

JESUS: I AM THE DOOR 2

Jesus "I AM" (12)

Banska Bystrica, 21 September 2014

John 9:39 - 10:10 Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, "Are we also blind?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt ¹ but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains. **10:1** "Truly, truly, 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. 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, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." ⁶ This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. ⁷ So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep." ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

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0. INTRO: LEADERSHIP AND RELATIONSHIPS

- last time: (1) Jesus: The door to leadership (→Creation), (2) Jesus: The door to living (→Salvation)
- today: Jesus: The door to relationships - (1) personal, (2) truthful, (3) respectful

0.1. THE CONTEXT

- John 9:39-41 – the Pharisees¹ in conflict with Jesus – because of (1) teaching with power ⇒ popularity with the people [Mt 12:22-24], (2) rejection of the Pharisaic traditions ⇒ casting doubt on their purity [Mt 5:20],

0.2. THE METAPHORICAL MEANING OF “THE DOOR”

- There are two easily overlooked changes in metaphorical thinking: (1) the human shepherds are also the sheep, (2) Jesus, the door, is also the Shepherd
- “the door” – a mixed metaphor with “the Good shepherd” (the door → the entry under his leadership[Good Shepherd])
 - Jesus as the door: (1) for the leaders, (2) for the sheep → leaders of men have to behave as sheep at the same time (leaders towards humans & sheep towards the Lord)
 - → (1) the door to the rightful leadership, (2) the door into eternal life
- to enter through the door [for the leaders] → (1) access – relationship to Jesus first, (2) mediation – doing the Shepherd’s work for the sheep
- to enter through the door [for the sheep] → (1) resting, (2) doing, (3) living

0.3. LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH ⇒ RELATIONSHIPS

- the door to people’s wills (getting doing) is through their minds (truth) and their hearts (love)

1. JESUS: THE DOOR TO PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

1.1. FALLING AWAY FROM PERSONAL LOVE FOR JESUS

- first – when we lose the *NAME* (we don’t use the name of Jesus) – we may still have personal *FAITH* (the Word of God – we can still believe in the Word)
- next – when we lose personal *FAITH* – we may still have deep interest in *RELIGION* (values)
- next – when we lose *RELIGIOUS VALUES* – we may still have *ETHICAL PERSUASION* (humanitarian concerns)
- next – when we lose *ETHICAL PERSUASION* – we are left with nothing, but *HEDONISM* ...

1.2. PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP TO JESUS

- from “*What* does he say?” to “*Who* is he who says it?” = we can come to a point where we don’t care about Jesus, but about what he says or does for us
- **Lk 5:5** Master (ἐπιστάτα), we toiled all night and took nothing! But **at your word** I will let down the nets."
- **THE sin: John 16:8-9** And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning (1) sin and (2) righteousness and (3) judgment: ⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me;

Jesus as the door: we pass through Him into a relationship AND we must “stay in the door” (= in a living relationship with Him)

2. JESUS: THE DOOR TO TRUTHFUL RELATIONSHIPS

- truth: not only *factuality* but *importance*,² *urgency* and *emotional-spiritual power*!!!

¹ “The Pharisees ... not only took part in government, administration of justice, and legal instruction, but also formed associations dedicated to the practical realization of the Levitical ideals. ...the Pharisees, and especially the Pharisaic scribes, had two sources of power: first, their position as members of the High Council; and second, their position as functionaries and authorities among the common people.” (BO REICKE *The New Testament Era*, Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 1974, pp. 159, 162)

² “YThere is a casual, indifferent readiness, even in our increasingly secularized society, to grant the main claims of the gospel – not to grant them importance, but to accept them as premises of religious life.” (BRUEGGEMANN, W. *Finally Comes the Poet*, Minneapolis : Fortress Press, 1989. p. 1.)

- metaphor: (*Cizmansky*): When the two crucified criminals looked at each other from their crosses, they saw each other with Jesus in their sight as well.
- **Phil 2:20-21** For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.
²¹They all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

2.1. SIN

- **2Cor 10:12** when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.
- the norm for humans: JESUS CHRIST – the only *normal* man

2.2. SALVATION

- 1Cor 9 – all to all people – only in Jesus! → the right priorities
- Philem 6: ...that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.

3. JESUS: THE DOOR TO RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

- **John 21:16** “Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Shepherd My sheep.”

3.1. ALL PEOPLE

- created in the *IMAGE OF GOD* - **James 3:8-9** ...no human being can tame the **tongue**. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.

3.2. CHRISTIANS

- **Phi 2:3** ...with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;
- **James 4:11** He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law;
- **2Cor 4:5** for what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as **your servants** (δούλους ὑμῶν) for Jesus' sake (διὰ Ἰησοῦν)

Through Jesus we can enter into valuable relationships with other Christians: not idealisation, nor disappointment. We can see them as being created in God's image, as those representing Jesus to us (when ministering one to another).

4. CONCLUSIONS

- Before we can have true relationships with people we have to have personal relationship with Jesus.
- Jesus sets the norm (measure), the aim (eternity) and the manner (servant hood) of relationships with people.
- Jesus gives ability to see the infinite value of the human soul and respectfully acknowledge it in our attitude and behaviour toward people.