

Jesus “I AM” Week 5 – The Gate of the Sheep

Ready (*Plant the seed*)

Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. –John 10:7

Set (*Get the conversation started*)

In our verse this week, Jesus calls himself the gate for the sheep. Some translations use the word “door.” That is interesting! How can Jesus be a gate or a door? Let’s look again at the verse: I am the gate *for the sheep*. Jesus says he is a gate for the sheep. Who might these sheep be? Yes! Us! We are the sheep. If we read further in John, Jesus says, “All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come so that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:8-10). Through the gates sounds safe, doesn’t it? These thieves and robbers Jesus was talking about, those were the false prophets spreading lies about false Gods. But Jesus said his sheep did not listen to them and they were safe through Him. When we pray to ask Jesus to be the Lord and Savior of our life, he keeps us safe through him. Jesus’ gate is our salvation. The only way through it to God is through a relationship with Jesus.

We can see thieves around us still, working to tempt us away from Jesus. When someone asks you to do something you know is wrong, you can walk away. You are safe in the gate, you are safe in Jesus. When you are losing a game and feel tempted to cheat, you can choose the right way. When an opposing player plays dirty, you can choose not to retaliate. Remember who you play for. Paul tells us, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as if working for the Lord.” (Col. 3:23). Always do your best on the court with your body, your mind and your spirit.

Grow (*Take it away*)

- What things can tempt us away from Jesus?
- How does knowing that you are safe through the gate, Jesus, help you to resist that temptation?
- Why should we always do our best for the Lord?

Pray

Father God, we are so thankful to you for sending Jesus for us. He protects us and guides us. Please be with us in the hard times, God, strengthen us against temptation. We desire a relationship with Jesus that keeps us always looking to you. May all your ways be reflected in the way we play and act both on and off the courts. In Jesus name we humbly pray, Amen!

Overtime (*Optional Reinforcement Activity*)

Materials: Basketballs, 2 cones.

Directions: Divide into two or three equal teams. On each team, one player is the shepherd and the rest are his sheep. The sheep are lined up on the opposite side of the gym from the shepherds. Use the two cones to “be the gate” on the shepherds’ side of the court. When you say go, the shepherds must dribble across to pick up a sheep. Both the sheep’s and the shepherd’s hands must remain on the ball while they run back and through the gate. Once safely through the gate, the shepherd leaves that sheep and dribbles back for another. The shepherd that gets all of his sheep back through the gate wins.

Give Directions & Play a quick round

Say: Amazing job! You guys are quick! Your sheep are safe. In the game, the sheep had to hold onto the ball the whole time with their shepherd. I want you to think about how Jesus guides you to him. In what ways can we hold on tight to him so that we can enter His gates and resist temptation? (Reading our Bibles, praying, going to church, etc).