

I AM: "The Gate" – (WEEK 4) Craig Miles

INTRO

- We've been looking at the "I AM" statements of Jesus in the book of John that Jesus made about himself.
- Every time Jesus calls himself "I AM ..." He does this to let us know that He is identifying himself as God.
- Jesus called himself, "**The Bread of Life**" and "**The Light of the World.**"

THIS WEEK

- This week we're discussing the statement, "**I AM the Door.**" (*John 10:1-10*)
- In order to understand the full meaning of this passage we need to be reading it with the understanding that the original listeners would have been using.
 - **Sheep are one of the most helpless creatures in the animal kingdom.** They get lost, they have very few survival skills and are totally dependent on a shepherd.
 - **God compares us to sheep on purpose!**
- This passage can be confusing in that Jesus refers to himself as both the shepherd that is let into the sheepfold and the gate to enter the sheepfold.
- **There were two kinds of sheepfolds.** The one near towns or inns often were used by multiple shepherds and flocks, even at the same time. The ones out in the countryside were typically only used by one shepherd at a time.
 - When Jesus refers to being the shepherd who enters in by the gate, he is describing a sheepfold with multiple shepherds and was guarded by a gatekeeper.
 - **The sheep pen represents the Kingdom of God**
- **In John 10:1 Jesus is comparing himself with the Pharisees** (and anyone else who would take Jesus' place.)
 - Jesus compares them with thieves and robbers because they were trying to keep the people's obedience to themselves rather than Jesus.
- **In John 10:3, the shepherd calls his sheep, and they listen to his voice.**
 - **Do you know the voice of the Lord?**
 - God's Word is the place to always start when you want to hear from Him.
 - If we don't know God's Word, it is easy for us to confuse God's voice with another voice.
 - Culture, Well-meaning friends (even Christian friends), Our own desires
 - Our enemy wants us to listen to any voice other than God's.
 - **It says that He calls them by name. God knows you – and loves you!** (*Luke 12:6-7*)
- **John 10:4-5 tells us the sheep not only know the shepherd's voice; they also follow him.**
 - **Do you follow Jesus and go where He goes?**
 - It also says they won't follow a stranger. In fact, they'll run from him.
 - Many people make horrible mistakes because they follow a voice other than God's.
 - Other religions, the culture, political ideologies, materialism
 - **Are you listening to God's voice and choosing to follow him so closely that you are in the protection of the Good Shepherd?**
- **The Pharisees didn't get what Jesus was saying so he hit the topic with another metaphor.**

John 1:7 (NIV) Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.

- **The small sheep pens that were used in the country during good weather were quite different from the ones near cities.** This type of sheep pen was nothing more than a rough circle of rocks piled into a wall with a small open space to enter. Since there was no gate to close - just an opening, the shepherd would sleep there, in this case literally becoming the gate to the sheep.
- **In John 10:9 Jesus said that whoever enters through him will be saved. He then contrasts himself with the devil, and any who work against God. (John 10:10)**
 - The thief comes only to kill, steal and destroy. Jesus wants to give you abundant life!

THE INVITATION

- **Jesus calling himself the gate is an invitation.** He called himself, “**The Gate,**” not “**a gate.**”
 - In John 14:6, Jesus says, “No one comes to the Father except through me.”
 - Jesus also said, “**WHOEVER**” enters through him will be saved! (**John 3:16**)
- **There actually is a time when the gate is closed forever. (Matthew 25:31-46)**
- **Only the righteous get into Heaven and only Jesus makes us righteous. (Philippians 3:8-9)**

CLOSING

- **Have you accepted the invitation?**
- **Are you listening to the Good Shepherd?**
- **Are you following where He leads?**

For Small Group Discussion: Did you hear anything new or challenging in this weeks’ message?

Opening Question: What door (literally or figuratively) do you regret entering?

Main Point: Jesus protects His followers as shepherds protect their flocks from predators.

Main Scripture: John 10:1-10

Head:

- What does it mean to “enter through” Jesus?
- We are told that the audience did not understand Jesus’ message. What do you think He was trying to communicate?

Heart:

- What are some ways that the enemy has tried to “kill, steal, and destroy” in your life or in your family?
- A gate is meant to keep things safe. How does Jesus protect you, or how has He in the past?

Hands

- What does it look like for you to have abundant life?
- How can you grow in expressing abundant life?

Additional Scripture: Revelation 3:20, John 14:6

Tips and Resources: *The Way of the Shepherd* by Dr. Kevin Leman



Sermon Series Resources: <https://bit.ly/RLcurrentseries>