

John Ch 10:1-10

(Place your finger there and then make your way to Ezek: 34)
 “Enter by the Door”

You recall that Ch 9 basically closed with the Pharisees excommunicating a man who had been born blind, from the Jewish religious system because he refused to deny the eye opening work of Jesus Christ in his life. Here Jesus had ministered to him *tenderly* and *compassionately*, and they managed him *tauntingly* and *cruelly*, and as to where Jesus was concerned about the man *himself*, they were worried and occupied solely with *themselves*. and So as you make your way through Ch 9 a very vivid and sharp contrast begins to develop between Jesus’ handling this man, and the Pharisees handling of him. and Jesus is going to use this background as an opportunity to seek to demonstrate to the people the difference between true and false shepherds.

Because at this time in the nations history, the Pharisees had basically taken the position of the leaders of God’s people, or those who “Shepherded” the flock of God, led them, guided them, instructed them in their understanding of the heart and mind of God. They were the nations examples of “godliness.” and So as we approach ch 10 that’s how this idea of “Shepherds and sheep” has developed.

To you and me, we may not readily see the correlation in ch 9 between shepherds and sheep, and the whole analogy may be a bit foreign to us in our otherwise industrial type culture. But we need to bear in mind to whom Jesus was speaking, and the role that shepherds and sheep played in this nations history, and still today. Even from the book of Job (the oldest book in the bible) we find that Job had 14,000 sheep, Solomon offered 120,000 sheep as a sacrifice to God on the day that the Temple was dedicated. Along with several others 2 of the most prominent leaders in Israel’s history (Moses and David) were both shepherds, and in various portions of the Psalms and throughout the prophets you find references *to* and analogies drawn *from* sheep and shepherds. This was a people familiar with the relationship of a shepherd to his sheep and how that correlated with those who tended to the people of God. As a matter of fact it’s common in the OT that instead of the Lord using terms like, “Overseers and His people” He speaks of “Shepherds and His flock.”

Look at Ezek 34 (Vs 1-16). and So seeing the way that these Pharisees have treated this man whom the Lord has dealt favorably with, this makes for a tailor made lead in for him to draw this distinction and show them the heart of a true shepherd in contrast to a hireling, or someone who only tends to the sheep for what’s in it for them. and As soon as a situation grows volatile, or potentially threatening to a hireling, they’ll disregard the sheep, just like these Pharisees did this man in Ch 9.

So that's how the events in Ch 9 slide into this discourse in ch 10. What Jesus says here directly correlates with the happenings of Ch 9, the way the Pharisees cast this man out of their fold, vs the way Jesus took him in to His flock, healed his hurts, bound up this otherwise broken man, having opened his eyes and changed his life. Now we're going to use 4 words to divide Ch 10 into 4 very basic segments, if you want to jot it down we'll look at it like this. #1 Vs1-6 "Illustration," as Jesus uses this correlation regarding flocks and folds, shepherds and strangers to try and teach them once again the reality of who He is. #2 Vs 7-10 "Identification," they don't get what he's says in these 1st few vs and so He breaks it down even further for them in the next few vs. #3 Vs11-18 "Dedication," the hireling flees in the face of uncertainty, but the good shepherd is dedicated unto the sheep, being willing even to die so that the sheep might live. and Finally # 4 in Vs 19-41 we see the makings *of* leading on *into* "Confrontation" as once again these guys just have a real problem with what Jesus has to say.

Vs 1-6

So though what Jesus says here is saturated with Messianic insinuations and implications, and even pointed accusations at *their* failure to tend to God's flock adequately because they're strangers and not shepherds to the sheep, they don't get it. (Look at vs 1-2)

Now obviously anything that Jesus has to say is absolute truth, but whenever you see the words, "Most assuredly", or perhaps, "Verily verily," what's happening there is that the Lord is placing strong emphasis on what He's about to say, He's stressing the point. and He's developing here the difference between true and false shepherds, giving them tools to discern the legit from the ill-legit. and The point that He's stressing is that there's only one-way to enter the sheepfold legitimately and that's through the door, and only the true Shepherd of the sheep enters that way.

