

**03082020 Jesus In His Own Words... Of the many images painted in his own words, the most descriptive are of his relationship to us..and one statement stands out... it is Jesus referring to himself as the Good shepherd! Why? as a good shepherd, Jesus is concerned with the welfare and the care of His sheep personally and corporately.... it is a primary concern**

**Now To the Jewish mind, a “shepherd” was any kind of leader, spiritual or political. In fact the religious leaders considered themselves the shepherds of the Israelites... People looked on the king and prophets as shepherds. Israel was privileged to be “the flock of the Lord” (Ps. 100:3). Shepherds and the flock of God's kids are spoken of in Isaiah Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah and other places.**

**But there was a problem with the shepherds of God's flock the Israelites...**

*Ezekiel 34:1 Then this message came to me from the LORD:<sup>2</sup> “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds, the leaders of Israel. Give them this message from the Sovereign LORD: What sorrow awaits you shepherds who feed yourselves instead of your flocks. Shouldn't shepherds feed their sheep?<sup>3</sup> You drink the milk, wear the wool, and butcher the best animals, but you let your flocks starve.<sup>4</sup> You have not taken care of the weak. You have not tended the sick or bound up the injured. You have not gone looking for those who have wandered away and are lost. Instead, you have ruled them with harshness and cruelty.<sup>5</sup> So my sheep have been scattered without a shepherd, and they are easy prey for any wild animal.<sup>6</sup> They have wandered through all the mountains and all the hills, across the face of the earth, yet no one has gone to search for them.<sup>7</sup> “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:<sup>8</sup> As surely as I live, says the Sovereign LORD, you abandoned my flock and left them to be attacked by every wild animal. And though you were my shepherds, you didn't search for my sheep when they were lost. You took care of yourselves and left the sheep to starve.*

- **and it was prophesied that God would remedy this situation...and send himself to shepherd the flock of God...**

*Ezek 34:<sup>9</sup> Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD.<sup>10</sup> This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I now consider these shepherds my enemies, and I will hold them responsible for what has happened to my flock. I will take away their right to feed the flock, and I will stop them from feeding themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths; the sheep will no longer be their prey. <sup>11</sup> “For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search and find my sheep. <sup>12</sup> I will be like a shepherd looking for his scattered flock. I will find my sheep and rescue them....*

- **So Jesus chooses the occasion of the feats of Tabernacles commemorating the Israelites journey through the desert ...when they were homeless and moving through the desert ....to make the statement the shepherd has arrived... the occasion of this statement ...**

The symbols that Jesus used throughout His ministry **HELP US UNDERSTAND WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE WANTS TO DO FOR US**. But as much as we may treasure this image of Jesus as our shepherd, the **downside of the metaphor** is that it **makes all of us sheep**.

**Some facts about sheep: Sheep are defenseless against prey, they have a tendency to stray, they require constant oversight, leading, rescue, and cleaning or they will die.**

\*On a cold night, sheep have been known to pile on top of one another to stay warm; the sheep at the bottom of the heap left to suffocate.

\*Unless prevented, a sheep will often eat food not good for it...leading to bloating and illness...they must be led to good pasture

\*A frightened sheep will sometimes run right off the edge of a cliff.

***Sheep are absolutely DEPENDANT on the Shepherd!*** yet they offer value to the shepherd...meat and wool

**So lets pick up Jesus own words as he describes who he is to the people...in Chapter 10 of John's Gospel**

10 "I tell you the truth, *anyone* who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely *be a thief and a robber!* <sup>2</sup> But the *one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.* <sup>3</sup> The *gatekeeper* opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

- **Now During certain times of the year, shepherds would lead their flocks away from the village to greener pastures where the feeding was better. and other times they would graze their flocks near the villages and town they lived in as food was plentiful there..**
- **so in the beginning of chapter 10 of John ...Jesus is speaking of flocks in the villages...**

- **When the sheep remained in the villages and towns**, all of the shepherds of the community brought their sheep into a common sheepfold which had stone walls seven to ten feet high, overseen by one **"Watchmen" or the hired hand!**
- While the sheep stayed in the communal sheepfold, all of the shepherds would return home each night except the one who would act as a porter, or watchman. In the morning, the shepherds would return for their flocks.
- **Theft from these communal sheepfolds was common.** A two-man operation, a thief would stand upon the shoulders of a partner and climb into the sheepfold. Then, with great stealth, he would slit the throats of four or five sheep and toss them over the wall to his buddy.
- **The watchmen regulated which shepherds brought and took which sheep.**
- The shepherd calls the sheep by name (a very personal contact); and he leads (not drives) the sheep.
- How did they know whose sheep was whose if they were all mixed together in the sheepfold?
- Each shepherd had a distinctive call, or song, to which only his own sheep responded. then he would lead them to pasture...

