

# God's Promises: He Opens Doors

John 10:1-10

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We've been talking about Jesus as the God who called Himself I Am. Jesus is also making statements that continue to reveal God to us. Jesus is the one and only God who nourishes our souls. Jesus is the one and only God who removes the darkness. Jesus is the one and only God who opens doors.

***“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”***

***This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus again said to them, “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. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” John 10:1–10 (ESV)***

**Don't over think these words, Jesus is the door to heaven for sinners.** Jesus has just healed a man born blind and a debate ensued about the religious leaders being spiritually blind. Jesus is confronting the religious leaders who have lead the people into legalism, the letter of the law and not grace and love, the spirit of the law.

These words of Jesus are a rebuke to those teachers who misled the people and a word of encouragement to the sheep to follow Jesus. Jesus puts down the religious leaders and opens the door for sinners.

How much do you know about sheepfolds or sheep pens? Only what I read. Shepherds would have an area that would serve as safe a place for their sheep. Each shepherd would bring his flock of sheep, usually at night. One shepherd would watch the sheep while the others rested. In the morning each shepherd would call his sheep and take them out to pasture.

Jesus wants the attention on two things: the entrance to the sheep pen and those who try to steal the sheep. We can try to break down this imagery, but if we go too far it becomes more complicated. The sheep are people waiting to hear about God's salvation and eternal life in heaven. The thieves and robbers are false teachers and self-righteous corrupted teachers. The door is Jesus, the gateway to eternal life, the kingdom of God.

Jesus gives people the opportunity to hear the truth that faith in Him is the way to Heaven. The unspoken conversation is about our ultimate destination being in heaven for eternity with God. Jesus doesn't mention heaven or eternity. The entire work of the religious leaders was to teach the people

about a relationship with God that is eternal. This is not a new idea but was spoken about in the Old Testament: God's people being with God; God's Kingdom lasting forever.

The religious leaders were jumping into the sheep pen with rules and regulations, rituals and customs. Jesus was breaking their rules, shutting down their rituals, and opening the door to a relationship with God forever.

The Old Testament prophets on more than one occasion referred to the people as sheep. Jesus is the door, the way, the truth, the life that leads to God, the Father of all. No matter where you are there is only one door to salvation. Jesus provides access to God the Father, to God's Kingdom, to heaven and eternal life. He is the true source of hope, peace, grace, mercy, and love. He is the one who forgives sins, overcomes it's power, and defeats it's punishment. He is the one who protects and provides, sustains and guides. He is the one who is always present, never absent. He grants wisdom and knowledge. He transforms individuals from sinners into saints. He makes people into faithful servants. Jesus, is the Savior of the world, the Door into life eternal.

***John 10:1 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber."***

**People are swayed to believe that there are others ways to get to Heaven.** Do people even care if there is heaven? The more I talk to people the more I realize that I misunderstand people. I've thought that everyone wanted to go to heaven. I've believed that people wanted to live forever without pain and suffering, grief and sorrow. I've lived my life holding onto the promise that I would be in heaven eventually.

This is not true for many people. I think that an overwhelming number of people are so focused on getting through their day, that they don't ever think about heaven. It's not a promise for them that holds any value. Heaven only becomes important when there is death. That's when they become concerned about seeing their loved one again.

I'll go one step further and say that people in every generation from the beginning, in every place on the planet are first concerned about their belly. They want to know what they are going to eat, what they are going to wear, and where they are going to sleep. Their second concern is are they loved, are they happy. Not much of anything else seems to matter beyond these two things. God is not a big deal to people. They are like sheep that want someone to give them food. Only when they are threatened do they want someone to keep them safe.

So when someone comes along and says do this and you'll get something people are willing to follow. I'm not telling you something you don't already know. You may not think this way yourself, but this is the reality for the rest of the world.

The religious leaders of Jesus' day convinced the people they would be blessed if they followed the rules and regulations, the rituals and customs. This is true of every religion through history. Christianity is the only exception.

Jesus was upset about these false teachings. He proclaimed and He claimed that He was the Door. He made it clear that to be blessed a person needed to go through Him. It's true you can work hard for your food, clothing, and shelter. Is that your highest goal? Is that all you want to achieve?

There are people who will answer yes because they don't have anything else. Literally they are living one meal to the next, wearing on their back their only clothes, and uncertain about where they will sleep. Even though the vast majority of people already have all these things they are only concerned with these things. Is that all that there is in this life? Is that the only reason to exist? Is there nothing more than that? Sheep don't care, and people are like sheep.

