

John 10:7-10

"Sheep in Mass 'Ewe-icide,'" The Sun Online (7-8-05)

12 years ago, there were some shepherds who had gathered for breakfast outside a small town in the nation of Turkey. As they were eating they saw something happen that was devastating. One lone sheep jumped off a nearby cliff and fell to its death. What happened next was the shocker. After that one sheep jumped, the rest of the herd followed. 1500 sheep jumped. 450 of them died in the fall.

One of the local newspapers reported the incident. It soon went viral in other newspapers worldwide. It was devastating for the herdsmen to lose 450 sheep, not only for the lives of the sheep, but more the impact it had on their livelihoods. The total value lost in the tragedy was \$100,000. 26 families were affected by the loss. If the loss were equal among the 26 families, the loss per family would be in the neighborhood of \$3800 per family. That is truly significant when you consider that the average income per person in Turkey at that time was \$2,700 a year.

Were the shepherds eating breakfast responsible for the sheep? Was their neglect somewhere? Was their carelessness present?

Yet, when we put things in human perspective, people are like sheep. We are inclined to follow someone. Yet, in the years past, there have been "shepherds" who have led their sheep to death and destruction. An example many of you were not alive when it happened, Jim Jones. Do some of you remember Halle-Bob comet? What about David Koresh and the Branch Davidians. There was a special on that group this past Thursday. People are still followers of him, thinking he will come back again.

God is very concerned about people following the wrong shepherd. There were some through the years of the history of the Jewish people who were false shepherds leading "sheep" to death and destruction. Ezekiel 34 is a scathing message to Ezekiel from God about such happenings.

From verse 2, *"Thus says the Lord ^[b]GOD, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been ^[c]feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds ^[d]feed the flock?"*

¹⁰ *"Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My ^[a]sheep ^[h]from them and make them cease from feeding ^[i]sheep. So the shepherds will not ^[j]feed themselves anymore, but I will deliver My flock from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them.""*

¹⁵ *I will feed My flock and I will ^[p]lead them to rest," declares the Lord GOD.*

Then verse 23, we see a prophecy.

²³ *"Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. ²⁴ And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken.*

Wait a minute. David was in the past. Who is this servant, David?

That brings us to the passage I want to look at for this morning, John 10.

Without question, Jesus has the passage of Ezekiel in mind when he speaks to the Pharisees of the figure of speech of verses 1-6. Jesus is the fulfillment of Ezekiel 34:23-24.

I want to look at a repeat of the story Jesus gives in verses 1-6.

John 10:7-10.

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.

The thieves and the robbers are the Jewish leaders of the day. I don't want to spend time on them. I want focus on how Jesus referred Himself. This is the third of the seven "I am" statements of the Gospel of John. Each time Jesus identifies Himself in an "I am" statement, it is a claim of deity. He is God. "I am" is equal to Yahweh of OT.

I am the door. Jesus states this twice, once in verse 7 and the second in verse 9. I I am the door of the sheep. I I am the door.

Imagine yourself trapped in a building without windows or in a cave or in anything that is binding you. One thing you look for is freedom. Freedom and only comes by finding the door.

He is the Door

He is the door to the flock of God. There is no other way in. Jesus repeats this in another way in another "I am" statements. I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me.

There is no other way to God but through Jesus Christ and Him alone. There are no many ways to God. All roads don't lead to heaven. Before GPS came along on or cell phones, from time to time someone would stop in the parking lot of the church, roll their windows down and say, "Excuse me, are you from here." I reply, "I am now. How can I help you?" They say, "How do you get from Myrtle Beach?" I reply, "How did you get here?" They reply, "I have this map program (MapQuest) that said that if I follow that road, it will go to Myrtle Beach." Is that true? No. Go down that road, it will take you to the end of the road. Myrtle Beach is not at the intersection of 65 and 19. I say, "You can't get to Myrtle Beach down that road." So, I would give them the best directions that I can.

He is the Door of Deliverance

It is amazing to me that Jesus went from word picture to God fact. I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, He will be saved. He will be rescued. He will be delivered. He will be set free. If there is a rescued to be done, there must be something we need rescuing from. If there is a freedom to be given, there must be a bondage. We need rescuing from the thing called sin. We need freeing from the bondage call sin. Entering the door of Jesus Christ is the only way to that freedom.

He is the Door of Divine Provision and Protection

After Jesus states the first God fact, “He will be saved,” he states the second God fact, “He will go in and out and find pasture.”

That is divine provision. He makes me lie down in green pasture. That is provision. He leads me beside the still (quiet) waters.

We have received all things pertaining to spiritual life and godliness, have we not? All things. Fully sustained, fully supplied. But what is it that is our food? What is that pasture? It’s the Word. “Thy Word was found,” Jeremiah says, “and that’s what became my food.” We hear His voice. We know His voice. Where does His voice come to us? Through the Word.

God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the church to reveal Himself, His purposes, and His ways. Do some of you remember that statement? It is the 4th reality statement of Experiencing God. You want to experience God? Here is how He speaks to you. His Spirit speaks through His word primarily. This is the standard. This is the ruler. If what you hear in prayer, circumstances and the church does not match what is here, it is a different voice.

How much Word intake do you get? For some of you, today is all you will get. I preached on 4 verses this morning. Tonight I’m going to preach on 4 more verses. Will that be the only Bible you get for the week? When you go where you go for lunch, will that be the only meal you get for the week? What if it is? What’s going to happen? You’ll get puny. I encourage you to get in the Word. There are a lot of resources at your use right in your hands. There is no excuse for you to go spiritually starving.

Not only do we find divine provision, there is also divine protection. We have the freedom to roam. But know our shepherd is watching and guarding. We belong to Him. Nothing will take us away from His possession. Romans 8, go to it.

³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities (for Brooke: rulers), nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

He is the Door of Eternal Life

Verse 10 is one of the key verses of scripture. It is worth your memorizing. It is simple and easy. I came that you might have life and have it abundantly.

This is a purpose statement of Jesus. What Jesus identifies is what we call eternal life. Notice, nothing is said of heaven. For this is eternal life here and now. Eternal life here and now is God’s life in us. It is God’s life in us that lets us live life abundantly. There is a hard word to put in exact English language. Abundant can be translated as exceedingly beyond any number or measure. It is purposeful living. It is meaningful living.

I have not checked these facts with the nurses in our church, but it is my understanding that when a hospital has an infant that is not gaining weight or growing for unknown reasons, something is put on their chart—FTT—failure to thrive.

I think that that is a spiritual condition for many in our churches. They have FTT spiritually. It may be due to the fact that the word salvation is limited in understanding to only the forgiveness of sins or the escape from punishment. In these verses, Jesus is teaching us that there is more than just

escaping judgment. He wants us to thrive spiritually. "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.' 'He that hath the Son hath life.' 'Even when we were dead through our trespasses, God made us alive together with Christ.' "

You were made to thrive. You are divinely protected and provided for. You have been delivered, freed. These are all promises. We must meet the condition. If we enter the door of Jesus Christ.