

I AM THE DOOR

I. BACKGROUND

A. THREE IMAGES OF HEAVEN AND ETERNAL LIFE

1. Scripture uses several images for Heaven and eternal life
2. Three of the main pictures in the New Testament are:
 - a. The **Kingdom** of Heaven—used 33 times in Matthew
 - b. The Holy **City**—New Jerusalem—with a new garden—**Rev 21-22**
 - c. **Domestic** or **pastoral** picture
 - My Father's house—**Jn 14**—the eternal kingdom
 - The sheepfold—**Jn 10**—the kingdom here and now
3. There are two types of entrance

a. Kingdom and City—**gate**—(πύλη)

1. Large entryway—to city/town, palace, temple, prison
2. At the end of a 'way'—with a long journey between destinations
3. Image: more defensive—restricts access—to keep people out

Mt 7:13-14—*Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction; and many enter through it. But small is the gate and broad the road that leads to life; and only a few find it.*

Rev 21:12—New Jerusalem has a **great and high wall** with **twelve** gates

4. Similar imagery—not using 'gate' explicitly

Gen 3:24—stationing cherubim and the flaming sword at the garden to guard the way to the tree of life

Mt 19:24—*it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.*

b. House and Sheepfold—**door**—(θύρα)

1. Smaller passage—into house or dwelling place
2. Gives access directly to family and intimacy
3. Image: more inviting—to draw in—or to show opportunity

Rev 3:20—*Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me.*

B. THREE NARRATIVE ILLUSTRATIONS OF GAINING ACCESS

1. National: The Kingdom of Heaven

- **ILLUSTRATION**: passing through **immigration** and customs

1. Not shot record
2. Not birth certificate
3. Not driver's license
4. Instead—you need your **passport**

- Parallel—application:

1. Not baptismal certificate
2. Not being on the church roll
3. Not record of attendance or giving
4. Instead—your name is in the **Lamb's Book of Life**

2. The Holy Citadel: The New Jerusalem

- **ILLUSTRATION 1**—military challenge and **password**

1. Not the charisma of personality
2. Not your name recognition—or who you know
3. Not your title—or position
4. Instead—you know the **code**—you have the **key** and **password**

- **ILLUSTRATION 2**—the **garage door opener**

- Garage door opener has right code—properly tuned
- It worked at home this morning—but not here at a distance
- Point: we must be in close contact for it to work—not distant

- Parallel—application:

1. Not just *calling* ourselves 'Christian' or 'Baptist'
2. Not just wearing the symbols of faith
3. Not just going through religious rituals
4. But knowing the **true** and **right** Word—"Jesus Christ is Lord!"
5. And we must be in **close connection** with Him—not at a distance

3. Domestic—the Father's House—the Sheepfold

- **ILLUSTRATION**—going into a **friend's home**—as your new **pastor**

1. Not just the prayer list—having common activities
2. Not just business minutes—joint decision-making
3. Not just the directory—knowing *about* the people
4. Not just knowing the Bible or being able to preach
5. But knowing and caring about the person—personally

- Parallel—application:

1. Not just working at all the ministries of the church
2. Not just administering all the church business
3. But knowing the Shepherd—personally!
4. And taking care of His flock—because you care

5. This is the most intimate picture—and this is what Jesus does

II. TEXT: JESUS IS THE ‘I AM’—WHO IS *THE DOOR*—JOHN 10:1-10

1 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the door-keeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.” 6 This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them. 7 So Jesus said to them again, “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 hear them. 9 I am the door; if anyone enters through 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.”

III. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF JESUS THE DOOR

A. FOUR FEATURES OF ANY DOOR

- It **provides** access **into** an enclosed space
- It **provides** access **out from** an enclosed space
- It **prevents** access **into** an enclosed space
- It **prevents** escape **from** an enclosed space

B. JESUS DOES THREE THINGS AS ‘THE DOOR’

1. He provides access **into**—opens—He saves
2. He provides access **out from**—opens—He leads
3. He prevents access **through** Himself—closes—He protects
 - But in this life—it is limited protection
4. He **does not prevent** access **out from**—He **does not imprison!!!**

IV. EXPLANATION: WHAT JESUS DOES AND DOESN’T DO AS THE DOOR

A. JESUS **DOES** PREVENT ACCESS INTO—HE **PROTECTS**

1. He is the true entrance to the sheepfold
 - a. No robber can enter through Him—**v 1**
 - **EX: middle-eastern shepherds lying across the entrance**
 - b. In the eternal kingdom—the sheepfold is impenetrable
 - c. But in this life—in **Jn 10**—this is *not* guaranteed! Beware!!!!

