

# THE GREAT “I AM’S” of JESUS

by

John Caylor

Copyright © 1957

## CHAPTER FOUR

### I AM THE DOOR

**“I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture” (John 10:9).**

It was shepherds to whom God first revealed the coming of the Messiah. Throughout the ministry of Christ the analogy of sheep, shepherds, and sheepecotes was common. The language was easily understood because of the universality of the occupation of shepherds. When Jesus spoke of Himself as the door of the sheep, He was on familiar ground with His hearers.

Jesus is the door. Note that He did not call Himself a door, but the door. There is no other. He is the entrance into the sheepfold. He is the door of the sheep. There is no other way.

Philosophers' doors are false openings leading to empty rooms. Whoever tries to find his own way without divine guidance will discover that he has entered an empty room where there is no light. There is nothing wrong with philosophy. There is nothing unreasonable about Jesus' claim to be the door. The philosopher who enters by means of the door of the sheep will find himself walking in the light and reasoning by the aid of divine logic.

*There is the doorway of good deeds.* Many try to enter into the kingdom through that door. It is a false door. No one is good enough to enter the kingdom. It is not possible for one to earn his way by good deeds.

Suppose you, at your present age, whether young or old, could begin at this point and never sin again. Suppose you fill your life with good deeds from now until the end of your life. Let your goodness be perfection. How much goodness could you accumulate to put over against the sins of your past to wipe out the sins you have committed?

It is not possible for one to gain a surplus of goodness to balance over against the evil of his past. Good deeds in the Christian are the outworking of an inner goodness which comes from Jesus Christ our Lord. Good deeds should always follow acceptance of Christ as the door to eternal life but they cannot earn salvation for us. The doorway of character is offered as a door of hope. Now character is important, but it is not an attainment, but it a gift from God through Jesus Christ. Christian character is a cloak of righteousness which is put on the believer by Christ. Then it becomes a fitting robe exemplifying the giver.

Character is what one is, rather than what one does. If the Christian honors the Lord and his Christian profession by a circumspect life and a character which is respected by those who know him, he is living the gospel. The nearer he lives to the giver of his new life, the finer his character and the more radiant his life.

E. Stanley Jones, the great missionary to India, was challenged by a Confucian when the missionary claimed salvation. Said the Confucian, "I would consider it egotistical to claim that I had already attained salvation." Stanley Jones answered, "So would I consider it egotistical to claim the attainment of salvation; but since my salvation is an obtainment and not an attainment, I do not consider it egotistical to claim that I have it. What has been given me, I know I have. My salvation is a gift from Christ.

There is quite a difference between attaining salvation by means of good works and obtaining salvation through the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ unto good works. Character is what one is. Christian character is what one allows Jesus to make of him through a dedicated life.

*There is the false doorway of obedience.*

God's chosen people through the generations tried to keep the commandments. They were the best people who had ever lived. They were God's people. Yet they were short of God's will and purpose for mankind. In spite of their efforts to keep the law, the Israelites were disobedient children. Salvation by means of obedience to the law required that every jot and tittle of the law must be kept. There must be no violation even in part. This was impossible. So God sent His only Son into the world that He might redeem man. The law was a schoolmaster bringing people into the presence of Christ. Only through Him can full obedience to the law be effected.

There is a sense in which obedience is necessary in salvation. When Jesus offers an invitation to the lame to get up and walk, to the blind to open his eyes and see, to the sinner to repent and accept Him, obedience is necessary. Unless the lame man starts to get up, he will have no strength; unless the blind man opens his eyes, he cannot see; unless the sinner repents and acts upon his belief in Jesus Christ as Saviour, there is no salvation for him. Obedience in accepting the invitation of Christ is necessary if one is to receive the salvation which He offers.

As the text declares, Jesus is "**the door of the sheep.**" They are His sheep. He knows them and calls them by name. From the foundation of the world it was God's plan for Christ to come into the world and give His life a ransom for sinners. In the same plan which sent God's Son into the world to die for sinful man, God chose His sheep. Those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour are His sheep. He knows them. He calls them and they respond. He identifies them as His own. He presents them to the Father.

As the shepherd stands in the door of the sheepcote counting in his sheep, so Christ is the door of the sheep counting in His redeemed. Only those who have trusted Him as Saviour are admitted into the sheepfold. They are the redeemed of the Lord. They are His.