Now we need to realize that the sheepfold that Jesus is talking about here isn't heaven, nor are the sheep in view here you and me, we come into view in vs 16 when Jesus begins to speak of other sheep that He has that aren't that particular fold. and So the fold that's in view in *this* passage is the nation of Israel. and The door that's in view is the Law and the Prophets. and Jesus is saying here that anyone who seeks to enter into the sheepfold in any way other than the prescribed and legal entrance (meaning as the scriptures ordain) is a thief and a robber. Which is to say if they can't come to you and shepherd over you through the legitimate way that scriptures mandate then there's ulterior motives there, they're looking to somehow rip you off, or hurt you to help themselves.

So this is a radical claim that Jesus is making here because He's saying that He came through the door, He came to them legally, that is, through the fulfilling of the Law and the Prophets, you see they're usurping authority in some other way, going around this and over that to justify their position of authority, but Jesus came right through the door. Born under that law that He might fulfill the law, the bible says, "*But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law,*" Gal 4:4-5

He was of the line of David just as the Scriptures prophesied, born in Bethlehem just the Word had promised, born of a virgin just as Isaiah prophesied. He entered the sheepfold through the door that the word of God had framed, and He's seeking to unveil that to these religious leaders. He's more or less flashing them His credentials, His "badge" (so to speak) that verifies who He is; because you remember back in vs 40 of ch 9 they challenged Him. They said, "Are we blind also?" and Jesus said in essence, "Yes, you are blind because you can't see Me for who I am, and you're seeking to safeguard a position that doesn't belong to you."

Here He's showing them that *He's* the true Shepherd, *He's* the One who's entered the sheepfold by the door, *He's* the One who cares for the sheep. But by the way they've cast this man out, they've demonstrated that they don't care about safeguarding the sheep. They've got ulterior motives, they're thieves and robbers ripping off the flock of God, and they don't care who gets hurt, or violated in the process as long as their agenda is accomplished. But Jesus has come to them *legally*, is concerned for them *personally*, and ministers to them *compassionately*; He's the nation's True Shepherd.

Vs 3-4

Now there are 2 primary views as to whom this "doorkeeper" represents and as for whom you choose to see him, as it makes virtually no difference to the overall emphasis of what Jesus is saying. But some see the doorkeeper as J.B. and how he in essence opened the door for Jesus to enter into the fold by heralding Him as the One who's sandal strap he was unworthy to even loose. and By John's proclamation of Jesus being the Lamb of God, and going before Him and preparing the way for Him, that he opened the door for Him into the nation.

I personally think it makes more sense to see this porter, this doorkeeper as the Holy Spirit. Who all throughout the Scriptures was opening the door in such a way that none other than Jesus Christ could come through it. He was opening the door to Jesus through the Law, through the sacrificial rites, through the more sure Word of prophecy that only Jesus would fulfill. and So principally speaking He was opening the door to Jesus through the word, then as He conceived of the Holy Spirit in Mary, the Holy Spirit was opening the door to Jesus in bringing Him through the line of David to be born of a virgin. and Then we see Him practically opening the door to Jesus at Jesus' baptism when Jesus came up out of the water, and the Spirit descended upon Jesus verifying that He had opened the door of the sheepfold to Him. Ratifying the fact that He was the true Shepherd, the Father bearing witness audibly at that time as well as to the reality of who Jesus is as the Son of God. So whether you want to view the doorkeeper of the fold as J.B. or the Holy Spirit ultimately it makes little difference, the point is, the door was opened to Jesus and He entered the fold through the door, the way the scriptures had foretold the Messiah, the Good Shepherd would come.

We read here that the sheep hear His voice, and He calls them by name. and Obviously the 1st thing this suggests is relationship; there's a personal connection here between the

Shepherd and His sheep. The sheep respond to His voice, and to them His voice is comfort and security, peace and assurance, the Shepherd knows them by name. The God who created the heavens and the earth and all the things contained therein knows your name *personally*, and is aware of your circumstances and surroundings *thoroughly*, and He keeps watch over you quite *closely*. He calls His own sheep by name, why does it say His “own” sheep, because we’re all like sheep who have gone astray, but not all sheep are His sheep, His sheep are those who respond to His Word because they know His voice, they recognize the inflections their Shepherd. You see there might be several flocks in one fold, and the shepherds would lead them in, and then go home for the night while the doorkeeper watched out over the flock.