*John 10:4 After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't know his voice."*

- they understood the story....The shepherd has a flock and the legitimate right to enter the sheep pen... He knows his sheep...and they know him... he enters the gate and leads them in and out to pasture and back to rest... Jesus has legitimate right to enter the sheepfold of the earth...for he was heaven ...the gate keeper to retrieve his flock.
- but they did not get the point..
- so Jesus explains it and changes the story a little..

*John 10:6 Those who heard Jesus use this illustration didn't understand what he meant, <sup>7</sup> so he explained it to them: "I tell you the truth, **I am the gate for the sheep.** <sup>8</sup> All who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup> **Yes, I am the gate.** Those who come in through me will be saved. They will*

come and go freely and will find good pastures. <sup>10</sup> *The thief's* purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

- Is Jesus the gate or the one having rightful entry to the gate? Both; here He is speaking of a different type of sheepfold, one used out in the fields, not in the towns.
- **A "field" sheep pen was an enclosure for sheep with only one entrance.** It might be a cave, a stone or mud-brick structure, and it may or may not have a roof. **Made up of thorny branches or rocks, sheep folds, little corrals we would say with walls about this high, waist high, usually made out of rocks from the hillside and inside of those sheepfolds the shepherd will leave the sheep.**
- **the flock could only enter thru the narrow door or gate, letting in one sheep at a time...each sheep was personally known by the shepherd ...and each sheep knew the shepherd and his voice..**
- When evening came and all the sheep had entered, the shepherd himself would sleep in the doorway of the sheep pen to guard his sheep.
- **Thus, before any wild animal could enter the pen and kill a sheep, it would have to come through the doorway where the shepherd lay.**
- **The shepherd would then chase the wild animal away before it could harm the sheep. In this way the shepherd himself was "the gate for the sheep."**
- **And anyone or animal that would enter the pen by any other way...had an intent to hurt the sheep and avoid detection by the shepherd.**
- **The Lord Jesus called Himself "the Gate for the sheep." This means that Jesus cares for all those who belong to Him. This also means that before you can become a part of God's "flock," you must pass through Jesus.**
- **He alone is the door** that can admit sinners into eternal life.
  - **Jesus has the right to enter the sheep pen...and he is the gate for the sheep...**
  - **And He is the Shepherd...I am the shepherd ...**

*John 10: 11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep.*

<sup>12</sup> *A hired hand will run when he sees a wolf coming. He will abandon the sheep*

*because they don't belong to him and he isn't their shepherd. And so the wolf attacks them and scatters the flock. <sup>13</sup> The hired hand runs away because he's working only for the money and doesn't really care about the sheep<sup>14</sup> "I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, <sup>15</sup> just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep*

➤ **Jesus is the Good Shepherd, because He is the One who will lay down his life for the flock he will protect/save them with his life....**

➤ **The bad shepherd thinks the flock exists for his benefit; the good shepherd lives (and dies) for the good of the sheep.**

➤ **yet there are other sheep who don't even know their included in his fold..**

*John 10: <sup>16</sup> I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd. <sup>16</sup> **I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd.***

- **These are Gentile believers, not of the fold of Israel.**
- **There is one flock; one shepherd; but Jesus calls His sheep from more than one fold (group of people). he will protect them with his life....and those who do not belong will not be let in...he is the door...few will accept that...we all think like that..**
- **inclusion... is a key aspect of the mission Jesus...and it goes against our natural inclination...**
- **the fact that Jesus came in the flesh tells us what he thinks of human beings...were the ones who find many reasons to separate...he came to unite..**
- **Jesus claims power over life and death**

*John 10:17 "The Father loves me because I sacrifice my life so I may take it back again. <sup>18</sup> No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded."*

- **Anyone can lay down his life; even to lay down his life to save the sheep...**

- **But only this shepherd can take His life up again ...to lead the sheep and be with them forever**

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end

- **In a "field" sheepfold, the shepherd would actually lay across the entrance, to keep the sheep in and to keep out the wolves - he was, in fact, the door.**
- **Thief implies deception and trickery; robber implies violence and destruction.** These take away life; Jesus gives life, and He gives it abundantly.
- **Now During certain times of the year, shepherds would lead their flocks away from the village to greener pastures. In the open fields, where the feeding was better.**

Let's unwrap this passage today Jesus called himself the narrow door... **I am the door.**

- Doors play a major role in our lives if you think about it. Almost no activity in your life does not have a door mixed in it somehow from the front door of where you live to a refrigerator door where we get food...
- from the open door to the closed door.
- **And doors play basically two roles for us, they protect and they make possibilities. When they're closed they protect. When they're open they create possibilities.**

“The word door can be translated gate....and in John chapter 10 Jesus defines what this door or gate is...

