



I Am (Part 4) – The Door

Rob Daniels – February 21, 2016

Hey, friends. Welcome to The Village. My name is Rob Daniels. I'm your Connections Minister. Let's tune our hearts and turn our eyes to the Word of the Lord where we find both encouragement and truth. We'll be coming from John, chapter 10, this morning, verses 7 through 9. As you're turning there, I want to share a little story.

Growing up for me as a kid in the inner city of Dallas, there were many different doors I could've walked through. There were those doors that promised financial gain at the expense of family, friends, and neighbors. There were also those doors that would promise pleasure at the expense of young girls in the hood. There were also doors that would promise popularity and fame at the expense of treating others in a really vulgar and malicious way. The reality is all of these doors presented something to me that enticed me, and it spoke to a want in my life at the time.

There was a man in my city, on my block actually. That's *street* for my suburban brothers and sisters. There was a guy by the name of Mr. Shaw who lived on my block. He wasn't quite enticed by many of the doors of opportunity per se that were open to us in the hood. But Mr. Shaw became interested in me as a kid. Mr. Shaw was about 60, and I was about 8. Mr. Shaw invited me in. He became a door for me that was very different than many of the other doors I could've walked into as a kid.

One day Mr. Shaw said, "Hey, Rob, I want you to collect all of the change you have and bring it back to me. I just want to collect it." I thought Mr. Shaw really needed some money, so as a kid, I was like, "Yeah. I'll serve you, old man. No problem with that." You're not old if you're 60, by the way. I just wanted you to know that.

I was excited. I was excited to serve Mr. Shaw. I was really grateful to serve him. I got all this change for Mr. Shaw, and about a year went by that I did this. One day Mr. Shaw came to me, and he presented to me this Mason jar full of change. He said, "Rob, this is all of the change you've saved

this entire year." Powerful, informative was this very moment for me. What happened in that very moment was Mr. Shaw shut the very door of easy financial gain for me that would've left me helpless, hurting, and possibly even in jail, enslaved to a system.

You see, the reality before us today is many of us have entered into many doors. Even now some of us right now are being enticed by doors that will promise life, will promise gain, will promise pleasure, will promise hope. But in the very end, those doors lead to death. Here's the truth. There are only two doors. There's a door to *life*, and there's a door to *death*. The door to death will present itself in many different forms, in many different doors, to try to lure and to try to please and to try to gratify, but in the end, it leads to death and destruction.

The door to life is one door, one way, one man: Jesus Christ. Where do you find yourself this morning? What door do you find yourself entering into and pursuing today? Last week Matt preached on Jesus Christ being the light. Jesus Christ pushes back the darkness. There is no darkness where Jesus Christ is. The week before that, Jamin preached on Jesus being the Bread of Life. We have everything we need in Jesus Christ. He is everything. This week we're going to learn about Jesus Christ being the Door.

There are three things I want to bring out of the text for us this morning. The first is *introduction*. We're going to see Jesus Christ introducing himself to the Pharisees. The second point will be *invitation*. We're going to see Jesus standing before these religious leaders, giving an invitation. The last thing, the third point we're going to see, is *illumination*. Upon coming to faith in Jesus Christ, salvation, there are promises Jesus says here in the text that we have as we enter into the door of Jesus Christ.

Before jumping into the text we have for this morning, I just want to give you a little background about what's going on in the gospel of John. We're going to start at chapter 8. In chapter 8, you have this dialogue Jesus is having with two groups of Jews. You have the Jews who believe and follow Jesus Christ, and then you have the Jews who do not believe and don't follow Jesus Christ. Jesus says to the Jews who follow him in John, chapter 8, verse 31, "**If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**"

This dialogue springs up this conflict with the Jews toward Jesus. They look at Jesus, and they say, "Well, what do you mean the truth will set us free? We're not held captive to anyone. We're not in bondage to anyone. We're Jews. Our Father is God. We come by Father Abraham." Jesus says to

these Jews in John, chapter 8, verse 42, "**If God were your Father, you would love me... [...] You are of your father the devil..."**

Just imagine right now what's going on in the hearts of these Jews. Jesus has just called them out. He says, "You are following indeed your father. Not Father Abraham, not Yahweh, but you are following your father the Devil." Then right after that later in the text Jesus says, "**...before Abraham was, I am.**"

Then we transition into chapter 9 where Jesus encounters this blind man, this man who was born blind since birth. To condense this narrative, Jesus heals this man. He heals this man, and the city goes crazy. Crazy! So much so that they take this blind man to the Pharisees. "How is it that this blind man we've seen his entire life (born blind) can now see? What just happened to this blind man?"

