

I AM the Gate Week 2 - 15/9/2024

John 10:1-10

- Has anyone got any sheep stories they would like to tell or experience with being around sheep?

Read John 10: 1- 10

Jesus told this parable because of being challenged by the Pharisees because He healed a blind man. The healed man said that Jesus must be a prophet and a godly man because he healed him but the Pharisees said that Jesus was not godly because He healed the man on the Sabbath! They saw their overbearing additions to the law as being more important than God's healing power and mercy to a blind man. Jesus said that they were the blind ones ... and then directly challenged their authority with this parable.

Three things struck me during Paul's sermon last week that I would like to explore:

1. Sheep seem to REALLY need a shepherd and protection! Paul mentioned that they were vulnerable and valuable.

- How are sheep vulnerable?
- As Jesus compares us to sheep does that mean that we are also vulnerable as believers?
- How are sheep valuable and how are we valuable as people and believers?

2. Jesus speaks a lot about thieves and robbers in this parable and what 'the gate' does to protect the sheep from them. Jesus is addressing the Pharisees and refers to them as thieves and robbers because they are acting as the gate keepers for deciding who is godly and who is a sinner. Jesus is asserting HIS authority to make that judgement and also mentions salvation through the gate - a foretelling of His death and resurrection.

- Discuss if you agree with this quote: "In a Christian context, a modern day "Pharisee" is someone who follows the impulse to be seen as righteous by obeying certain laws, while ignoring more important matters of the heart." (Daniel Macoy)



- Do you agree with the statement that there would be no need for a sheep pen or gate if there were no 'thieves and robbers'?

The aim of the thief is to "steal, kill and destroy" ... sometimes people steal for the financial gain ... sometimes jealousy, control, power, hatred etc

So thieves can be/take the big things that take us away from Jesus - physical distractions of better things to do than come to church, sinful behaviours that cause guilt, the influence of bad friends ... good friends who distract us! ... but they are most likely going to be the little things that destroy the truth, destroy fellowship, destroy relationships, destroy family, distract from 'the point' ... they will kill our joy, our peace, our faith and the fruits of the spirit, they will kill the good, they will distract us from the way forward. Some 'thieves

and robbers' may be inside us ... bad attitudes or a view of God that is self centred, not King of Kings focussed.

Satan knows that we are saved but he will do anything to make sure that we do not grow closer to Jesus ... because that would make your life attractive to others, that would mean that you start reflecting His light ... and draw others to Jesus.

- *What are the thieves and robbers in our lives?*
- *What is taking our focus off Jesus individually and as a church?*

3. In the whole of John 10, Jesus is talking about being the shepherd (this is another of His "I AM" statements which we will explore later), but this aspect of being a shepherd was so important that He specifically says: "I AM the Gate to the sheep" and it is also obvious that a wooden gate would not be able to do what a human 'gate' could do for the sheep.



- *Why do you think this is so important that 'the gate' needs to be emphasised?*
- *What do you need to hear from Jesus today?*

- *Is there anything that particularly stands out to you about this story or the sermons from the last 2 weeks?*

Pray for each others, for church meeting on Sunday, for our elders and leaders of all the groups

Suggested worship songs:

