore. The other is of a flood much like a river overflowing its banks. The abundant life is one in which we're content in the knowing that God's grace is more than sufficient for our needs; that nothing can suppress it and His favor toward us is unending.

Of course, before one can know the abundant life, they must first know life. They must first be made alive through faith in Jesus Christ. Many an individual today who is pursuing the brand of abundant life that's been made popular by the word of faith movement have yet to experience spiritual true life in Christ; meaning they'll miss out on both!

What does the abundant life look like? We get a clear picture of it in the 23rd Psalm, which is above all the psalm of the contented life. Let's look at it quickly. **Ps 23:1** - Not to be in want is to be content; this state can exist only when the sheep is in the care of a good shepherd. In the psalm, David says he's content in the Lord in 5 areas.

1) He doesn't lack rest (**2-3a**). Sheep don't lie down easily. "It is almost impossible for them to be made to lie down unless 4 requirements are met. Owing to their timidity they refuse to lie down unless they are free of all fear. Because of the social behavior within a flock, sheep will not lie down unless they are free from friction with others of their kind. If tormented by flies or parasites, sheep will not lie down. . . . Lastly, sheep will not lie down as long as they feel in need of finding food. They must be free from hunger." Freedom from fear, tension, aggravation, and hunger! These are the 4 necessities. The important thing to note is it's only the shepherd who can provide these.

This psalm begins with the sheep at rest which means the sheep have found their shepherd to be a good shepherd; one who's able to meet their physical needs and provide them with a release from anxiety. This requirement must be met before any of the other advantages of the contented life can be realized. What are they?

2) He doesn't lack guidance (2b; 3b He leads me). Sheep are pretty stupid, probably more so than any other animal on earth (except an Irish setter). They can be in the best possible pasture and still they will wander off or worse, if not moved, they will stay in one spot and destroy all the edible plant life. No other class of livestock requires more careful handling and more detailed directions than do sheep. Therefore, a shepherd who is able to give good guidance is essential for their welfare.

3) He doesn't lack safety (4). This speaks of the shepherd's ability to protect the sheep in moments of danger. The question isn't whether we will have dark valleys to go through (we will) but rather; how will we react to them? With Jesus, we can face them calmly. With the Holy Spirit to guide us, we can face them without fear.

4) He doesn't lack for provision (5). In biblical imagery, oil and wine speak of joy and prosperity. David knew of God's great love and provision personally. His face shone and his heart was made merry because of it. There are far too many scowling faces and gloomy hearts today but that's not what God intends for His children. If we will but allow Him to lead us, we'll find our table prepared, our heads anointed with oil and our cups overflowing with joy!

5) He doesn't lack for a heavenly home (6). David was blessed in this life but it's not only in this life that he will know God's goodness; he will know it forever! This, along with [John 14:2-3](#) and other passages, teaches that if you enter into God's flock through faith in Jesus Christ, you will also dwell in the house of the Lord forever. The blessings of this life and heaven too!

Let us never forget that all of this was achieved for us by One who Himself became a lamb in order to die for us so that we might be able to enter into the fullness of such a great salvation. 😊