

Session 4 – I AM the Door

John 10:1–10

Jesus' words invite us to consider
a deeper question:

**Where are we looking for
security, protection, and
belonging?**



How to Use This Study

This series is designed to be experienced in two stages.

- **Personal Study During the Week**

Each participant reads the Scripture and works through the Study Guide before the group meeting.

- **Group Discussion Together**

When the group gathers, the Facilitator and Student Guides help guide conversation, reflection, and prayer based on the material everyone has already explored.

- This format allows the group to move beyond surface discussion and engage the Bible more deeply together.



Where We Are in John's Gospel

As John's Gospel unfolds, Jesus continues revealing **who He truly is**.

Each moment builds on the last.

Session 1 — John 1

The Word became flesh and lived among us.

Session 2 — John 6

Jesus declares: *I am the Bread of Life*.

Session 3 — John 8

Jesus proclaims: *I am the Light of the World*.

Now the tension with the religious leaders is growing.

In **John 9**, Jesus heals a man born blind.
Instead of celebrating the miracle, the religious leaders reject it.

This conflict sets the stage for Jesus' next declaration:

“I am the door.”
(*John 10:1–10*)

Jesus now explains **who truly belongs to God's flock — and who does not**.



The Shepherd Image in Scripture

To understand Jesus' words in John 10, we need to understand the shepherd image in the Bible.

Throughout Scripture, God describes His relationship with His people using this image.

A Shepherd Provides
Guidance
Protection
Provision
Care for the Vulnerable

One of the most famous examples appears in Psalm 23, where the Lord is described as the shepherd who leads His people beside still waters and restores their souls.

This image communicates trust, dependence, and care.



When Shepherds Fail

The prophets often warned about leaders who failed to care for God's people.

Instead of protecting the flock, some leaders used their authority for personal gain.

Instead of guiding people toward God, they created burdens and barriers.

One of the clearest warnings appears in **Ezekiel 34**.

There God rebukes the shepherds of Israel and promises that **He Himself will come and shepherd His people.**

Jesus' teaching in John 10 directly echoes this promise.



The Setting of the Teaching

Jesus begins this teaching shortly after the events of John 9.

A man who had been blind from birth was healed by Jesus.
Instead of celebrating the miracle, the religious leaders interrogated him.
Eventually they expelled him from the synagogue.

**The leaders who were supposed to guide the people
spiritually had rejected the work of God.**

**Jesus begins speaking about true shepherds and false
shepherds in response to this moment.**



Understanding the Sheepfold

Jesus describes a sheepfold.

10 "I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! ² But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't know his voice."

John 10:1-5

In ancient villages, sheep were often kept in a stone enclosure at night.

The sheepfold typically had:

- high stone walls
- one narrow opening
- no physical gate

At night the shepherd would lie across the opening.

The shepherd himself became the **gate that protected the sheep**.

Nothing could enter or leave without passing through him.



Two Ways to Approach the Sheep

Jesus describes two types of people approaching the sheepfold.

10 “I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! 2 But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice. 5 They won’t follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don’t know his voice.”

John 10:1-5

Some **enter through the gate**.

Others **climb over the wall**.

Those who climb in another way are not shepherds.

Jesus describes them as **thieves and robbers**.

Their intention is not care or protection.

Their intention is to take advantage of the flock.



The Sheep Know the Shepherd

Jesus explains that sheep recognize the voice of their shepherd.

10 "I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! 2 But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice. 5 They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't know his voice."

John 10:1-5

When the shepherd calls, the sheep respond.

They trust his voice because they know him.

But they will not follow a stranger.

Instead they move away from unfamiliar voices.

Jesus is describing the relationship between Himself and those who belong to Him.



The Crowd Doesn't Understand

John tells us that the people listening did not understand what Jesus meant.

6 Those who heard Jesus use this illustration didn't understand what he meant,

John 10:6

The imagery was familiar.

But the deeper meaning was not obvious.

So Jesus moves from illustration to declaration.

He explains plainly what the image represents.



Jesus' Declaration

Jesus says:

7 so he explained it to them: “I tell you the truth, I am the door for the sheep.”

John 10:7

This is another of the great **“I AM” statements** in John’s Gospel.

Jesus is not simply describing a spiritual concept.

He is making a claim about **His identity**.

He declares that He Himself is the entrance into life with God.



Why the Door Matters

In the sheepfold the door had several critical functions.

Protection from predators

Security during the night.

Access into safety

- Without the door the sheep would be vulnerable.
- By calling Himself the door, Jesus is saying that **true security and life are found through Him.**



Protection

The door protected the sheep from danger.

In the ancient world sheep faced threats from predators, thieves, and the wilderness.

Spiritually, people also face dangers:

deception

destructive influences

spiritual confusion

Jesus protects by guiding people into truth and relationship with God.



Salvation

Jesus explains that those who enter through Him will be saved.

9 Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. They will come and go freely and will find good pastures.

John 10:9

Salvation means rescue and restoration.

Through Jesus people experience:

- forgiveness of sin
- reconciliation with God
- a new identity as God's people

Entering through the door means trusting Christ as the way into life with God.



Salvation

Jesus adds another image.

9 Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. They will come and go freely and will find good pastures.

John 10:9

Those who enter through Him will **come and go freely and find pasture**.
This describes a life of freedom under the shepherd's care.

The shepherd does not trap the sheep.

He leads them into places where they can flourish.

In Christ, people experience both security and freedom.



The Thief's Purpose

Jesus contrasts His mission with another reality.

10 *The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.*

John 10:10

False leaders promise life but ultimately produce harm.
Throughout history many voices compete for people's loyalty.

Not every voice that promises life actually leads to life.

**This reemphasizes on why it is so important to be one
of His sheep, and recognize His voice!**



Jesus' Mission

Jesus explains why He came.

10 The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

John 10:10

Jesus does not simply offer survival.
He offers **a rich and satisfying life.**

**This life is not defined by possessions or comfort.
It is defined by a restored relationship with God.**



The Invitation

Jesus' statement about the door is an invitation.

The door is open.

But people must decide whether they will enter.

Trusting Jesus means recognizing that true life is not found through self-direction.

It is found through following the One who leads us into safety and life.



Reflection Questions

1. Why do you think Jesus used the image of a door to describe His role?
2. What voices today compete for people's attention and trust?
3. Why do people often search for security apart from God?
4. What might it look like to trust Jesus as the door that leads to life?



Key Takeaway

Every person is searching for safety, belonging, and life.

Jesus declares that **He is the door.**
Through Him we find protection, guidance, and abundant life.

The door is open.

The question is whether we will choose to enter.

