



A Sweet Summer Part 6 – The Door

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You and I encounter doors every single day. You woke up, you went through your bathroom door, you went in your closet door. When you got here, you went through a car door. When you entered church, you came through doors. Doors symbolize something. There are doors all over the world. Here's a picture of different types of doors; they're all over. Doors aren't anything new. Doors have been around since even the Hebrew slaves and the ten plagues, the last of the ten plagues being the death of the first born. They put blood of the lamb over the door post. So, doors have always symbolized something very important, whether they symbolize an entrance or an exit into something or a place.

You and I make door decisions every single day of our life. We decide which door we're going to walk through and which door we're going to walk out of. And we walk through these daily, doorky decisions all the time. People have different opinions on doors and what doors should look like and all these different things. We just painted our house. Everybody had an opinion on what color my wife should paint the door. She didn't listen to anybody but Joanna Gains, so that's what we did.

Doors are everywhere, and doors are unique, and doors serve a purpose, but obviously doors, most importantly, to our house, protect us from what's outside. None of you last night said, "Hey, just leave the door wide open and let the cool breeze come in tonight." No, you shut the door, and, usually, the spouse asks, "Did you lock the door?" So, doors have a lot of symbolism and we're actually going to talk about a very specific door because in life, there are a lot of doors you can choose to go into. But there is this unique man that refers to himself as the door. That's a weird nickname to give yourself. But when you understand why he calls himself the door, it kind of blows your mind; it's really powerful.

If you have your Bibles, we're going to look at John 10: 1-10. If you don't have your Bibles, it's going to be on the screen. If you've never owned a Bible, let me know; I'd love to send you your first Bible ever. So, here's John 10 - "**Truly, truly...**" There are a couple of times throughout the gospel where Jesus uses this phrase, "Truly, Truly." It's not like my nine-year-old son saying, "No, Dad, I swear I'm telling you the truth." "Does that mean every other time you're not telling me the truth, son?" Right? When we always put an emphasis - I swear, I swear... Why are you swearing? Just tell me the truth.

That's not what this is at all. Any time Jesus says, "Truly, truly," or some versions say, "Verily, verily." He is saying, "What I'm about to tell you is really important, so listen." That's what Jesus is doing. "I'm about to tell you something really important so listen up."

“I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.” We’re going to come back to this word *thief*. So, he’s saying the man that doesn’t come through the door but tries to say, “I’m going to figure it out my own way and I’m not going to go through the door. I’ll just live life how I want to live and I’m going to figure it out on my own.”

There is no Oprah Winfreyism in here where like, *hey that’s what’s true for you and that’s what’s true for you. And you can get in the door this way and you can get in the door that way.* That’s not how this works. There is one way through this door and he’s saying, “No one that comes through anyone else but me will get in.” So, there’s one door that promises life, yet this door [self-righteous] leads to death. And then there’s another door [surrender] that promises that we have to die to ourselves that actually leads to life. This door [self-righteous] says, “Hey, you be your own God. You be self-righteous. You judge others. You sit on the throne. You act like you’ve got it all together. You go to church. You get your nose in the air. You be a spiritual elite.” That’s self-righteousness.

Jesus rebuked people that walked through that door. As a matter of fact, he called them whitewashed tombs. He said, “Why are you judging everybody else? First clean the inside of your heart.” When you get in a self-righteous place, you’re never examining yourself because you’re always judging and criticizing everyone else. You’re walking through the wrong door. So, the opposite of self-righteousness when you walk through this door, is surrender. You surrender to Him. You walk through this door and it’s a daily death to self. Paul said in Philippians 1: 21, ***...to live as Christ to dies is gain.*** That’s a different door to walk through.

But this door [self-righteous] looks attractive. This door is gold, and this door is broad and wide. Matthew 7: 14. These doors are different sizes intentionally. Matthew 7:14 says, ***Broad is the way that leads to destruction, but small is the gate and narrow is the road that leads to life and only the few will find it.*** This door [self-righteous] looks attractive. This says, “Hey, chase fame. Get all your blog followers and your Facebook friends and make it all about you and people knowing your name and leaving your name. Do you know what’s crazy? About 95% of you in here couldn’t even tell me the first and last names your great, great grandparents, and that’s your own blood, that’s your own family. And you can’t even remember the first and last name of your great, great grandparents, and you want to chase making your name famous?”