As Jesus delivered this sermon, on the heels of healing the blind man at the Temple, He clearly declares His identity and plainly states His purposes and plans. In these verses, we can see the heart of Jesus on display. *He reveals His great love for sinners and His plan for dealing with their sin.*

The symbols that Jesus used throughout His ministry **HELP US UNDERSTAND WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE WANTS TO DO FOR US.**

But as much as we may treasure this image of Jesus as our shepherd, the **downside of the metaphor** is that it **makes all of us sheep.**

**Sheep are helpless, defenseless, straying, dirty animals that require constant oversight, leading, rescue, and cleaning or they will die.**

#### **Some facts about sheep:**

\*On a cold night, sheep have been known to pile on top of one another to stay warm; the sheep at the bottom of the heap often suffocate.

\*Unless prevented, a sheep will eat until it becomes bloated, falls over and dies, a true definition of "slop 'til you drop".

\*When being transported via truck or train, horses and cattle know to lean in the proper direction when the vehicle turns a corner. In contrast, sheep often will lean in the wrong direction, fall over and not be able to get back up.

\*A frightened sheep will sometimes walk right off the edge of a cliff.

There are definitely smarter animals in the animal kingdom...and that's who we are!  
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- **Is Jesus a madman or who He says He is?**

*John 10:19* When he said these things, the people were again divided in their opinions about him. <sup>20</sup> Some said, “He’s demon possessed and out of his mind. Why listen to a man like that?” <sup>21</sup> Others said, “This doesn’t sound like a man possessed by a demon! Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

- **The words of Jesus were not the words of a madman (instead, they are supreme sanity). The deeds of Jesus aren't the deeds of a megalomaniac (instead, they were utterly unselfish). The effect of Jesus isn't the effect of a madman (instead, He has changed millions for the good).**
- **Actions (like opening the eyes of the blind) can be a valid testimony; but only in concert with faithfulness to the word of God (not the words of one who has a demon).**

end

- **This sermon is delivered on the heels of healing the blind man at the Temple, He clearly declares His identity and plainly states His purposes and plans.**
- The religious leaders call him in twice to question him about his healing...on the Sabbath...he second time...they rebuke him..

## **So after the blind man was healed and the religious leaders kicked him out of the repeating theology back to the religious leaders reagrding his healing...as stated in John 9... we pick up the story...**

<sup>24</sup> So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, “God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner.”

<sup>25</sup> “I don’t know whether he is a sinner,” the man replied. “But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!”

<sup>26</sup> “But what did he do?” they asked. “How did he heal you?”

<sup>27</sup> “Look!” the man exclaimed. “I told you once. Didn’t you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?”

<sup>28</sup> Then they cursed him and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses! <sup>29</sup> We know God spoke to Moses, but we don’t even know where this man comes from.”

<sup>30</sup> “Why, that’s very strange!” the man replied. “He healed my eyes, and yet you don’t know where he comes from?

<sup>31</sup> We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will. <sup>32</sup> Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he couldn’t have done it.”

<sup>34</sup> “You were born a total sinner!” they answered. “Are you trying to teach us?” And they threw him out of the synagogue.

### **Spiritual Blindness**

<sup>35</sup> When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?<sup>[c]</sup>”

<sup>36</sup> The man answered, “Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him.”

<sup>37</sup> “You have seen him,” Jesus said, “and he is speaking to you!”

<sup>38</sup> “Yes, Lord, I believe!” the man said. And he worshiped Jesus.

<sup>39</sup> Then Jesus told him,<sup>[d]</sup> “I entered this world to render judgment—to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see<sup>[e]</sup> that they are blind.”

<sup>40</sup> Some Pharisees who were standing nearby heard him and asked, “Are you saying we’re blind?”

<sup>41</sup> “If you were blind, you wouldn’t be guilty,” Jesus replied. “But you remain guilty because you claim you can see.