The Pharisees approached this blind man, and they asked him, "How are you with sight?" This blind man testifies, "A man by the name of Jesus healed me." The Pharisees are upset. They're angry that this blind man is healed. Really? They're upset that he is healed. Not only are they upset that he is healed, but they're upset Jesus Christ has healed him.

They're so upset this blind man testifies the Lord Jesus Christ healed him that they excommunicated him. They exiled him from the community of Jews. They rejected him. He is no longer a part of the Jewish community because he testified Jesus Christ has healed him. What we see in the character of these Jews is they're angry. Jesus Christ is doing something to them that they do not like.

Then we transition now into the text for this morning. In verses 1 through 5 of John, chapter 10, we see this dialogue Jesus brings up, this picture he gives of sheep and shepherd. In verses 1 through 5, he uses this term, "I am the shepherd of the flock of God." He knows all of his sheep individually by name among other sheep who are not of the flock of God. Then he would say, "If you enter in by any other way, you are thieves and robbers." That is this. The Pharisees are, in fact, thieves and robbers.

Now we come to our text for this morning. Would you stand with me as we read verses 7 through 9 together in John, chapter 10? "**Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door.**

If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture." Thank you.

This is the Word of the Lord. You may be seated.

Verse 7 starts out, "**So Jesus again said to them...**" What Jesus is repeating again is the imagery of sheep and shepherd. He stands before the religious leaders with this tone that is pretty bold. He says, "**Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door...**" This is what I envision Jesus saying. "Excuse me. Excuse me. In light of your anger because I've just called you out that you follow your father indeed the Devil... Excuse me. Excuse me. In light of your rage that I've just healed this blind man, in light of all of that, let me reintroduce myself. I am the Door."

1. *Introduction.* Jesus is the Door. So why is it that Jesus would communicate to these religious leaders that he is the Door? Well, let's think about this context. The Pharisees, religious leaders, followers of the law, doers of the law, workers of the law, finding their life and their identity by following the ways of the Torah. These Pharisees would actually see themselves as the gatekeepers to righteousness. They make intercession happen for others to come into a relationship with God.

You see, this term for *door* was not unusual to the Jewish community, for many of the Jews would see themselves as entering into heaven by way of the Door. Jesus steps onto the scene, and he says, "Let me put my card out and trump you and let you know who I am and thus letting you know truly who you are."

Remember chapter 9 in the gospel of John, these same Pharisees, upon hearing this blind man was healed, did not celebrate, but they asked the very question, "Why? Why is it he is healed? How is it he was healed?" To give you the more context, this blind man was one of their sheep. They didn't celebrate the very fact he was healed, but what they *did* do is they exiled him from the community of the Jews. Wow.

These Pharisees dismissed this man because he testified to the healing power of Jesus Christ. These religious leaders cared more about their own power and not the power of God. They cared more about their own glory and not the glory of God. They cared more about their own control and not the sovereignty of God. They cared more about their own ways and not the ways of God. They cared more about their own will and not the will of God. They cared more about their own systems and not the means by which Jesus will call all men to himself that is through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jesus reintroduces himself to these Pharisees. He says, "Wait. Wait! I am the Door. In my very frame, there's love. In my very frame, there's grace." Ephesians 2:8: "**For by grace you have been saved...**" "In my very frame, there is mercy." Ephesians 2:4: "**But God, who is rich in mercy...**" "In my very frame, there's forgiveness." Colossians 1:14: "**In whom we have redemption...the forgiveness of sins...**" "In my very frame, there's joy. There's peace. There's patience." Galatians 5:22: "**But the fruit of the Spirit...**"

What Jesus is communicating to these leaders, to these Pharisees, is this. Don't miss it. Jesus Christ is the only way into a relationship with God. Jesus Christ is the only way to life eternal. Jesus Christ is the only way by which we may be forgiven of our sins. That is, Jesus is predicting something that's going to happen 10 chapters later in the gospel of John.

On the cross of Jesus Christ, when Jesus Christ would hang on a tree absorbing the wrath of God, do it for us, sinners, and he would die on that cross... Upon dying on that cross, he would then be risen, conquering sin, death, and the Devil, opening up the door that we may enter through him into a relationship with a holy, righteous, loving, gracious, merciful, and forgiving God. Jesus Christ, the Door.

These Pharisees consumed themselves with their own power, with their own glory, with their own systems, with their own will, and they missed the King of Glory standing right before them. They missed him, the one who is full of mercy, the one who is full of grace, the one who is full of forgiveness. These Pharisees in their arrogance and in their pride missed the King of Glory.