This door [surrender] says it’s not about you; this is the way of humility. Philippians 2, Christ was the perfect example of humility. It’s not about you. It will never be about you. This door [self-righteous] says it’s all about you. You need to focus on you and yourself and what you’re going to get out of this world and who you are going to be and how many followers you’re going to get and how much money you are going to accumulate and what you’re going to be. This door [self-righteous] says, “Hey, chase pleasure, whether it be through alcohol, pornography, drugs, addictions, money, materials, boats, cars. Chase pleasure; be a hedonist. Go through that door and just make sure whatever you do in life, seek your pleasure and fill it up with as much pleasure as you can.

But this door [surrender] actually gives you fulfillment apart from those things. True fulfillment. True satisfaction. This door [self-righteous] says, “Hey, be bitter; pursue bitterness. Don’t forgive people. Hold onto it.

And when you're bitter towards people, you never see the good in anyone. You refuse to because your bitterness doesn't allow you to see the good in other people. As a matter of fact, the crazy thing about bitterness is locking yourself in a cage and one day you wake up and realize you're the only one that holds the key to let yourself out.

This door [surrender] is the opposite of bitterness; it's forgiveness. It understands Ephesians 4: 30 -32. ***Be kind and compassionate with one another, forgiving each other just as in Christ, God forgave you.*** How dare we have the audacity to hold onto this bitterness but embrace the forgiveness of this door.

We make these decisions every day. We go through these doors every day. I want pleasure. I want these things. I want anger. I want hate. I want bitterness. And you make decision every day, you and I, to walk through these doors. And we walk through these doors, and we walk out of these doors, and every single day... When you leave here, you'll walk through a door and it will be a reminder. Am I going to walk through the door of self-righteousness and fame and pleasure and bitterness? Or am I going to walk through the door of surrender and humility and true fulfillment and forgiveness?

C.S. Lewis says it best in his book *Mere Christianity*. *"If I find within myself a desire in which this world cannot satisfy, the only probable explanation is I was made for another world."* This [self-righteous] was never meant to fulfill you. We continually walk through this door, don't we? We continually walk through this door only to wake up the next morning a be like *man, that didn't fulfill. Why is my heart still empty? Why am I still hungry? Why am I still dissatisfied?* That's because this door was never meant to satisfy the deepest longing of your soul. And you can keep trying to walk through it and try to walk through different ways, but this door wasn't meant to do that. And when you walk through that door, you still wake up the next morning, walk out that door, and say that didn't satisfy. Because it was never intended to.

John 10 goes on to say, ***2 "But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice..."*** By the way, we're all sheep. All of us are sheep. I don't care if your name is Bill Gates or Jeff Bezos. I don't care if you are a billionaire. I don't care if you're homeless; we're all sheep. Every single person. Now some sheep are found and some sheep are lost. By the way, all sheep are dumb. I've never met a smart sheep. It's doesn't sit, it doesn't shake, doesn't roll over. Sheep aren't doing that. And here, Jesus is saying, "Hey, everyone is a sheep; it's just whether or not they hear the voice of the Good Shepherd." What a paradox, right? That Jesus is referring to himself as the Good Shepherd and then he becomes the Lamb. What an amazing paradox, right? To him, the gatekeeper opens, the gate, sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. They hear his voice and the know his voice because they spent time listening to his voice. They are with him all day. How do you know the voice of your shepherd? You listen to it. You spend time in His Word. You pray.

What I love about this text... Don't miss this. So, he brings them into these safe places at night. ***"...and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out."*** Don't look past this. Think about that. The sheep had a bad day. Some sheep have some bad days, right? A sheep wandered off... What does it say? He could have all 99 sheep and he's going to go get that one.

Let me contextualize. The sheep went and partied. The sheep went and cheated. The sheep went and stole. The sheep went and did something it shouldn't have done. Well, the shepherd goes and gets that sheep, brings it into the pen and it gets to sleep in safety that night. It wakes up the next morning, he leads them out into green pastures, and it gets a new day. I thought about that, and I was like *man that ties into Lamentations 3:22-23* which says, ***The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end.*** Not for dumb sheep, not for dumb people. They are new every morning.

Do you ever read a passage of scripture 10 or 15 times, and for whatever reason, it just hits you differently than any other time you have read it? That happened to me a few weeks back, and it was this verse. It's the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will teach you, at different times in your life, different things he wants you to learn. I believe he wanted me to learn this to share with you and to encourage all of you. I used to think I had to wait until tomorrow morning before I get some new morning mercies. I blew it yesterday; I need a new morning. Some of you already blew it on the way to church. For whatever reason, the banter between husband and wife going to church is the sharpest on Sunday. Can I get an amen? The devil is trying to get at you, right? It never fails, on Sunday mornings we're going at each other's throats, right? One likes to be on time and the other doesn't like to be on time...

