



SERIES: John Believe
SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD
Saturday, February 11, 2023
Scripture: John 10:7-10
TITLE: The Abundant Life

Is a train freed or restricted by its train tracks? If you're like most people, you are thinking "restricted." A train is restricted by its train tracks. But what happens when a train goes off of its train tracks? It's derailed. It's stuck. It's useless. But what happens when a train is on its tracks? It is free to go wherever those train tracks lead. It's a full life for that train.

This is a lot like our lives with Christ. Many people think it's ignorant to think Jesus is the only way to God. Many think a life of following Jesus is boring and oppressive.

Here's what Jesus said about these topics in John 10:7-10.

So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

In verses 1-6, Jesus identified himself as the shepherd. But now he has changed the illustration. He says, "I am the door of the sheep." So, think about all the metaphors Jesus has used in His teaching. He is the bread, the water, the light. And now, he's the door. Was Jesus crazy? Hardly. He was the thing their souls always longed for. And He uses imagery to help His listeners get it.

One aspect of being a shepherd was caring for the sheep both in the fold and out in the fields. And sometimes, they had to travel farther away. So the shepherds would have to make a temporary shelter for the sheep. But this meant the shepherd would turn into the door. He was the gate in and out of the temporary pen.

What's the point? Jesus tells us: "I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture." There is only one way to salvation: that's through Jesus Christ. It's not Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, spiritualism, new agism or any other "-ism." It's through Jesus Christ alone. He is the gate.

And then in verse 10, we find one of my favorite verses: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." It is tragically true that there will be false teachers, cult leaders, and cultural influencers who want to draw the lost further away from Jesus. They want to draw you away from Christ. But stay with the shepherd – the gate – because with Him there is abundant life.

Now, what does that mean? Riches and wealth? Perfect health? A beach body? Success? What?

It ties back to verse 9. They go in and out and find pasture. It's the good life. It goes all the way back to Psalm 23. The Lord is my shepherd, and I will lack nothing that I need. He makes me find rest in the green pasture. He leads me beside the still water. He guides me through the darkest and most treacherous of valleys. Even in the presence of enemies and threats, we find lasting peace. That's the abundant life, and that's what Jesus offers.

Jesus is the gateway to God, to peace, to hope, and to rest. There is no other way to the abundant life. If you haven't entered in, will you today? If you have, enjoy it. There is no place I'd rather be!