Jesus speaks of that day when the sheep will be gathered together on the one hand and the goats on the other. Only the sheep, or the redeemed, will be admitted into the fold. The goats will be commanded to depart as the Lord will declare that He never knew them. **“Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.”**

*Jesus is the door of safety.* To enter into the sheepfold through Jesus Christ as the door is to put Christ between us and temptation. There is the temptation to wander. One is heard to say, “I would be a Christian, but I am afraid I cannot hold out.” This is a mistaken notion about what it means to be a Christian. It does not mean that one must hold out. To be a Christian means that one is to surrender to Christ. He does the holding. He will protect His children from the temptation to wander and will keep them in His will. The Christian is not to hold out; he is to let Christ hold him.

To enter through the door of safety means that the Christian puts Christ between him and life’s precipices. Life is beset with pitfalls. In every direction one goes he is likely to run into difficulties. Sheep on the hills of Palestine were in constant danger of cliffs and precipices over which they might fall. Particularly were the lambs in the fold likely to feed too close to the edge and fall or be pushed off the cliffs to be wounded on the rocks below. Young Christians need the constant care of the Shepherd to provide safety for them by night all they enter in the sheepcote for safety, and by day as they feed upon the hills.

The analogy is carried further in the suggestion that the sheep are protected against ravaging wolves which would pounce upon them while feeding in the fields or slip into the sheepfold, except for the shepherd’s care. The wolves of doubt and despair constantly beset the Christian. He must depend upon the door of safety to keep him from the thieves and robbers who would climb over the wall, or the wolves which would endanger his safety in the pasture.

*He is also the door of plenty.* Jesus said, **“By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”** Not only is He the door of safety; *He is also the door of plenty.* Whoever enters by that door will be free to go in and out, into safety and out to pasture.

It was this beautiful thought which led David to sing about the safety and security of the Lord. **“I shall not want,”** he said. The Christian has not been promised all the material blessings he could enjoy, but he may be sure that he will have all that he needs and that what he does have will be for his good. He may trust the Lord for pasture. Green pastures and refreshing waters are the lot of the Christian.

*Christ is the door of happiness.* The pursuit of happiness is a common, but futile occupation. No one ever attained happiness by seeking it. It does not come that way. Happiness comes from complete trust in the Lord and full surrender to His will and plan.

Jesus tells us that life does not consist in the abundance of things which a man possesses. It is not how much of this world’s goods or how well received one may be in business or social circles; happiness depends upon the security of faith in Christ and the assurance of being in His Will, Jesus gave the formula for happiness in the Beatitudes.

*Jesus is the door of usefulness.* People want to be needed; they want to be useful. There is no better way to fulfill that ambition than to surrender to Christ and be used of Him. Soul clinics and psychiatrists are kept busy by people who are frustrated and idle. On the other hand, some people are so busy with church work that they do not have time to be Christian. In our complex civilization, ministers find it necessary to learn counseling.

Christians need guidance. Those who are not Christian need first to enter through the door into the safety of Christ and then out through that same door into lives of usefulness. Christians who become frustrated should take time out to Commune with the Lord and seek His guidance. No one is really useful until he is of use to the Lord.

*Christ is the door of prosperity.* Real prosperity is measured by the spiritual. Men prosper as their souls prosper. Soul prosperity is the by-product of Christian guidance. The life which looks to Christ for direction will prosper in Him.

*Jesus is the door of invitation.* “**Come,**” is a word often used by Jesus. “**Come,**” He said to those who labor and are heavy laden. There is the promise of rest, the rest which Jesus will give and the rest which the one who comes will find. He invites all to take His teaching and learn His way and find rest for their souls.

“**Come,**” said Jesus to the rich young ruler. That invitation to take up the cross and follow Jesus is open to everyone. Some, like the rich young ruler, will turn away because it costs too much. Others will fail to respond because it seems too simple. The invitation stands. Jesus invites young and old to come and follow Him.

- “**Come,**” he said to Simon Peter, and took him by the hand and lifted him up so he could walk on the water.

- “**Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile,**” He invited His disciples. And He taught them. That same invitation is open to His followers today. We may enroll in the school of Jesus.

- “**Come, ye blessed of my Father,**” is the invitation to inherit all that the Father has in store for His children.

- “**Suffer the little children to come,**” He both encourages and commands.

“**Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely,**” expresses the universality of the invitation of Christ; Let sinners come for salvation. Let saints come for encouragement. Whosoever will, let him come.

~ end of chapter 4 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>

\*\*\*