



Around the Word
BIBLE STUDY
Eastertide, 2016

The I AM sayings of Jesus John 10:1–10

Session 3: "I AM the Door"

I AM the door, Jesus declares. Rather ordinary, don't you think? There are plenty of Christ the Vine, Light of Christ, or Good Shepherd Lutheran churches. Ever seen a Christ the Door Lutheran Church? Probably not. Aren't doors simply a way for us to break on through to the other side? Aren't doors just a way to get from point A to point B? There's nothing significant about a door...or is there? St. John's Gospel records this important "I AM saying" of Jesus. So, what does Jesus mean when he says, I AM the Door?

In our daily life, doors vary in function and form, but in the Christian Church, there is only one door and it only comes in one size and shape: Jesus crucified. The doorway of Jesus' cross is an eternal portal for you. It is a narrow door through which the last come first. It is a narrow door and we must be stripped of our self-righteousness, pride, and sin in order to fit through it. And yet this door of Christ Crucified is wide enough for all sinners to enter and find rest in Christ's sheepfold. Jesus cross is a door large enough to swallow up our death, guilt, and sin. And when Jesus' tomb opened on Easter morning, the doorway of death was closed forever. Jesus is our Door to eternal life!

Many Prophets and Apostles, One Door

"Christ is the Door of the Father through which Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the prophets, the apostles and the church all enter. All these enter into the unity of God."

—Ignatius of Antioch

Opening: Psalm 100

¹Make a joyful noise to the LORD, | all the earth!*

²Serve the LORD with gladness!

Come into his presence with | singing!

³**Know that the LORD, | he is God!***

**It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his
| pasture.**

⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his | courts with praise!*

Give thanks to him; | bless his name!

⁵**For the LORD is good;
his steadfast love endures for- | ever,*
and his faithfulness to all gener- |
ations.**

**Glorify him to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit.**

**as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

Read John 10:1–10

v. 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."

Behind the English phrase, "Truly, truly" is the Greek, "Ἀμήν ἀμήν" ("Amen, amen"), the word we use to conclude prayers. Martin Luther translates it this way: "Yes, yes; it shall be so." Why is this word choice significant? Look at the immediate and surrounding context of John's Gospel. Where else does Jesus use the phrase, "Truly, truly" to begin a statement? What kinds of statements follow this phrase? What makes this common phrase of Jesus more than mere repetition for emphasis?

Look again at the surrounding context. To whom is Jesus speaking in this section? Who is he accusing of being a thief and a robber? What are the other ways by which they try to enter the sheepfold? What is this sheepfold?

v. 2-3: "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

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name and leads them out.”

In an agricultural setting, what is the vocation of the gatekeeper on behalf of the sheep? How does Jesus embody and fulfill these characteristics and qualities of the shepherd?

How is Jesus greater than an earthly shepherd? How is the gatekeeper known to the sheep? How are the sheep known by the gatekeeper? What does it mean that the shepherd knows his sheep by name?

What name were we given in Holy Baptism? See 1 Peter 2:1-10. Why is it comforting that Jesus knows us, his baptized sheep, by name? See Revelation 21:22-27

v. 4-5: “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.”

How does Jesus go out before us, his sheep, in life? How does he go before us in death and resurrection? See also 1 Corinthians 15. Why does Jesus place a heavy emphasis on his voice and words? Where in the Christian Church do we hear the voice of our shepherd, Jesus? By what tangible means does he deliver his Word to us? How do these gifts help us to flee the voice of strangers and false shepherds? How does Jesus tell us that we will recognize those who are false teachers?

v. 6: “This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.”

Why does Jesus frequently use figures of speech in his teaching? How are Jesus’ figures of speech helpful in understanding his teaching? How do figures of speech bring concreteness, instead of abstraction, to Jesus’ words? What don’t the disciples understand yet? When do they finally understand what Jesus is saying? See John 20:30-31; 21:1-19.

v. 7-8: “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

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listen to them.”

Why does Jesus repeat his previous declaration? What is new or different as he speaks it again? How does he intensify and focus his wording for the disciples? What and who is Jesus excluding by his words, “All who came before me are thieves and robbers”? Why is Jesus the only acceptable door for the sheep? What do the thieves and robbers lack that Jesus provides the sheep?

Where else in the bible do we read about a doorway? Consider Exodus 12 and the Passover rituals or Jacob’s dream in Genesis 28.



v. 9: “I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.”

What are the purposes of doors in our daily life? How is Jesus similar to these purposes, and yet greater? Why is this figure of speech more than a metaphor? How is Jesus our door to eternal life? How do we enter through him? What is the good pasture that we find in Jesus?

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

What has the thief come to do? Ultimately, whose work is Jesus referring to in this verse? See also 1 Peter 5:6-11 and Genesis 3. How do sin, death, and the devil steal, kill and destroy? What has Jesus done about these three great thieves who want to steal us away from Christ?

In contrast to the thief, what does Jesus bring to us his sheep? What does Jesus mean by “life”? Where/how do we receive this life abundantly just as he promises? How is Jesus’ declaration, *I AM the Door* fulfilled in his work of salvation for us?

Closing: Christ, the Word of God Incarnate (LSB, 540)

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