



Discussion Questions Set #1

“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.” (John 21:18-19)

“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them.” (Matthew 7:15-16)

“Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene” (2 Timothy 2:16-17).

In sermon, it was suggested that Christ’s comments about thieves and robbers might not be wholly applicable to Satan, which is the usual interpretation here. It is likely a comment related to the teachers of the law who sought to use their positions of religious authority for their own advantage, oppressing the “flock of Israel” under man-made rules and regulations. The prophet Ezekiel described them as poor shepherds who “only [took] care of [themselves]” and “ruled ... harshly and brutally” (Ezekiel 34:2,4).

1. How might this interpretation cause us to interpret this passage differently?
2. How does an examination of one’s fruit lend credibility to his or her message? What does this practically look like for us in a digital age?
3. What do you think the phrase “godless chatter” means and what caution might this extend to us as we seek to follow Jesus well in our world?

Discussion Questions Set #2

“Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.” (John 10:xx).

“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)

In sermon, it was suggested that through the gate, in Jesus, we find both protection and plenty. Though the path is lined with disgrace and suffering, we are guarded and gifted in abundance as we journey along it toward eternal glory.

1. Discuss the significance of Jesus as the gate which provides salvation and security.
2. Discuss the significance of Jesus as the gate which enables plenty and life to the full.
3. Why is it important that Jesus provides both of these realities for us? What might happen if we fail to recognize one of these realities?

Discussion Questions Set #3

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.” (John 10:xx)

“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.” (John 16:13)

1. Discuss the importance of knowing Jesus as “shepherd” and not just “gate”.
2. We didn’t touch on it in detail in sermon, but note that the use of the term “hired hand” also likely refers to the religious leaders of Israel. Why is it important that we recognize the difference between our shepherd and the hired hand?
3. Can you identify some of the “shepherding duties” of the Holy Spirit in the life of the follower of Jesus?