But the sheep just all kind of mingled together, they weren’t tagged or branded or anything, but when the Shepherd would begin to make his distinctive call, only his sheep would separate from the fold. and So Jesus is going throughout Israel calling out to the nation to come to Him and find rest, to come to Him and drink, to come to Him and never hunger, and *His* sheep are responding to His voice, just like this blind man, and coming out of the fold of Judaism and all, and following after Him. You see He’s leading them out, notice it doesn’t say He “drives” them out, or “beats” them out, or “pushes” them out, no, He “leads” them out, cares for them, goes before them.

Take note of those words there (in vs4), “He goes before them.” Jesus goes before your life, prepares the way for you, He’s already been where you’re going and has given you an example of how to confront or deal with any and every situation that’ll ever come into your life, He’s there to lead you through that trial or that tough time, you just follow Him, and He’ll lead you through.

Vs5

The Lord’s sheep know His voice, and they can tell when someone else, or something else is seeking to manipulate them, or somehow draw them away from their Shepherd. They’re able to sense; “There’s something strange about this watchtower magazine.” Or, “This book of Mormon just doesn’t have the inflection of My Shepherds voice.” Or sometimes they may find in a certain church, “Hey, this just isn’t the voice of my Shepherd that’s sounding out from behind that pulpit.” and They’ll graze right on out of that fold to some place where the word of God is being taught, because they won’t follow a stranger, they only follow their Shepherd.

On the other side of that you can always tell when a stranger creeps *into* the flock, and tries to climb into the fold where the Lord’s sheep are grazing, when a false shepherd tries to enter in and deceive the sheep. Because it always causes a scattering of the sheep, people will become disoriented and confused, scattered and skittish, nervous and uncertain, there’ll always be an unhealthy dividing of the sheep. False shepherds always scatter the sheep, because they’re not caring for the sheep, they have an agenda of their own in mind. and If sheep get hurt, or scattered and confused, it’s but a small price to pay.

That's what Jesus is saying here, when a stranger enters into the flock, the sheep can sense that something's not quite right, something's not registering and resonating in their hearts as it should, and they scatter, they flee.

Vs6

So they couldn't see what He was saying, why? Vs 40 of Ch 8, they were blind.

Vs7

Underline that word, "again." Aren't you glad that the Lord doesn't just tell you something once, and then if you don't get it He just writes you off for an idiot and moves on? Man I am, because I'd have been written off long ago be that the case. Sometimes the Lord has to repeat Himself to Me time and time again concerning those issues that need dealt with in my life, those things that I'm just not seeing the way I should, those things that it's imperative that I get a grip on lest they bring ruin into my life.

Be it the movies you watch, or the surroundings you subject yourself to, or the type of influence I allow into my life, and it's like the Lord keeps coming to me and saying, "You need to see this, I'm telling you again, you need to get a grip on this, it's something that needs dealt with in your life." and Jesus is telling them again, and it's not that He's mixing His metaphors here, this is more of an amplification, and an application of His illustration, so as to serve as a means of identification for them, so that they might see what He's saying. It's like if you can't see it that way, how about this way?

He's come to them as the true Shepherd of the sheepfold of the nation of Israel and He leads them out of this Jewish religious system into a loving relationship with Himself. and In the context of what's going on here, to say that He's the Shepherd and to say that He's the door, it's a synonymous saying, it's an amplification to bring clarification, because they're just not getting it. You see He leads them out of that fold, into His flock and when the shepherd would watch out over his flock by night, he would make a temporary corral of sorts with this thick brush and after leading the sheep into this corral the shepherd would literally lay down for the night in the entry way so that no sheep could get out, and no predator could get in apart from 1st getting past the shepherd. So that the shepherd literally became the door of the sheep. So Jesus is simply magnifying here what's He's already said there, they didn't get the whole "True Shepherd" thing, and so He's casting even more light on it by telling them that He's the door of the sheep, it's another way of saying the same thing. He came into the fold legally, by the door, is leading His sheep out of that particular fold, out of the old covenant, out from under the law and legalism, and now He personally serves as the door for His flock by which they can have a relationship with the Father. The law isn't the door for you and me, Jesus is. He's claiming to be the exclusive way to gain access to the Father, He alone is the Mediator between God and man, He is the door through which we pass, He passed through the Law, we pass through Him.

