

Sermon Series: Book of John

Sermon title: I AM the door. I AM the good shepherd.

Scripture reading: John 10:1-11

Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church

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Introduction:

It's Christmas time already. It's hard to believe. In cities and countries all over the world, (many of whom are not predominately Christian) decorations and displays are going up everywhere and music is playing over speakers...supposedly celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. Of course, many don't know that Christmas is even about Jesus.

Many modern and multi-ethnic societies seem to be ok with Christmas as long as it's not intolerant; as long as it's more general; as long as Jesus isn't talked about too much; as long as Jesus is 'one of many' doors and not exclusive.

But, if you start saying Jesus is the only door to heaven and you'll have conflict. Start saying that all other religions are false and you'll make people mad.

Start saying that Mohammed, Buddha, Swami Vivekananda, The Dalai Lama, Joseph Smith and Baha'ullah, are false teachers and you may lose your life.

Well, Jesus made some pretty startling claims about himself. These claims made people mad then and if you and I decide to say what the Bible says, they may say we are insane.

We've looked at some of these claims in 7 "I AM" statements that Jesus said.

- *"I am the bread of life."*
- *"I am the light of the world."*

Today we will handle two of them that go together in John chapter 10.

I am the door.

I am the good shepherd.

Let's pray.

I. Illustration #1- Thieves, Robbers and Strangers.

-v.1-6

In order to understand this first illustration or allegory, we must understand the context and the context is chapter 9.

A Jewish man was born blind. Jesus comes up to the man and puts mud on his eyes and tells him to go wash in the pool of Siloam and the man is healed. The Pharisees, *the shepherds of Israel*, find out about it. They refuse to believe that Jesus healed the man. And they treat the blind man so badly. They say abusive things to him and throw him out of the synagogue, literally and figuratively.

So, it's within this context that we need to read John 10.

1 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. **2** But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. **3** To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. **4** When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. **5** A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." **6** This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So, the main point here is Jesus is saying that some people are thieves and robbers. Who does he mean?

The thieves and robbers are the Pharisees/religious leaders. They think they are the shepherds and Jesus is the robber. They're guarding the door and see Jesus as a thief....but It's the reverse!

They are the thieves and robbers and strangers.

The sheepfold here is Israel.

The true shepherd of Israel is Jesus.

He is the one who is calling his own sheep out of the sheepfold or enclosure and the Gatekeeper opens for him only. He is the Messiah.

Who is the Gatekeeper here?

I think it's God the Father.

They don't understand this illustration at all.

So, Jesus says....."Ok. Let's try another angle here."

II. Illustration #2- I AM the door.

-v.7-10

7 So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **I am the door** of the sheep. **8** All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. **9** I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

So, here we have another contrast between two things; A door (vs) thieves and robbers.

Well, that doesn't make much sense. A door vs. a wall makes more sense or a shepherd vs thieves and robbers.

Why a door....an entry way....a gate?

Well, the shepherd is the door!

You see, these sheepfolds or sheep pens were made of rock, like ones you can see all over Tibet.

The terrain is not conducive to building them out of wood, like we may see in the UK or USA or Australia. They didn't have wooden doors.

The shepherd was the door.

He would lay or sit in the doorway and fill the doorway so that no sheep could get out and that no robber or thief could get in. One way in and one way out; through the shepherd or the door.

Who is Jesus referring to when he says, "[All who came before me are thieves and robbers](#)"?

He could mean both all who claimed to be the Messiah or all others who claim to be the door which one must go through to find life. In a way the Pharisees claimed this. It was "their way or the highway", meaning that they believed you must do as they say or you are wrong.

Here, in this second illustration, the sheep are all the redeemed who will believe in Christ.

Jesus is the door and the shepherd who provides salvation, protection and abundant life for his sheep, which is what he means when he says they will, 'go in and out and find pasture.'

One way in and one way out! Through Jesus, the door and Jesus the shepherd.

The door is the shepherd.

In verse 10, where we usually think this means the devil, I hope that you see that in context he isn't talking about the devil here. Of course, this would be true of the devil but he's talking in general about what a thief does and specifically he is referring to the Jewish religious leaders.

They've just treated the blind man harshly.

They're wanting to kill Jesus and Lazarus later.

(See 10:31, 11:53, 12:10)

They want to kill Jesus because he is not only denouncing them...by saying they are thieves and robbers...but he is saying that HE is the door and the shepherd of Israel. Not 'a' door, but 'the' door.

III. Illustration #3- I AM the good shepherd.

Jesus is going to now expound on this shepherd imagery and he's going to explain what he will do that makes him a good shepherd.

11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. **12** He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. **13** He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. **14 I am the good shepherd.** I know my own and my own know me, **15** just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. **16** And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. **17** For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. **18** No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

19 There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. **20** Many of them said, "He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?"

21 Others said, "These are not the words of one who is

oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

Here in this 3rd illustration, we see another contrast and comparison. Between what?

A good shepherd vs a hired hand.

In order to understand this better we need to turn to an Old Testament passage in **Ezekiel 34**. Listen to what God says in this passage and then compare it with what we are reading here.

The word of the Lord came to me: **2** "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord God: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? **3** You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. **4** The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. **5** So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered; **6** they wandered over all the

mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.

11 I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.

15 I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God.

22 I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep.

23 And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. **24** And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the Lord; I have spoken.

You see, the Pharisees think they are the shepherds of Israel but they are actually thieves...stealing people's souls. They are robbers.....robbing people of joy and abundant life. They are hired hands who care nothing about the sheep.

Jesus on the other hand....is the Good Shepherd. He is God and they are his sheep. He owns them. He cares about them.

And he will demonstrate just how much he cares by laying down his life for the sheep- and here the sheep are the redeemed from all nations...that's why he says he has other sheep of this fold that he must bring in... meaning the Gentiles...us!

Jesus, the good shepherd, did not die by accident. **17** For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. **18** No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again.

Why did he lay his life down? Why did he come to earth? Why did he die on the cross?

The answer is in verse 9.

9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. **10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Big idea:

There is only one door to abundant eternal life; through Jesus Christ the good shepherd, who gave his life to save his sheep.

III. Application

1. The exclusivity of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is 'the door' not 'a' door.

Jesus is 'the shepherd' not 'a' shepherd.

There is no other. Only one shepherd for people.

Do you honestly believe this?

There is no other way!

Are you prepared to tell THIS message to others this Christmas?

So, often we define the gospel as, "I am a Christian".

To tell someone that you believe in Jesus is not telling them the gospel. The gospel is telling people that Jesus is the only door and that they **MUST** enter through him or they won't enter.

The gospel is telling people that Jesus is the only shepherd available to them. He's not one of many options but the only option.

We need the courage of our shepherd.

In an age of religious tolerance, are you and I prepared to speak the truth. People will not like it. They may respond to you like they did to Jesus in 10:21!

Many will say we are insane, intolerant, narrow-minded bigots.

2. Jesus's sheep follow Jesus.

Let's not talk about 'believing' but following.

I come from a country where everyone says they *believe* in Jesus but many aren't following Jesus.

Whose voice are you listening to?

Whose footsteps are you walking in?

Whose food are you eating?

Whose water are you drinking?

Don't be deceived! If you say you believe in Jesus but don't follow him....be careful...you may be following an imposter; a look-alike. That's not the real Jesus.

The real Jesus said in verse 27, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."