

COME IN OR GO OUT

4/25 & 4/26

[John 10:1-10](#) – There are times when Jesus speaks in riddles, and those listening to him ask him to clarify his words. In John 10, Jesus is speaking to the religious leaders. He uses the gate to the sheep pen as his example. He starts by pointing out that those who do not enter through the gate are there to steal the sheep. This lesson seems easy to understand, but is it? Many try to get followers of Jesus to listen to them rather than to Jesus. They are there to take advantage of the sheep, but the sheep know better because they know the shepherd's voice. They know the real shepherd comes through the gate, not around it or over it.

How do people try to lead you away from Jesus?

How are you able to discern Jesus' voice?

Why is Jesus the gate?

Sermon Notes



Our Journey for

April 20 – April 26, 2026

As we continue to look at Jesus' self-descriptions, we come to this rather odd description. He says that he is the gate or door, depending upon the translation of the Greek word *thoora*. There is a phrase that says that you make a better door than a window, which is used when you are standing in the way of someone trying to watch what is going on. But I am not certain anyone has called themselves a door or a gate. Yet, Jesus does as he is talking to the religious leaders about sheep and shepherds. The religious leaders don't understand the imagery Jesus is using, so He goes into some detail about what he means. Thousands of years later, we still struggle with the meaning of Jesus being the door. Is he guarding his sheep? Is he protecting his sheep by limiting who can lead them? Is he limiting access to those who are trying to harm the sheep? This leads to many more questions. As we look into Jesus' words, we examine protection, access, and the gatekeepers of Jesus' sheep.

~ Pastor Seth

GUARD YOUR HEART

Mon. 4/20

[Proverbs 4:20-27](#) – When someone says, "Pay Attention", what do you do? Do you lean in? Do you tune out? Does it depend upon who is speaking to you? Solomon, the wisest person the world has seen, writes this part of Proverbs to emphasize the need for wisdom. He gets our attention by pointing out that these words are for our health, and our lives will be better if we hold on to them. The first thing he says is to "guard your heart". Why guard our hearts? Because everything we do flows from our hearts. Solomon's view of the heart is that the heart is the center of a person's inner life. It needs protecting because our inner life determines whether we are good or bad people. It leads us to either trust or manipulate others. It leads us to walk with God or deny God.

How can we protect our hearts? What does Solomon say to do?

Who can help you protect your heart? Who else? Have you asked for their help? Why?

A RESPONSE TO GOD

Tue. 4/21

[Joshua 24:1-28](#) – All of us are given a choice to follow God. Some of us have chosen to follow God, others have chosen to do so later in their lives, and others are still trying to make up their minds. We all have to make the choice. The people of Israel were no different. They conquered most of the Promised Land, and it was time to choose their next steps. Joshua laid it out before them and explained what he would do: follow the Lord. The people responded by telling Joshua that they remembered God's words of protection and guidance. They remembered all the times God delivered on His promises. They knew God would remain true to His word. Joshua took it a step further, telling them they would rebel against God and face consequences, but the people were undeterred and wanted to follow God.

What would your response to Joshua be? Why?

How are you living out your response to God?

IN OR OUT

Wed. 4/22

[Jeremiah 7:1-8](#) – What does a door do? It allows you to come in or go out. It stops others from entering. It offers protection. The prophet Jeremiah is told to stand by the gate at the Temple. While he is standing there, he is to tell the people that they need to change their ways if they want to remain in Jerusalem. God has had enough of their actions that did not reflect His ways and His laws. If they were not going to follow Him, they would be heading out the door. How different are we from the people of Jerusalem in Jeremiah's day? We have more technology, but our hearts are still the same. We are tempted to trust in the time we spend at the church instead of following Jesus' words and doing what he did.

How are Jesus' words like a door?

What does it look like to spend time at church instead of following Jesus' words and doing what he did?

WHOSE RIGHT?

Thur. 4/23

[John 8:1-11](#) – We hear words of condemnation, and we cannot get them out of our heads. Those words put us down and will not let us get back up. The woman in our reading for today heard those words from the religious leaders. If we put ourselves in her shoes, we can imagine the thoughts that told her how bad she was and that she would never be able to recover her dignity. She might have accepted the consequences of stoning because it would be more merciful than facing her family and friends. When Jesus speaks, her thoughts quiet down, and she hears words of love and hope. When the religious leaders leave, she looks into the eyes of the one who loves her no matter what she has done. She hears the words of forgiveness, not condemnation. She understands grace over death.

Where do Jesus' words lead the woman?

Where do Jesus' words lead you?

LISTEN CAREFULLY

Fri. 4/24

[Hebrews 3:7-19](#) – Hebrews 3:7-19 speaks about listening for Jesus' voice and not hardening our hearts. As the people of God were leaving Egypt, they started to harden their hearts to God. They looked back at Egypt as a place where everything was better. The problem is that it wasn't better. They were slaves. God was leading them to the Promised Land, where they would be free and live in a place where their basic needs would be met. But the people had a hard time trusting God would do what He promised to do. The author of Hebrews tells his readers that they face the same temptation and should not give in to it. They should encourage each other to listen to Jesus' voice and follow Him.

How are you listening to Jesus' voice?

Who are you encouraging to follow Jesus' voice?