**Research on: I am the door of the sheep**

John 10:7, 9, 10

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

“That figure of a door is worth dwelling on. Christ uses it in a sort of absolute way. There is a door, an entrance, a way in, -- He does not say in from where, nor into what. It is a way in, in where and in from what, our own hearts will suggest to us. . .” *The Interpreter’s Bible*. Ed. George Arthur Buttrick et al. 12 vols. New York: Abingdon, 1953, page 624).

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

“Jesus is the model shepherd because he is essentially good and, since he is mindful of his own, he will risk his life for the sheep.. . the goodness of the true shepherd is now set out in opposition to the indifference of the hireling” *The Interpreter’s Bible*. Ed. George Arthur Buttrick et al. 12 vols. New York: Abingdon, 1953, page 624).

My. 152:12-15

    The restoration of pure Christianity rests solely on
spiritual understanding, spiritual worship, spiritual power.
Ask thyself, Do I **enter by the door** and worship only
Spirit and spiritually, or do I climb up some other way?

**I am the door of the sheep (John 10:7) (Words of Current Interest from early perodicals)**

Phillips translates: "I am the door for the sheep"; and The New English Bible: "I am the door of the sheepfold." Moffatt, however, suggests, "I am the shepherd of the sheep"; partly, he tells us "for the sake of the sense." He notes that an early Egyptian version was based upon a Greek text showing *"poimen"* (shepherd) instead of *"thura"* (door).

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.

**"THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP"**

By Robert Ellis Key

From the [June 1949 issue](http://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1949/6/67-6) of *The Christian Science Journal*

The shepherd and his sheep is a theme which runs through the pages of the sacred Scriptures. The children of Israel from the earliest period of their history were said to be keepers of sheep. Since the shepherd watches over his flock and safeguards it from danger, it is natural that he should be regarded as a type of guidance and protection.

To all Christians the term "shepherd" has a spiritual significance. Christ Jesus called himself the good shepherd. He reminded his followers that the good shepherd will give his life for the sheep; he knows his sheep by name, and they follow him. Doubtless our Master was familiar with the twenty-third Psalm, which in exquisite poetry describes the spiritual provision and protection of God, divine Love, who is the great Shepherd: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."

The work of the shepherd is not only to protect, but to direct, for he guides his flock into the fold and safeguards their incoming and outgoing. In "Miscellaneous Writings" Mary Baker Eddy says ([p. 9](http://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Well+is+it+that+the+Shepherd+of+Israel+passes+all+His+flock+under+His+rod+into+His+fold%3B+thereby+numbering+them%2C+and+giving+them+refuge+at+last+from+the+elements+of+earth.)), "Well is it that the Shepherd of Israel passes all His flock under His rod into His fold; thereby numbering them, and giving them refuge at last from the elements of earth."

If there is one illustration more often used in the Scriptures than any other, it is undoubtedly that of the shepherd. Our Master drew many lessons from this familiar subject. On one occasion he said to his disciples ([John 10:7, 9, 10](http://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Verily%2C+verily%2C+I+say+unto+you%2C+I+am+the+door+of+the+sheep.+...+I+am+the+door%3A+by+me+if+any+man+enter+in%2C+he+shall+be+saved%2C+and+shall+go+in+and+out%2C+and+find+pasture.+The+thief+cometh+not%2C+but+for+to+steal%2C+and+to+kill%2C+and+to+destroy%3A+I+am+come+that+they+might+have+life%2C+and+that+they+might+have+it+more+abundantly.&book=tfccs.main.hb.kj)): "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. ... I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

This saying of our Master's concerning the door of the sheep has a beautiful significance when we remember that a sheepfold in the East consists of a stone enclosure provided with a single opening, which acts as a door. In this opening, or door, the shepherd himself lies down to rest. He is literally the door. No sheep can stray from the fold, and no wolf can enter and devour the sheep, for in order to do so it must cross the guardian form of the shepherd.