**28-33 now he is testifying for Jesus and giving them back some of their theology...and calling them out...how do you our religious leaders not know where he is from? He does miracles only God can do as you have taught us?**

- **Vs 31 -33 Add the verses demonstrating he is God...**
- **When you lose a debate ...name calling always follows! And he is kicked out of the Temple ...**
- **These bad shepherds did not care for this man; instead, they mistreated him and threw him out. But Jesus, the Shepherd, came to him and took him in Vs34 Jesus does not leave him in this state of confusion...a good thing called bad...and complete rejection from the faith...**
- <sup>34</sup> “You were born a total sinner!” they answered. “Are you trying to teach us?” And they threw him out of the synagogue. <sup>35</sup> When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” <sup>36</sup> The man answered, “Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him.”
- <sup>37</sup> “You have seen him,” Jesus said, “and he is speaking to you!”
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- <sup>40</sup> Some Pharisees who were standing nearby heard him and asked, “Are you saying we’re blind?”
- <sup>41</sup> “If you were blind, you wouldn’t be guilty,” Jesus replied. “But you remain guilty because you claim you can see.”
- **Vs 35 he asked him the question ...they kicked you out but do you believe the messiah is coming in the flesh...God and flesh mixed...Son of man?**
- **Vs 36 yes...Who is he? Vs 37 I am he! Vs 38 yes I believe...worshipped him...only God is to be worshipped...Jesus received it...he is God!**

*<sup>\*39</sup> Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.” <sup>40</sup> Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?” <sup>41</sup> Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.*

- **For judgment I have come...that the blind rejected marginalized anyone who is an outcast...blind...can see with the light I illuminate them with...come to me...**
- **I am the judge of the world...everyone has opportunity to come into my kingdom...**

- Vs 41-42 the Pharisees who thought they saw clearly and understood completely the ways and things of God ...would never consider themselves blind...so they ask for affirmation from Jesus...once you claim to see clearly when you are actually blind...means you still fall short of seeing...which is sin!
- you are the shepherds ...the leaders but you are blind? willfully so...
- So with this context we enter in Jesus message to these blind leaders who think they see clearly... Jesus will explain what a good shepherd is... with this background Jesus now talks about what a good shepherd is...he opens His message with a familiar illustration..a sheep pen...Shepherds and sheep...

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*JN 10:1 "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. <sup>2</sup> The man who enters by the **gate** is the shepherd of his sheep. <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.*

*<sup>5</sup> But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." <sup>6</sup> Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.*

JN 10:7 Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the **gate** for the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the **gate**; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.

Why did Jesus call Himself "**the Gate the door for the sheep**"?

- In the open fields, a shepherd would make an enclosure of thorny branches or rocks, sheep folds, little corrals we would say with walls about this high, waist high, usually made out of rocks from the hillside and inside of those sheepfolds the shepherd will leave the sheep.
- They would have a single doorway by which the flock could enter.
- The gate was just a space The door or gate would be narrow letting in one sheep at a time...each sheep was personally know by the shepherd ...and each sheep knew the shepherd and his voice..
- When evening came and the sheep had entered, the shepherd himself would sleep in the doorway of the sheep pen to guard his sheep.
- Thus, before any wild animal could enter the pen and kill a sheep, it would have to come through the doorway where the shepherd lay. The shepherd would then chase the wild animal away before it could harm the sheep. In this way the shepherd himself was "**the gate for the sheep.**"
- And one or animal that would enter the pen by any other way...had an intent to hurt the sheep and avoid detection by the shepherd.
- The Lord Jesus called Himself "**the Gate for the sheep.**" This means that Jesus cares for all those who belong to Him. This also means that before you can become a part of God's "flock," **you must come through Jesus.**
- Whoever wants to be saved from the snares of Satan, or the wolves the penalty of sin, from the power of death and enter in and find safety must pass through Jesus.
- **He alone is the door** that can admit sinners into eternal life.

That is why God's Word says:

AC 4:12 *Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*

- Jesus is the one and only door to Salvation.
- I am the shepherd and I am the gate...

**Jesus is not only "the Gate for the sheep," He is also "the Good Shepherd."** Jesus is the **Good** Shepherd, because He is the One who loved us and gave His life for the flock.

*John 10:11* **I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.** <sup>12</sup>The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away <sup>JN 10:14</sup> "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me-- <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father--and I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> **I have other sheep** that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

- This was the problem with the man asking how few will be saved...he figured he and his fellow Israelites ...were the few and the other ethnic groups were the many....
- But Jesus left heaven to come as a human being....the earth suit is what all people wear...it is not about ethnicity...it is about humanity ...sheep are sheep and their were other sheep...

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