Guess what? Here's the good news. You don't have to wait until tomorrow morning to get new morning mercies. That's not how it works. God is omnipresent so what that means is God isn't only subject to Branson, Missouri. God isn't just here. God is Japan, God is in Australia. Look at this picture and let me explain what I'm saying here. So, if God is omnipresent and he's over the entire universe, then when it is morning in Branson, Missouri, it's also about to be morning in Hawaii. And then it will be morning in Asia and then it will be morning in Europe and then it'll be morning on the West Coast of Africa and then it will morning over Iceland and Greenland.

Do you see what I'm saying? It's never not morning to an omnipresent, sovereign God, which means his mercies aren't new every morning; his mercies are new every single second of your day. You don't have to wait 24 hours to get his forgiveness, he's giving it to you right now in this second, which means it doesn't matter how you came in here today. His mercies are new every single second. They never come to an end, and he never grows tired of painting sunrises and sunsets that look completely different every second of every day for eternity. That's how amazing our God is. And he leads his sheep out every morning and says you're forgiven. When you walk through this door, you are forgiven.

Now you have to watch out. That broad door is going to get you to walk in guilt, it's going to get you to walk in shame, it's going to get you to walk in bitterness. "Come here. This looks good." No, it promises life, but leads to death. Surrender promises that if you die to yourself, you find true life.

4 "When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice." That's such a powerful phrase. They know his voice. If you've ever been over to Israel or ever been around a shepherd and see him interactive. It's kind of like you guys that have dogs. You can try to get some of them to come to your voice. My wife likes it when I walk our dog. It's not because she's lazy, but our dog will listen to me. You guys that are dog trainers know there is something about the alpha male. Our dog will walk three feet away from me and I'll give a command and she'll stop in her tracks and sit down. With my wife, that dog is gone. She tries to give the exact same

command, tell the dog the exact same thing, and the dog is like, *I can get away with this. I know she's not going to discipline me.* And that dog is gone, right? It's the same thing with sheep. If you've seen a really well-trained dog that listens to the voice of it's master, it's the same thing with sheep; they don't listen to the voice of the enemy.

How do you know when the enemy is trying to speak to you and lie to you? You have to know this voice. You have to know what truth is? You have to spend time in the Word so that when those darts, those lies come at you, you are able to discern what is true and what is not going to fulfill and tear you apart.

5 "A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." You see, followers of the Good Shepherd don't follow strangers. Followers of the Good Shepherd choose not to go through the door of self-righteous because they know the stranger doesn't have... Remember it's called a personal relationship with Jesus. When you have a personal relationship with someone – your spouse, your kids, your family, your neighbors – you know their voice. They can call you and they don't ever have to say, "Hey, this is Mark." "I know who it is; I've heard your voice for 35 years. You don't have to tell me who you are." You know their voice. When you have a relationship, you know the voice.

And then when someone calls and starts talking like they know you and you're like, "I'm sorry. I lost your number. Who is this?" That's because you don't know the voice. So, any time you hear a voice you don't recognize, that should put a red flag up in your life like, I don't recognize this voice [self-righteous]. But I recognize this one [surrender]. But this voice [self-righteous] tries to masquerade itself. As a matter of fact, 2 Corinthians 11: 14 says the devil masquerades as an angel of light. That means he's not like a Halloween costume with a red mask, horn, tail, and pitch fork. That's not what the devil looks like at all. The devil looks shiny. There's a reason why I painted this door gold.

This rock isn't really gold. If it were, you'd all be tackling me to take it to cash it in right now. It's pyrite, fool's gold. It's painted with gold. It shines, it's glittery; it might have an elusion of gold. It's a junky, old, Ozark rock that I picked up and painted. But it can look like gold, and it can look really attractive. And chasing these things can look alluring. Just like the bass in Taney Como, that's looks really good, but as soon as he eats it, boy does he regret it. It's the same thing. As soon as you go through this door... You and I have been there. I've been there in my life. *Man, I wish I never would have walked through that door.* But God continually gives us grace and forgiveness through that door. The devil masquerades as an angel of light.

There are sayings in life that maybe you're heard but you never knew where they came from. How about, "That came out of left field." Have any of you guys ever heard that saying? There's a true story behind this. Wrigleyville, where the Chicago Cubs play in Wrigley Field, outside of leftfield is right in the middle of Wrigleyville. There used to be an insane asylum out behind leftfield in the ivy out there in Wrigleyville. It's a true story. So, there would be these crazy screams and yells that would come from the psychiatric ward, and you'd be like, "Whoa, what was that?" "Well, it came out of leftfield," pointing to the insane asylum. That's a true story.