Through this illustration of the Christ as the door of the sheep we learn that when enfolded in divine Love, as understood through the Christ, we are secure from loss or destruction. We may also see in this parable an indication of the fact that when our incomings and outgoings are in accord with the Christ, then we can not only remain safely within the fold, but "go in and out, and find pasture."

Much of our time is spent in either incoming or outgoing. Our incoming and outgoing thoughts, therefore, demand constant watchfulness. We are frequently confronted with incoming fears and conflicting opinions—destructive thoughts that would devour our happiness. We must stand porter at the door of consciousness if we would deny them admission and thus enjoy a full measure of health and happiness. Again, we must not withhold the truth from others if we would be blessed and prosperous.

Christian Science reveals the truth concerning God and man. Our study and practice of this Science reveal the ideas of Truth in constant circulation. Many earnest people, impelled by a desire for spiritual things, have forsaken material modes and turned for help to Christian Science. The stagnation of mortal mind wearied them. The frequent incoming of fears and their outcome, disease, created a longing for security. They sought new views, better health, a higher reason for living. In Christian Science they find these longings satisfied. Old ailments drop away. Outworn creeds become obsolete. Doubt is dissolved, and confidence established.

The land of Christian Science is indeed a fold of the flocks, a good land, a land worth working for, the land to live in. As we advance in the understanding of Christian Science, God, good, becomes alive to us. We have a living God. The incoming good is our natural heritage, and it awakens our gratitude, which flows out in love for God and man. Thus through the activity of the Christ, the incoming and outgoing truth is in constant circulation.

At this season of the year, we Christian Scientists are especially grateful for the incoming and outflowing of divine Love. We look forward with joyful anticipation to the reports of progress to be given at the Annual Meeting of The Mother Church. Inspired by these records of spiritual achievement, we determine to go out and dedicate ourselves anew to the great task of establishing the Cause of Christian Science. This can only be done by increased spirituality, better healing work, and deeper consecration to the truth which Mrs. Eddy has revealed and established.

In some measure each one is a shepherd, feeding those who come to him from the wilderness of mortal mind hungry for the bread of Truth and athirst for the water of Life. Addressing the Annual Communion of The Mother Church just fifty years ago, Mrs. Eddy wrote (The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany, [p. 125](http://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Brethren%2C+our+annual+meeting+is+a+grave+guardian.+It+requires+you+to+report+progress%2C+to+refresh+memory%2C+to+rejuvenate+the+branches+and+to+vivify+the+buds%2C+to+bend+upward+the+tendrils+and+to+incline+the+vine+towards+the+parent+trunk.+You+come+from+feeding+your+flocks%2C+big+with+promise%3B+and+you+come+with+the+sling+of+Israel%27s+chosen+one+to+meet+the+Goliaths.)): "Brethren, our annual meeting is a grave guardian. It requires you to report progress, to refresh memory, to rejuvenate the branches and to vivify the buds, to bend upward the tendrils and to incline the vine towards the parent trunk. You come from feeding your flocks, big with promise; and you come with the sling of Israel's chosen one to meet the Goliaths."

This inspiring message comes to us each year with renewed meaning. The great Shepherd is leading us; we too can surely go out and feed His sheep.

Robert Ellis Key

**THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP**

By Albert F. Gilmore

From the [May 1925 issue](http://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1925/5/43-2) of *The Christian Science Journal*

IN one of the most appealing lessons taught by the Master, the parable of the shepherd, he declared himself to be the "shepherd of the sheep," their guardian and protector from all lurking danger. "I am the door," he declared: "by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." To Christian Scientists this parable has a special significance, for they know the door to be the Christ, Truth, through which they are privileged to enter the kingdom, spiritual consciousness, thereby winning salvation from all that is false, unreal, and discordant.

He who declared himself to be "the way, the truth, and the life" might well be the open door to the universe of Spirit, where is found man's perfection and everlasting bliss. Christian Scientists have found the Christ to be the door to all that cheers and blesses. It is indeed the way of Life to all that enter therein; and gratitude to our beloved Leader grows apace as we comprehend more and more of the significance of her message, for she has shown us the manner in which we may enter the golden door of Life, even to "go in and out, and find pasture."

