

## **“I am the door “ Sunday August 14, 2011.**

<sup>9</sup> *I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.* <sup>10</sup> *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.*

<sup>11</sup> *“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.*

Beloved friends in The Lord,

One of the best known Psalms is Psalm 23. People who are not believers in The Lord Jesus Christ, quite often have heard of or know the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. This Psalm is used in very many funeral services. It is a very beautiful Psalm and it brings peace and comfort. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm really says it all.

What is important to understand is that this Psalm, like all of God’s Word, is empowered in the life of the person who believes, who trusts in God and His Word. Only a believer in Jesus Christ can say: “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want...” I believe that it is God’s desire that every single person could make this confession. Last Sunday, we reflected upon the truth that Jesus died for all mankind. His blood has paid the penalty for all sin and whoever calls upon Him shall be saved.

Today we underline this truth. Today’s Scripture shows us this truth from a slightly different perspective. Jesus uses a door as an illustration. A door generally has two main functions: To keep something or someone in or out or to provide access either in or out. A door is either a barrier or a gateway.

There is a door that leads to God’s Kingdom. It is vital that we understand that God’s kingdom operates in two realms. There is God’s kingdom here on earth and also God’s kingdom in Heaven.

In teaching His disciples to pray Jesus taught them to say: “Your Kingdom come...”

When John the Baptist began to preach he said: ***“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 3:2).*** Here he was speaking about the Lord Jesus Christ. Where Jesus is, there is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus lives in a believer’s heart, therefore the kingdom of heaven is establishing itself in and through the believer. That is why Paul wrote to the Philippians: <sup>20</sup> ***“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; <sup>21</sup> who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.” (Philippians 3:20-22).***

When we are in Christ, then we are citizens of God’s kingdom. We are just passing through this life here on earth and that is why John exhorts us: <sup>15</sup> ***“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.***

**<sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. <sup>17</sup> The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.” (1 John 2:15-17)**

So we see that the Kingdom of God is already here, and of course when we die in Christ then we will live with Him in God’s Kingdom eternally.

It is of utmost importance that we understand that in order to enter the Kingdom of God, and in order that the Kingdom of God be in us, we must go through the Door. That Door is Jesus Christ.

He said: **“<sup>9</sup> I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.” (John 10:9).**

Jesus is the Door. The Church is not the door. Religion is not the door. Good works are not the door. Jesus and Jesus alone is the Door.

In order to go through the Door, we must come to Calvary. As we considered last Sunday, we have to call upon the name of the Lord in faith. That is all. When we call upon Jesus in faith, when we place our trust in Him, understanding that His blood paid the awful price of our sin, then we have entered the Kingdom of God.

Then we can confess along with David: **“The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.”** (Psalm 23:1) This is such a powerful truth. When you are in Christ Jesus, then the whole of His Kingdom is yours. Michael Youseff said recently: “If you are not living in Christ Jesus then this life is as good as it gets. On the other hand if you are in Christ Jesus, then this is the worst that it can be.”

He is so right. If a person is not in Christ Jesus, has not entered through the Door, then that person is still subject to this world and it’s ruler. There is nothing to hope for. There is no sure foundation, his house is built on the sand and it will fall. After this life – eternal darkness: hell,

On the other hand, if a person is in Christ, has entered through the Door, then this life and it’s challenges and difficulties are the worst that we will ever experience. The best is yet to come. That is why Paul could write to the Romans: **“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” (Rom.8:18)**

When we will be freed from this earthly body and will have received our new resurrected body, then we will experience no more suffering and pain. All tears will be wiped from our eyes, all sickness, ageing, and death will be a thing of the past.

David wrote about present difficulties in Psalm 23 in a positive way:

***“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I fear no evil, for You are with me;  
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.***

***<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
You have anointed my head with oil;  
My cup overflows.***

***<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life,  
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.” Psalm 23:4-6)***

When we have entered through the door, then we have a good Shepherd, who is with us constantly. Jesus said that He is the Good Shepherd. He loves His sheep. He has demonstrated his love in that He has already laid down His life for His sheep.

He then goes on to teach us that he knows each one of His sheep by name, personally. He knows all there is to know about us. We are not just a number in his flock, but each one is a precious lamb, whom He loves and tends and keeps.

There is even more good news, When we are in Him, when we have entered his sheepfold, then we are eternally secure in Him. Jesus taught:

***“<sup>27</sup> My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; <sup>28</sup> and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.” (John 10:27-30)***

You see, in Jesus we are eternally secure. Once we have come through the door, He closes it. He does not let us go. He paid a tremendous price to redeem us. He shed His own innocent and precious blood for us. He will never let us go.

That is a very comforting truth. We have eternal security in Jesus.

That now brings us to the important consideration: “Are you eternally secure? Have you entered the Kingdom of God, through Jesus? Can you confess along with David: “The Lord is my Shepherd”?

If you can, praise God and hold to Him in faith.

If you cannot, then right now is the time. He is waiting for you with arms wide open.

Amen.

Pastor Colvin S. MacPherson

Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sydney. [www.sydneylatvianchurch.org.au](http://www.sydneylatvianchurch.org.au)

All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.