There is another saying you may have heard, "They pulled the wool over his eyes." Have any of you ever heard that saying? A lot of people don't know where that saying came from. It's really fascinating when you study this stuff. When the sheep pull the wool over their eyes, what would happen is after the shepherd would let them graze all day and then bring them back into the pen at night, he would take every single sheep in a single file line, and he would just skim through their wool to make sure there weren't any ticks or bugs or pests or anything that could be detrimental to that sheep's life.

What would happen is when the wool would get too long, the shepherd could no longer see them or pull them out to save that sheep's life. You see, the devil wants to pull the wool over your eyes so that you don't see the little ticks and the mites that are going to ultimately lead to your death. "Oh, it's not really that big of a deal if you do..." Really? That's what he wants you to think. As a matter of fact, that goes over thousands of years ago. "Surely, God didn't say..." Sound familiar? If he can just let that wool grow a little bit in our life to where we can't see the ticks and mites and those things that lead to death, the enemy can pull the wool over our eyes. That's where that phrase actually comes from.

Back to John 10 – **6** *"This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand..."* I told you they were dumb." They didn't understand. He's using these illustrations of a shepherd and a door and sheep to help them understand. *"...what he was saying to them."*

7 *So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly..."* "This is really important what I'm saying." *"...I say to you, I am the door of the sheep."* Which means the only way the sheep get into the pasture and protection and safety is through Him. He is the door. Jesus also says, in the Sermon on the Mount, "Ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you'll be found. Knock and the door will be opened to you." There are different people that come to Jesus in different ways. There are people that are really excited when they know Jesus and they realize, "Oh my gosh, he's the door." They're knocking vigorously saying, "Jesus let me in, let me in." He opens the door. He's so excited, "Yes, yes, come in, come in. **I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me.**" – John 14:6.

There's the skeptical knocker. "Man, I don't want to go to hell. Is this real? Is this Christianity stuff really real? They same weird. They're Bible thumpers. Do I really want to be a part of that? They're just different, but they do have a joy I can't explain, and they're not getting hammered and they're not getting high. There's something different about them." They gently knock on the door, "Oh my gosh! You are real! I trusted and now you're here..."

And then there's the really broken knocker that truly sees their sin and what it did to Jesus on the cross. It's a different kind of humble knocker. There's just a brokenness. There are different types of knockers, but it doesn't matter what kind of knocker you are. Jesus says knock and the door will be open to you. You didn't find Jesus; he found you. He was never lost. Remember? Omnipresent over the whole universe. He's not lost. He's not the sheep; you're the sheep, I'm the sheep. I'm lost. He found me. He brought me back into the pen. He showed me the door that leads to true life. Only through Him do we have life. Only through Him does he rescue you.

The last time I was up here, eight weeks ago, I showed a clip from The Chosen. I encouraged to go watch this. Some of you aren't being very disobedient. So, I'm going to tell you again to go watch it. It's free, it's on your phone, it's an app. I wouldn't be telling you to watch something that I thought was a waste of your time or had no biblical sustenance.

I'm going to show you a clip. You want to talk about when we focus on the wrong door verses who the ultimate door is. This clip is going to unpack it. I'm going to show you a clip and I want to give you the context of this clip because it's the end of episode three, season two of The Chosen. The disciples go to Samaria. Remember Jews and Samaritans didn't get along very well. There was racism, divide.

At the beginning of this clip, the sun is rising. It was probably like 5:00 or 5:30 am. There's this huge line. Thousands of Samaritans in line to see who Jesus is? The disciples are going through the line just like if you were at some airport that just cancelled three flights. Not that I experienced that this week or anything. But you're in this long line and there are people... But the disciples are going and interacting with the people in the line while they are there. "You okay? Good. You'll be with Jesus in just a minute." Just helping to calm down impatience.

Jesus starts healing people and ministering to people and loving on people and saving people. This goes on all day, and it keeps going on. You can see the sun is scorching hot now and then the sun sets. The disciples had enough. They're tired and they want to cut out. "That guy's been there since sunrise and he's still doing ministry?" Yes, Jesus was doing ministry from the time the sun came up until it set and then some. He's just wiping himself out, literally, to a point of exhaustion. Jesus is like, "I'm going to pour myself out for these people."

The disciples had enough and they went back to the campfire. When they went back to the campfire, this is what unfolded. Check it out.