When we miss Jesus the Door, that is to continue walking in darkness. That is to continue walking in lies. That is to continue walking in false hopes. Christ the Door is life. Christ the Door is hope. Christ the Door is a relationship with the holy and righteous God. Here's the proof the Pharisees completely missed Christ the Door before them.

Jesus then goes on to say in John, chapter 10, verse 9, right after, "**I am the door,**" he says, "**If anyone enters by me...**" This conditional clause gives reference to the very fact that the Pharisees are not of the flock of God. They are not in relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Jesus would tell them, "If anyone enters by me..." Jesus Christ is standing before these religious leaders with an invitation, "If anyone would enter by me..."

2. *Invitation.* The first point is Jesus Christ explains to these Pharisees, he speaks boldly to these Pharisees, "I am the Door." The second point is he stands before them and says, "If anyone would enter by me..." Invitation. The Pharisees miss him. As Jesus invites them in, they miss him. Dumb Pharisees, right? Stupid Pharisees. "How could you miss the one who brings redemption? How could you miss the one who brings forgiveness?" They cannot see the King of Glory. Dumb Pharisees!

Here's our reality this morning. Many of us right now in this place are just like the Pharisees. What keeps us from entering into the door of Jesus Christ? What doors are before us that present themselves as giving us life, but they find their end in death? Some of us may not struggle with works like the Pharisees. Some of us may not find our righteousness consumed in what we do for God. But some of us may be enticed and even enter into false doors, idols.

What are some of these idols we may wrestle with? What about the idol of perfection? "I have to be perfect. Everything always has to be good. Everything always has to be right. I have to pursue this, and I have to strive for perfection." The idol of power...looking for and striving for authority, for control. "Everything always has to fit in the way I want it to fit. Everything always has to go the way I want it to go." Power.

What about the idol of success? You're never content and always striving for the next benchmark. What about the idol of a spouse? Who you are and where you find your life is in your wife, your husband, your girlfriend, your boyfriend. The idol of children. "My life is my children. Who I am as a mother, who I am as a father, that's it."

What about the idol of beauty? You're chasing what the world would define as beauty and not resting in the *imago Dei*, that we were made in the image of God. What about the idol of self? Pride, arrogance, consumes you so much that you care nothing about anyone around you. Everyone else is beneath you.

What about the idol of intellect? "My life is consumed with what I know. I always have to know more." You see, some of these things are good, but when we put these things on a pedestal and begin to worship them, they make horrible gods. They are never safe. They have no power. They will never bring redemption, and they will never get us into a relationship with God, and they will not bring eternal life. They fail us every single time.

Jesus in this text brings out two types of people, two types of sheep. The first sheep are those who are cared for and saved by Jesus Christ. The second set is the sheep who are consumed by sin and darkness. I love how Jesus mentions the concept of sheep. If you know anything about sheep, sheep are dumb animals. They're dumb. They need help. They need guidance. They will run off a cliff thinking it's a pool. I mean, sheep need guidance. They absolutely need a Savior.

Jesus would say that we are sheep. Friends, we need guidance. Friends, we need help. Friends, we need a Savior. Apart from Jesus Christ, we are destined to death. We need help. Jesus groups us as sheep needing a shepherd. What group are you in? What group are you in this morning? Do you find yourself saved and cared for by Jesus Christ, or do you find yourself consumed by sin and darkness?

If you answer *yes* to this question, "Yes, I've entered into the door of Jesus Christ," praise the Lord! Praise the Lord that you've entered in. You are forgiven. My brother or sister, you have hope. You have freedom. You have relationship. In this context in what we are studying today, it should bring about a sense of remembering the sweet invitation you and I have walked through as a believer in Jesus Christ. That should bring about a sense of rejoicing.

Let me ask you as a believer in Jesus Christ to not write this message off as only for the non-believer, because there may be some false idols you wrestle with. There may be some things you find your identity in that's not rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We have an opportunity as believers to confess our sins before the Lord, to seek forgiveness because we've been forgiven. The awesome thing is we find his comfort, his peace, and his rest. We can draw near to a loving and gracious Father and find comfort.

So something that was encouraging in the story was that in the gospel of Jesus Christ, there's hope. In the midst of darkness, in the midst of death, there's hope in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We have that, having come to the door of Christ. If you are here and you say, "No, I haven't come to the door of Jesus Christ. My life is characterized by sin and darkness," well if that's you today, there's a sweet invitation for you, an invitation to freedom, an invitation to hope, an invitation to life eternally, an invitation to come to Jesus.