Emphatically we are told, and repeatedly, that we can enter this realm of Truth only by the front door, that is, by the way of the Christ, spiritual understanding; for those who would climb up some other way are termed thieves and robbers,—they who seek not the way of Life, but, rather, to gratify personal sense through pandering to the lusts of materiality. In her Message for April 19, 1899, in "The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany" [(p. 152)](http://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Ask+thyself%2C+Do+I+enter+by+the+door+and+worship+only+Spirit+and+spiritually%2C+or+do+I+climb+up+some+other+way&book=tfccs.main.pw.my), Mrs. Eddy admonishes her students thus: "Ask thyself, Do I enter by the door and worship only Spirit and spiritually, or do I climb up some other way?" Every true disciple asking himself this question should formulate an answer in accord with the significance of the query.

Mankind's greatest need, all will agree, is to lessen material sense by gaining more of spiritual truth. The facts of being must become more real to us, if we would progress Spiritward. The problem is perfectly plain. There need be no misunderstanding regarding it. The Truth-seeker has no other door. The only approach to the Father is through the Christ. The word "door," it seems, may signify both the barrier which closes a passage and the passage or entrance-way itself. In both uses it has a peculiar significance to the metaphysician. As a barrier, it would shut out all false beliefs, the intruders, interlopers, and eavesdroppers, which have no legitimate call to enter the portals of mentality. Such are the material beliefs. Surely, the true way is not to be entered and traversed by such, for Spirit and matter have no traffic. "Door" may also signify the portal to human consciousness; and John represents the Christ as saying, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." If this gate to the mentality be opened, if admission be given to the Christ-idea, consciousness becomes transformed through this angelic visitant, which is found to be the healing and regenerating Truth. This is the coming of the Christ-ideal, which, if entertained, reveals all the glories of heaven.

How may this door to the way be opened? Earnest desire for the spiritual—longing for the higher and holier thoughts—is the golden hammer at whose signal the door swings wide. Striving to enter in, grasping, holding to, and utilizing prayerfully every item of Truth gained, enables us to go forward, to enter upon that earnest day when Love and Life lead and comfort us with the assurance that all is well. In this great endeavor, the most important upon which mortals can enter, each year is the jubilee year; each moment of each day, the golden opportunity for journeying further into the land of perfect promise, where no shadows fall, where those clad in white garments of spiritual purity bask forever in the full effulgence of God's eternal glory!

Of the key to unlock the door to the kingdom, Mrs. Eddy writes in the Christian Science textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" [(p. 99)](http://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Truth+has+furnished+the+key+to+the+kingdom%2C+and+with+this+key+Christian+Science+has+opened+the+door+of+the+human+understanding.+None+may+pick+the+lock+nor+enter+by+some+other+door&book=tfccs.main.sh): "Truth has furnished the key to the kingdom, and with this key Christian Science has opened the door of the human understanding. None may pick the lock nor enter by some other door." Christian Scientists share the glorious privilege of unlocking the door to this heavenly opportunity. Thousands have found this door; untold thousands will find it. The door of the sheep is the way of Life in which all must walk. Why delay to enter? The sooner one enters, the sooner will he gain the state of perpetual harmony where reigns the peace that "passeth all understanding."

Through the gaining of this understanding,—"here a little, and there a little,"—and through applying it to the destruction of error, will the hosts advance. There is no royal road. All traverse the way on the same terms, and all are destined to make the journey. It is made in love and goodwill, in joy and thanksgiving, for Christ is the constant companion. All may gratefully enter here, singing the song of joyous obedience. Each seeker for this light is privileged to make this his jubilee year, the most profitable of all his experience. In degree as the Christ-consciousness is sought and won will the year be successful. The true Christian worker is the most blessed of mankind. His gains are permanent; they are the treasures which rust cannot destroy, nor moth corrupt.

Albert F. Gilmore