[Video plays]

That scene never gets old to me. I don't know how many times... I can't shake it because I'm like the dumb sheep around the campfire, complaining and arguing and not wanting to forgive. "I'll never forgive you, I can't." To hold onto that bitterness... When you and I take our last breath, there is one name that matters. There is one celebrity in heaven. Here, they are arguing and bickering and going through this door and chasing this door around the campfire. And then the one thing, the one thing that will ever matter for all of eternity comes walking across, completely exhausted because he's poured himself out for a 16-hour day in the heat and exhaustion.

All the sudden you can see it on their faces. They are looking at the only door that matters. They are looking at him like, *What am I chasing? What door am I walking through? Why am I going through that door? Why do I want that?* Conviction just sets over their faces because in that moment, they realize it's all about Jesus. It's always going to be about Jesus. And it's never going to stop being about Jesus. And we want to chase fame? We want to sit on the throne that only Jesus belongs on? We want to seek our own pleasure and satisfaction that will never suffice? I get it man. I see that and I'm just like God, forgive me. I don't want to walk through this door anymore. I'm done with that door.

Your door leads to true life. I want that door. I want to walk through that door. You're the door, Jesus. Look what it says in John 10: 9. **"I am the door."** He says, "I am the door. Nothing beautiful about me. Nothing grand; just a simple door that enters you into a life that you'll never regret, but I am that door." **"If anyone enters by me, he will be saved..."** Ladies and gentlemen, there is no way to get into Heaven's door except through Jesus, period, end of discussion. **"...and will go in and out and find pasture."** Pasture is life for a sheep. Pasture is sustenance. Pasture is fuel.

Then this whole first 10 verses closes with... But this is what's crazy when he says I am the door. In ancient Israel, they would stack these rocks around when they were out in the field because they would come back to town. The shepherd was literally and physically the door. And they understood this. So, when Jesus said he was the door, no sheep can get out because they would come to him. He won't let go of you. So, maybe you started following Jesus and you backslid a little bit. Jesus says come home, son, come home, daughter. You're a daughter of the King. You are the son of the Most-High. You can't get out and you can't get in except through Jesus.

And then it closes with this verse: **10 "The thief..."** There's that word again. Remember he started in Verse 1 and now he's coming back to it in Verse 10. **"...comes only to steal and kill and destroy."** That's the only reason he comes. The only thing this self-righteous door does is steal, kill, and destroy. It will destroy your family, kill your jobs, steal whatever hope you had, joy you had. It comes to steal, kill, and destroy. This door that we choose to walk through and then when we do and we come out, did it suffice? That bitterness isn't doing anything for me. That's pleasure is not sufficing. Buying another boat didn't make me happy. More money accumulated hasn't helped me to have a whole heart. This door never suffices. Why? The only reason that door is there is to kill, steal, and destroy your life.

But Jesus says, **"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."** Live it to the full. This door promises true life, and no one gets to Heaven accept through this door, that door being Jesus. Jesus said, "I came for the very reason that you would have a full life, an abundant life and this is the only door that matters."

I want you to reflect before we start taking communion. As a matter of fact, in 1 Corinthians 11, it talks about the Lord's Supper. Jesus instituted this on the night he was betrayed. He says that communion is not for a non-believer, so hear this. We here at Woodland Hills love you dearly, but if you've never walked through this door, this door being Jesus, if you've never recognized that he lived the life we all should have lived and died the death we all deserve to die, was crucified on the cross for our sins to forgive them as far as the east is from the west, and believe that he defeated the tomb and rose again and, one day, will come back for all of us. If you've never trusted that and you don't believe that, I'm going to ask you not to take communion because I don't want you to eat and drink judgment on yourself as scripture suggests. But I want to invite you after we do take communion to walk through this door and to meet with our prayer team over here in this prayer room and walk through the only door that matters. You'll think, *I don't want to do that*. Don't ignore the Spirit that's nudging in your heart right now if you've never walked through this door. That door [self-righteous] will not satisfy your soul. I promise. I've been through that door many times in my life.

But if you are a believer, I want you to just take a second before we take communion and examine your heart. Is there anything we need to confess before the Good Shepherd? Is there anything we need to confess before the Father before we come into this act? I just want to give you a second to examine your heart.

Father God, I pray if there is any soul in this room that's never walked through that door, I pray your Spirit would grip them so great they can't leave this castle before doing so.

I pray for those of us that have chosen to walk through the door that steals, kills, and destroys, that we would know your mercies are new this second, not tomorrow morning, but this second. May we walk in those mercies.

God, thank you for your goodness, thank you for your life, thank you for your death, and thank you that you're coming back for those that are yours. We love you and we are so thankful.

It's in the mighty and matchless name of Jesus we pray. And all God's people said... Amen.