

The Names of Jesus: Gate

Text: John 10:1-10

Warming Up

Questions:

1. *What's one of the dumbest things you've ever done?*
2. *In what ways do you feel you need Jesus now more than ever?*

Digging In

Read **John 10:1-10**.

The word for "gate" here is the word *thura*, which is also translated as "door" or "entrance".

Questions:

1. *Why do you think Jesus likens himself to the gate here, and to not the shepherd or gatekeeper?*
2. *How might seeing Jesus as the "door" or "entrance" rather than the "gate" change your perception of Jesus in this teaching?*

Sometimes it is the devil that is equated with the "thief" in this passage. But if we read closely, it is more likely Jesus is talking about the *Pharisees*, the religious leaders of their time. Biblical scholar Ken Bailey mentions that Jesus may even be referring to Jewish leaders that came before that also called themselves "the messiah", calling people to take up arms against their enemies.

Questions:

1. *In what ways can religious leaders rob us of what Jesus offers us?*
2. *When Jesus says he offers "life to the full", what do you think he means by that?*
3. *How have you experienced Jesus offering you "fullness of life"?*

When the Scriptures speak of "gates" in God's good future, they are always open.

Read **Isaiah 60:1-18**.

Questions:

1. *What do you think it means when it says that the gates of God's future city will "always stand open, they will never be shut"?*
2. *Why do you think the name of these opened gates is "Praise"?*

There are many echoes of Isaiah in the book of Revelation. In fact, Revelation is hard to read without a clear grasp of the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament) firmly in our minds. And when Revelation describes God's good future again, we find these opened gates *again*.

Read **Revelation 21:22-27**.

Questions:

1. *Why do you think Revelation is repeating the imagery of opened gates from Isaiah 60?*
2. *What do you think it means that the "kings of the earth", who Revelation 19 tells us were killed and eaten, are showing up again to enter these opened gates?*

Sending Out

Read **Luke 13:22-30**.

Some scholars point out that there are two doors in this passage: the door of verse 24 and the door of verse 25. There is the *narrow door* that Jesus always leaves open, and there is this other door that Jesus shuts where people are trying to get in on their own merit, because they know the owner of the house. In other words, Jesus shuts a door on those trying to get in by their own effort and position so that they can only then come in by way of the narrow door, which is Jesus and his grace alone. Which may be why the first are *last* and not *lost* in verse 30.

Questions:

1. *Why do you think it is hard for the very religious to continue to make access to God's household about grace and not about purity, effort, or personal merit?*
2. *For what reasons do the very religious tend to shut the door on others?*
3. *How would church be different if we believed Jesus was the door into his sheep pen or household instead of our goodness or faithfulness?*

Closing

Take a moment in silence to come before God and ask the question, *"What word or phrase or idea or moment does God want me to remember from this morning and carry with me this week?"*

Close with prayer.