I can't speak for you but my motivation is the promise that there is something more in this life and after death. I have gone through the door. I have been forgiven. I have found a new life. Thank you Jesus.

***John 10:9 "I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture."***

**Everyone who goes through the Door will find salvation.** Just getting by is not the goal for our lives. Instead let me suggest that the real motivation for people is to be loved and to live forever.

Now, nobody wants to live forever if it includes suffering, pain, and a lack of love. That's hell, a real place reserved for people who don't go through the door, who don't know Jesus, who reject God, who live according to their sinful desires, who are unsaved, unredeemed, and not delivered to the promise of eternal life in heaven.

People want to live where it's peaceful, a lack of conflict, no trouble, no problems, an abundance of food, comfortable clothing, and luxurious shelter. That's what we're being sold by anybody who has anything to sell. That's what people want forever. It's not heaven, you're just being told it's like heaven.

Salvation is to know you are loved and have life eternal in heaven. The only way to be saved is to go through the Door. Jesus makes it clear to the most desperate person that they are loved. Jesus makes it clear to the most celebrated person that they are loved.

Regardless of whether you are a beggar on the street or the richest person in the world, or someone in between Jesus' loves you. Your life can be about rules, rituals, and customs Jesus loves you. You might be the person who is free, independent, and happy-go-lucky Jesus loves you. The actions of your life might be driven by greed, selfishness, and possessions Jesus loves you. Jesus loves the black, brown, white and all the other skin tones. Jesus loves the person who speaks Spanish and the person who speaks Yiddish.

The love of Jesus isn't merely an emotion, or reassurance, or acceptance of all your sinful actions. Jesus' love is sacrificial, restorative, and empowering. That is the love we crave. We know we need this love. Jesus' love transforms us into the people we were created to be. Just living for the moment, to get by, is well short of what we can be. We can only get there with the love of Jesus.

Jesus' love takes away our sins and it's punishment. Jesus loves you and died as your sin. Jesus loves you and rose from the dead. This is how you know you are loved, you are forgiven. You have been given a new life. You have been empowered for more than food, clothing, and shelter.

Salvation from sin and life with purpose for all eternity is only possible through Jesus. Once you go through the door, Jesus, everything begins to change. You see yourself in a different way. You see your situation in a new light. You see your future from His perspective. Everyday becomes more than

getting by, it becomes an opportunity. You experience the grace of God in your circumstances. You realize the power you have over sin and temptation. You hear yourself talking about mercy, hope, and peace.

***John 10:10 “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”***

**Jesus is calling you by name, choose His abundant life.** All the lies, half-truths, negative thoughts, rules, rituals, and customs aren't saving you. They will never save you.

Jesus is the only way to be saved from your sin. No matter how good you think you are there is still sin in your life. No matter how bad you think you are Jesus can still forgive your sin.

Sin is ugly. Sin reflects the ugliness of hell. It is a place that is a burning pit of fire. It is a lake of burning Sulphur. It is isolation from all that is loving and pure and beautiful. It is separation from joy, hope, peace, and love. It is emptiness, pain, and suffering. Unless you go to the Door, to Jesus, you will be in hell.

Hell is not like detention, or a time out, or jail. It lasts longer than anyone can think or imagine. It is forever, eternal, everlasting.

Believe the lies, pretend you're good enough, keep thinking your way is the best way and you will be in hell. You don't have to be an axe murderer, child rapist, crooked banker, sexually immoral to go to hell. All you have to do is not believe in Jesus. All you have to do is believe you are smarter than God. All you have to do is ignore the majesty of His creation, for He is displayed in all that He created.

You want something more for your life. You want to overcome temptations. You want to leave behind your sinful past. You want to live a new life. Go to the Door, go to Jesus. He is waiting for you. He's been waiting since the moment you were conceived. He's been waiting since the He created all the world and watched the first people turn against Him.

Jesus has always known that you needed to be saved. He decided to become one of us to save us. He lived everyday facing temptations and never sinning. He lived in the face of rejection, denial, and betrayal. He was attacked, beaten, and nailed to a cross. He became our sin, cast our sin into hell, and came back to life. He has paid the penalty for our sin through His death. He has given new life, eternal life to all who choose to be forgiven, changed, made new by His life death and resurrection.

Go to the Door, go to Jesus. Empty out your soul and your heart of your sins. Confess that you need His power to be changed. Ask to be forgiven. Heaven is your ultimate reward. A new life now is your daily blessing.

Jesus is the Door of Salvation. Are you willing to go to Jesus?