

Theme: Jesus is the gate for the sheep - the only access to God's flock, and the One through whom we experience abundant life.

I. Intro - Sheep and Shepherds

- A. Some biblical metaphors are harder for us to grasp
- B. We do not have much experience with sheep
- C. The way we handle livestock in West is very different
- D. We have fences, few predators, don't stay with them
- E. Photo of sheep in village in Egypt
- F. What is Jesus teaching in the gate & shepherd sayings?

II. The General Background for I AM the Gate

- A. A more complex section for this I AM saying
 - 1. Jesus speaks in a bit of a riddle (v6)
Jesus used this **figure of speech**, but they did not understand what he was telling them. John 10:6
 - a. Similar to a parable or a proverb
 - b. This kind of saying requires some careful reflection
 - 2. Two metaphors tied together - gate & shepherd
I am the gate.... ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. John 10:9, 11
 - a. These run from John 10:1-18
 - b. They are related but teach distinct points too
 - c. Jesus' role/part shifts in the metaphors
 - 3. I will unpack over two weeks - one for each saying
- B. The flock of God and shepherds in the Old Testament

- 1. This was a common metaphor in the Old Testament
- 2. The most famous example - Psalm 23
The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
² He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, ³ he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. ⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
Psalms 23:1-4
 - a. An extended, detailed use of this metaphor
 - b. Individual believer is the sheep, God the Shepherd
- 3. Another key one for this saying
The word of the Lord came to me: ² "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock?' ³ You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock.
⁴ You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. ⁵ So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals. ⁶ My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them. Ezekiel 34:1-6
 - a. An extended, detailed use of this metaphor
 - b. Whole nation is the flock, leaders are the shepherds

4. Jesus is picking up on this rich background of the flock of God, and the importance of good shepherds to care for and protect the flock
5. Jesus also adds this metaphor of the gate for the sheep which was not usually part of the metaphor in the OT. What does he mean by this specific metaphor?

III. I AM the Gate for the Sheep

- A. The gate is how one becomes part of the flock of God
Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep... ⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. John 10:7, 9
 1. The gate for the sheep - the wall is to keep out others, but the gate is so the sheep can get into the sheepfold
 2. Picture of sheepfold and gate from Israel
 3. Jesus is claiming to be the way for one to come into the fold and be part of the flock of God
 4. He is the only access to salvation/eternal life (v9)
 5. A claim to fulfill Messianic prophecy of the gate
This is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous may enter. Psalms 118:20
 - a. Jesus is claiming to be this gate
 - b. God's people (the righteous) may only come in through Jesus
 - c. The entire section is a Messianic prophecy

This is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous may enter. ²¹ I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation. ²² The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; ²³ the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. ²⁴ This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

²⁵ O Lord, save us; O Lord, grant us success. ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless you. ²⁷ The Lord is God, and he has made his light shine upon us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar. Psalms 118:20–27

1. Jesus is claiming to be the fulfillment of all of this!
2. This is why the Pharisees become upset on Palm Sunday - when the people with their branches cry out these things it is a clear statement that Jesus is the Messiah, the only gate to God
6. This is not popular today - Jesus can't be the ONLY way
7. This will be developed more on John 14:6 I AM saying
- B. The gate is the only access for leaders to shepherd the flock of God
 1. Those who try to access the flock apart from the gate are thieves, not shepherds
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. ² The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. John 10:1–2
 - a. There are those who want to lead the flock, but they have not come through the gate
 - b. Jesus stresses that these people are not shepherds - they are thieves and robbers

- c. These thieves come to steal and destroy the flock

Therefore Jesus said again, "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. ⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:7–10

- d. Jesus is specifically speaking of the Pharisees in v8, who had rejected Him and His followers, and even put the blind man who had been healed out of the synagogue for testifying of Jesus (see John 9)
- e. But this is an ever present problem - 'religious' leaders who do not know Jesus, and have crawled into the flock over the wall instead of coming through Jesus
- f. Such leaders will steal, kill, and destroy faith, truth, hope, love, and life from the flock of God if they are not stopped
- g. Be VERY CAREFUL to whom you entrust the care of your soul - there are many hirelings and thieves trying to gain access to the flock of God - but they will only strip you bare, not care for you

C. The gate provides passage to a life of true blessing

I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:9–10

1. A sheep needs to go in and out of the pen to get food and water, but to come back in to be safe
2. Jesus the gate lets us go out and in to bless us, for

He came that we might have full, abundant life

3. Primarily eternal life - but includes blessed life now
4. "come in and go out, pasture" - a well cared for flock
5. Develop this more next week - the Good Shepherd

IV. Applying the Word of Jesus the Great I AM

A. Have you come through Jesus the Gate for the Sheep?

1. Jesus is the only way into the flock of God
2. Because this is so counter cultural, it must be repeatedly taught and stressed
3. Things that do not make us part of God's flock
 - a. Being born - everyone is not part of the flock
 - b. A good, moral life - good works don't remove sin or change us from a goat to a sheep!
 - c. Coming to church, knowing Christian terms - the Pharisees were very religious - and were thieves!
 - d. Being born to Christian parents - their faith does not make you part of God's flock
 - e. Having faith - it is not enough to be a "person of faith" - Who you believe in makes all the difference

4. Jesus is the Gate - the only access to God

5. Have you come through Jesus the Gate?

B. Are you careful to not let thieves steal, kill and destroy your soul?

1. There is so much false teaching and heresy today

2. Are you careful about who you listen to?
3. Just because a person is a pastor does not mean they are speaking truth!
4. Some church leaders today flatly deny Jesus as the only way, and deny God's Word - do not let them in!
5. Some will speak to our itching ears - but it must be checked against the Word of God, not our carnal desires!
6. Some will dazzle with "new revelations" - but do not be deceived! Go to God's Word and check everything out by that!
7. There will always be false prophets, thieves - do not give them access to your heart and mind!

C. Closing prayer - for the lost and for the flock

Jesus Is the Gate for the Sheep

John 10:1-10
 February 28, 2016
 Prayer
 Psalm 128:5-6

Teaching keywords: name of God; salvation and deliverance; blessing; false teaching and heresy; Lent

May the Lord your Shepherd bless you all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of God's flock, ⁶ and may you live to see your children's children. Peace be upon the flock of God.
 Psalms 128:5-6

"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. ² The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. ³ The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice."

⁶Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

⁷Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:1-10