2. There *are* robbers/thieves—**vv 1,10**

- a. But they are *not* endorsed by Him—not *anything* like Him
- b. They have gotten in another way—v1 [not through the Door]
- c. They are false shepherds (prophets)

Mt 7:15-20—*Watch out for false shepherds. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit; but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.*

1. They are recognizable—nothing like Christ
2. We must watch out for them

3. They **scatter** the sheep—**v 5**

4. **True** sheep will not listen to them or follow them—**vv 5, 8**

3. We ask Him to protect the flock—and help Him do this

EXAMPLE: Nursery door

B. JESUS DOES NOT PREVENT ESCAPE—HE DOES NOT IMPRISON

1. Notice Jesus only speaks of the sheep here—they all listen to His voice
2. But he does not address the problem of the goats
 - They were mixed into the ancient middle-eastern flocks
 - Some breeds look remarkably like sheep!

3. The ultimate destiny

- a. The Son of Man will divide the Sheep from the Goats—**Mt 25**
- b. So the eternal sheepfold will be only 'sheep who listen and follow'

4. The present reality

- a. In the sheepfold now—there is a mixture of true and false 'sheep'
- b. Christ the Door—does not prevent false 'sheep' from leaving!
- c. He does not imprison—being in the sheepfold is voluntary
- d. But those who leave were never true 'sheep'!

EX: French doors—where people *lean in* but never *come in*

EX: Revolving doors—where you never set foot in the room

C. JESUS **DOES** PROVIDE ACCESS INTO—HE **SAVES**

1. Whoever does *truly* enter through Him will be saved—**v 9a**
2. Christ the Door is the *only* entry into the sheepfold
 - He is *the* Way, *the* Truth, and *the* Life—**Jn 14:6**

EX: middle-eastern sheepfolds—with three sides against rock cliffs

3. Eternally—this is **permanent** and total—eternally safe

See verses 27-30—*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father hand. I and the Father are one.*

4. Here and **now**—the sheepfold (His **church**) is a place of:
 - Nurturing
 - Caretaking
 - Resting
 - Birthing

D. HE **DOES** PROVIDE ACCESS OUT FROM—HE **PROVIDES**

1. He takes sheep to good pastures—**vv 3-4, 9b** and **10b**
 - He leads them out—**v 3**
 - He goes ahead of them and they follow Him—**v 4**
 - They will go in and out and find pasture—**9b**

Ps 23:2-3—*He makes me to lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside the still waters; he restores my soul; he guides me in the paths of righteousness*

2. Sheep do not thrive in the fold—they must pasture to feed
3. The doorway is the beginning of this journey
 - Where we pasture is largely determined by our first step thru the door
 - So our initial vision—direction—is crucial to their provision

EX: Deviation from true direction

1° in 10 miles = 300 yards

From Ft Worth to Montgomery (700 miles) = 12 miles

From Ft Worth to New York (1600 miles) = 27 miles
Would end up in the Atlantic Ocean

From Ft Worth to London, Gatwick (4800) = 82 miles
Would end up in France

V. FOLLOWING JESUS LEADS TO ABUNDANT LIFE—v 10

- He guards/prevents and **protects** us from enemy invasion
- Leaving the fold with Him—He **sets our direction** on a true course
- Going where he calls us to go—we are on the Way with Him
- He provides exactly what we need along the Way—pastures/water
- He leads us to fields that are white unto harvest

VI. SUMMARY

A. JESUS IS THE DOOR OF THE SHEEPFOLD—WHO:

1. **Provides access** to the sheepfold and the Father—He **saves**
2. **Prevents access** to false shepherds and predators—He **protects**
3. **Opens the way** and **leads** His flock to green pastures—He **provides**

B. HE PROVIDES ACCESS IN THREE SPIRITUAL CONTEXTS

1. To the **kingdom** of God—**here and now**—with/through the church/His body
2. To the **city** of New Jerusalem (heaven)—our eternal heavenly destination
3. To the Father's **house**—our new and permanent home

C. WE HELP HIM—HE CALLS US TO BE DOOR-KEEPERS:

1. **Proclaim**—the Good News of **salvation**
2. **Guard**—His flock—**protecting** His church
3. **Provide**—for others—being a **nurturing** church

“Freely you have received—freely give”—Mt 10:8

SUPPLEMENTARY DRAMATIC NARRATIVES

I. ENTERING THE KINGDOM NARRATIVE

Patrick: “Red River Passport Control . . . Next!”

[Pause impatiently while I fumble for documents]

Patrick: “Next ! Yes—you sire—you’re next—documents p-l-e-a-s-e!”

[I still fumble—then produce my **shot record**]

Jim: “This is all I can find . . . will it do?”

Patrick: [Examine records—rolling eyes]

“No sir . . . we don’t care about how many shots you’ve had.”

“Don’t you have your passport?”

Jim: “Let me see . . . oh, no . . . I can’t find it! [Pause searching]

“Here . . . will this do?”