Vs 8

This is another one of those amazing statements whereby Jesus claims exclusivity. He says, “Everyone else who claims to give you ‘god consciousness’, who claims to be an avenue to the Father, who claims to be able to make you right with God by what you do, or the works that you perform are liars. They’re ripping you off and causing you harm.”

You see those Pharisees and various religious rulers had their own set of do’s and don’ts that they claimed you needed to uphold if you were to be acceptable before God. “You need to dress like this, and wear your hair like that, and give this much, and knock on so many doors, count these beads, and say those prayers or else you’re not right with God.” and Here Jesus is saying, “No go, negatory on the looking to anything else to make you right with God, I alone am what makes you right with God.” Concerning our righteousness, or the things that we try and do in order to be made right before God the bible says, “*We are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags;*” Isa 64:6 and It’s like spitting in the face of God to try and be right before Him apart from Christ, because it’s saying that whole “Allowing Your Son to die on a cross” thing was pointless, I can be made righteous apart from Him anyway. That mentality is just pure fallacy, it’s in Christ alone that we’re accepted and seen as righteous in God’s sight.

Jesus said, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*” John 14:6 Or to understand that another way, “I am the door of the sheep.” Paul tells us regarding Christ, “*For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.*” Eph 2:18 So it’s by Jesus and Jesus alone that we have access by one Spirit, (that is the Holy Spirit) to the Father. He’s the door; everyone else is a thief and will only do your harm. Buddha, never claimed to be the exclusive door, Krishna and Confucius claimed to be “a” way, not “the” way. Jesus alone said He was the only way, well how do we know who to believe? Simple, the resurrection, only Jesus Christ substantiated everything He said by proving He alone was the resurrection and the life, all those other guys are still pushing up daisies, Jesus Christ is alive and well.

Vs 9

So this offer of salvation is for (notice) “anyone.” “If anyone enters by Me he will be saved.” Not he “might” be saved, not “he can hope to be saved,” “he will be saved.” There’s assurance of salvation in Jesus Christ You abide in Him; you’ve got nothing to worry about. and This “going in and out” seems to allude to our new found freedom in Christ as opposed to bondage of our sin, or religious legalism, it’s that whole “If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed” sort of thing here. and Of course finding pasture in Christ obviously speaks of the nourishment and sustenance that’s to be found in Him for our souls as opposed to the barren wastelands that people are subjected to in their legalism and religious endeavors.

Vs 10

You see the thief has a 3-fold agenda, and that is to steal, to kill, and to destroy your life, to rob you of whatever it may be that you have that he wants. Often times in the religious circle (as well as any other circle) it's your money, they want to make merchandise of you. Sell you something they've prayed over, promise you wealth and fortune beyond your wildest dreams if you'll just sow your seed of faith into their ministry. and They'll appeal to the carnal nature in man in order to extract from them their resources. The agenda of the thief (which can obviously be applied to Satan because he's the root behind self-righteous religion) but here in the context of legalism and false shepherds, the fruit of the false shepherd is destruction. The agenda it to take from you, the agenda of the good Shepherd is to give to you, so the litmus test; is it feeding you, or is it fleecing you?

Jesus said, Do you love Me Peter? "*Feed My sheep.*" John 21:17 Jesus just wants to take you in and give you life, but you have to enter by the door, He's the only access to everlasting life. Perhaps you've strayed from the flock, let Him ease you back into the fold and lead you beside still waters today. Let Him make you to lie down in green pastures, and just cast all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you.

Perhaps you're here and you're still in another fold altogether and He's calling you out by name today, if you're hearing His voice, just heed His call as He calls you out of darkness and into the light. Enter by the door and you will be saved, forgiven of all your sin, Jesus is the Good shepherd and He laid down His life that you might live forever, that you might have everlasting life and if you'll just respond to His voice today and begin to follow Him.