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Peace, Sun Prairie
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Good Shepherd / Confirmation

John 10:7-10

ENTER THROUGH THE DOOR

The Confirmation vow. Perhaps you took such a vow 30 years ago. Perhaps you made the vow only recently as an adult. *You in the front row will be taking the Confirmation vow today.* You are making your vow to Jesus. God takes vows seriously even if people don't.

But in the Gospel Lesson from John chapter 10 today, Jesus makes a most solemn vow to you. He says, *Amen. Amen. I tell you.* Imagine that. God is swearing. God is taking an oath. For you! Wow! What kind of God is this and how do you rate, that your God makes a vow for you! You must really matter!

In Bible times, it was common for shepherds at night to keep their sheep in a corral called a fold for their protection. Alluding to this picture Jesus makes this vow: *Amen, Amen, I tell you: I am the door for the sheep. Whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out and find pasture.* Jesus is the door, meaning, He alone is the way of salvation. His vow is that He will always be that to you, the door to salvation. He will never not be that door for you.

I am the door for the sheep. "I am." This is one of Jesus' "I am" statements. Perhaps you've heard some of His other "I am" statements: "I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world. I am the resurrection and the life." Here He says, "I am the door for the sheep."

The words "I am" harken back 1500 years earlier when God was sending Moses to Pharaoh of Egypt to demand the release of the Israelite slaves. Moses asked, "What if my countrymen ask your name? Who should I say sent me?" God replied, "I am that I am. You tell them 'I Am' has sent you." Jesus is the same I Am who had spoken to Moses. The Bible says, *Jesus Christ: the same yesterday and today and forever.*

Amen, amen, I tell you, I am the door for the sheep. That means there is no other door. There never was another door. There will never be another door. Jesus is it, the only door for anyone who is His sheep.

Here is part your vow to Jesus today: *Is it your sincere prayer and desire to remain faithful to your Lord Jesus and his Word all the days of your life?*

The implication of that question is heavy. If you reply in the affirmative, it means that you are swearing you will die before you abandon Jesus or His teachings. But it's really just the flip side of Jesus' vow to you. Jesus vowed always to be the door for you and you are responding,

“Yes, Jesus, I swear that you will always be my door. I will seek no other door as long as I live.”

If you picture a lit-up, red EXIT sign, y’know, the ones required by building codes to lead people out to safety in the event of a power outage or a fire - Jesus is like that - He is like a red EXIT sign that signals the way from danger to safety, from threat to salvation. Your vow today is to say, “Jesus will always be my red EXIT sign.

The Bible says, *Thick darkness has covered the peoples.* (You are about to enter high school and then perhaps college.) Whatever your path there will be a lot of confusing messages about life like thick, toxic smoke. Through it all let Jesus be your red EXIT sign. He is your door, your escape, your escape from sin, from guilt, from judgment, from the grave, from all demons, from hell, from divine disapproval, from temptation, from self-sabotage, from propaganda and lies, from erring science and political movements, from false identity, from decay, from dead-end aspirations, from doubts, from anxieties, from destructive popular trends, from loneliness, from sorrow, from old age and illness, from persecutions, from the world’s hatred, and from all worldly influences and dark powers.

By suffering and dying on the cross and by rising from the dead He has become for you the Door to salvation, the Door to life, the Door to peace with God, the Door to heaven, the Door to the resurrection of your body, the Door to freedom from sin and the beginning of a new life, the Door to real identity, the Door to true self-worth, the Door to never-diminishing joy, the Door to the fellowship of the Spirit, the Door to really living as a child in the family of God, the Door to supremacy over all things, the Door to wholeness and healing and thriving and wisdom, the Door to grace and second chances and newness and wellness, the Door to rescue from everything that haunts or threatens us in this life, the Door to an everlasting certainty.

It is no wonder that Jesus said, *I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.* It will not appear like an abundant life here on earth. That’s why we will need to believe it in spite of the way things look and feel. We are saved through faith in Jesus, not by sight. We enter through the door by trusting Christ, trusting His Scriptures, His words and promises.

The Bible says, *No one whose hope is in him will ever be put to shame.* You will never be proven the fool for entering through the Door by trusting Jesus.

He has even taken an oath on that.