[Producing **birth certificate**]

Patrick: [With a little sarcasm]

“Sir . . . it’s nice to see that you were born.

“But we can’t accept a birth certificate unless it has a raised seal.”

“See . . . no seal . . . no good! Even worse—you weren’t born in Texas!”

“Don’t you have your passport?”

Jim: [Pause searching] “Oh . . . oh . . . here . . . how about this.”

“It shows I live in Texas! See my address is on it.”

[Producing **driver’s license**]

Patrick: [With exasperation]

“No sir . . . this may entitle you to *drive* here . . . but not to *live* here!”

[Pause—examining it] “Anyway, sir it’s expired!”

[While I fumble in the bag] “Really, sir . . . people are waiting.”

“Do you have your passport?”

Jim: “No sir . . . I just can’t seem to find it. What *will* I do?”

Patrick: “Sir . . . there’s only one *to* do.”

“Turn right around . . . go back to where you came from!”

[**Passport** drops out my pocket—you retrieve it—indignantly]

Patrick: [Stamping passport] “Sir, do you have anything to declare.”

Jim: “I *certainly* do. I declare—I’m sure glad you didn’t send me back to Oklahoma.”

II. ENTERING THE GREAT CITADEL NARRATIVE

Ken: “HALT . . . WHO GOES THERE? . . . FRIEND OR FOE?”

Jim: “IT’S ME . . . JIM SPIVEY!” [moving forward]

Ken: “I SAID . . . HALT . . . WHO GOES THERE? . . . **FRIEND OR FOE?**”

Jim: “IT’S ME . . . THE CHAPLAIN . . . LOOK . . . SEE MY CROSS!”

Ken: “FOR THE LAST TIME. WHO GOES THERE? **FRIEND OR FOE?**”

Jim: “A FRIEND—AT LEAST I THOUGHT SO!”

Ken: “ADVANCE AND BE RECOGNIZED”

[I STEP FORWARD]

Ken: “DALLAS”

Jim: “DALLAS WHO?—IS THIS A KNOCK-KNOCK JOKE”

Ken: “THE CHALLENGE IS ‘DALLAS’—WHAT IS THE PASSWORD?”

Jim: “TEXAS?”

Ken: “NO—STRIKE ONE—LET’S DO IT AGAIN—‘DALLAS’”

Jim: “STARS?”

Ken: “NO, AGAIN—STRIKE TWO—ONE MORE TIME—‘DALLAS’”

Jim: “COWBOYS?”

Ken: “YES, FRIEND—ADVANCE—AND ENTER THE GREAT CITY”

“BUT END ZONE SEATS WILL COST YOU \$89 A GAME—PLUS A \$4000
SEAT OPTION!”

III. ENTERING A FRIEND’S HOME NARRATIVE

[I KNOCK AT THE DOOR]

Joan: “WHO’S THERE?”

Jim: “IT’S THE PREACHER—DR. SPIVEY”

Joan: “HOW DO I KNOW IT’S YOU—SHOW ME SOME PROOF”

Jim: “I’M HERE TO PRAY WITH YOU—HERE’S OUR PRAYER LIST”

Joan: “WELL—THANKS—BUT THAT DOESN’T PROVE YOU’RE
THE PREACHER”

Jim: “HOW ABOUT THIS—MINUTES FROM BUSINESS MEETING.”

Joan: “THAT’S NICE—BUT ANYBODY CAN GET THOSE.”

Jim: “HERE’S A COPY OF THE CHURCH DIRECTORY.”

Joan: “THAT STILL DOESN’T MEAN ANYTHING. SHOW ME
SOMETHING THAT **PROVES** YOU’RE THE PREACHER.”

Jim: “LOOK AT THIS—ITS MY BIBLE—ITS GOT MY NAME IN IT”

Joan: “THAT’S STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH. YOU COULD HAVE FOUND IT—HE’S ALWAYS LEAVING THINGS LAYING AROUND. OR YOU MIGHT HAVE TAKEN IT FROM HIM.”

Jim: “OK—HERE’S A COPY OF MY SERMON NOTES FOR THIS WEEK—NOW ONLY I COULD HAVE THOSE, RIGHT”

Joan: “WELL MAYBE—LET ME SEE THE” [past the notes—pause]
NO—THESE CAN’T BE HIS—THEY’RE TOO SHORT!”
OH MY GOODNESS—HAVE YOU DONE SOMETHING WITH HIM? IS HE OKAY?

Jim: “LISTEN **MEEMAW**—IT’S PASTOR JIM—WILL YOU STOP FOOLING AROUND—OPEN UP AND LET ME HAVE ONE OF YOUR **FRIED PIES?**”

Joan: “OH—SURE—OF COURSE—WHY DIDN’T YOU **SAY SO** IN THE FIRST PLACE?”

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