Here's the awesome thing about coming to Jesus. The chains that enslave us, sin that consumes us, death that invades us, fear that overwhelms us, cannot go through the door with us. So come. If you're here and you are not in a relationship with Jesus Christ, there is an opportunity for you to

respond this morning to come to Jesus. Something happens. Jesus states some promises of when we come to him.

3. *Illumination*. So *introduction*...Jesus Christ stands before these Pharisees boldly and says, "I am the Door." Then he gives us this *invitation*. "If anyone would come by me, if anyone would enter by me..." Then third, he gives some promises, *illumination*. Jesus states this. He says, "**...he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.**"

The first promise Jesus gives us as we enter into the door is salvation. Romans 5:8 and 9 says, "**...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.**"

That is, upon the gift of salvation, our eyes are open to sin and darkness. We are set free from the bondage of sin, death, and the Devil. We can dwell with him. We can roam with him. We can be like Christ...free with hope, having a Father who loves us and sent his Son to die for us.

Then the second promise is we will go in and out and find pasture. What does that mean to go in and out and find pasture? What that means is God promises us we will have provision in Jesus Christ. We will be provided for through Jesus Christ. We are nourished in him. All of our needs will be supplied by Christ.

Philippians 4:19 says, "**And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.**" What this verse *doesn't* say is, "My God will supply every *want* of yours. Everything you ever desired and everything you ever wanted, the Lord will give that." No! It doesn't say that. What it says is every need we have the Shepherd knows.

Because the Shepherd knows the flock and because the Shepherd knows the sheep individually by name, God through Jesus Christ will supply every single need we have in Christ for that's freeing. That's freeing that the Shepherd knows us individually to supply every single need we have. Maybe it's the need of comfort. Maybe it's the need of truth. Whatever the need may be, the Father promises he will supply that need through Jesus Christ.

Then he says the sheep will find pasture. What does it mean when Jesus says, "Find pasture"? Well, this actually points back to an Old Testament passage found in Ezekiel, chapter 34, verses 25

through 31. This is what the Word of the Lord says: "**I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild beasts from the land, so that they may dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.**"

Just think about this. This is still in the concept of being sheep. The Lord speaks to the prophet, and he says, "**I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild beasts from the land, so that [these sheep, we] may dwell securely in the wilderness...**" Free. With peace. Not afraid. Not in fear. Verse 26:

"And I will make them and the places all around my hill a blessing, and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land. And they shall know that I am the LORD [Yahweh], when I break the bars of their yoke, and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

They shall no more be a prey to the nations, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them. They shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will provide for them renowned plantations so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the reproach of the nations. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people,' declares the Lord GOD. 'And you are my sheep, human sheep of my pasture, and I am your God,' declares the Lord GOD."

Amen! This is the covenant of peace inaugurated at the coming of Jesus Christ. As we come to the door of Christ, as we come to the invitation, as our eyes are illuminated, we're set free. We have salvation. We enter into a covenant with the Lord. That's the covenant of peace. The Lord's peace is with us. The Lord's peace is near to us.

Friends, there are many reasons why we need the peace of Jesus Christ. The peace of Jesus Christ reconciles us back to God. Our relationship was hostile because of our sin. The peace of Jesus Christ reconciles us back to each other. The peace of Jesus Christ follows us in seasons of devastation, in seasons of despair, seasons of death, seasons of mourning. The peace of Jesus Christ is with us as we enter into the door of Christ.

Friends, there are only two doors. There's a door to life, and there's a door to death. Where do you find yourself today? Entering into the door of Jesus Christ, we enter into the light of Christ where

the light of Jesus Christ shines in dark spaces. We feast on the Bread of Life where we have everything we need in the Son of God. Then Jesus promises this. As we come to him, he is, in fact, the Good Shepherd, but that's next week. Let's pray.

Father, you are a good Father. Father, you are slow to anger but abounding in steadfast love. God, we thank you. Thank you, Lord, that you made a way possible through your Son Jesus Christ that we may enter through the Door to be saved. God, on the cross of Jesus Christ, our sins hung with Jesus. God, thank you that your wrath was absorbed in that very moment Jesus died on a cross. God, thank you that Christ rose from the grave victoriously, conquering sin, death, and the Devil.

God, we who have walked through the door of Christ stand in victory over sin, death, and the Devil. God, we rejoice over that. Lord, I do pray for those who are here who have not entered through the Door. God, may today be the day of salvation. May today be the day of redemption. May today be the day of restoration. Father, we do pray. So move even more among us. Thank you for your Word. It's in Jesus Christ's name we pray by the power of the Holy Spirit, amen.

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