

PLEASANT VIEW PROCLAIMER

September 4, 2022

I AM: A Review

Now that we have finished going through the seven I AM statements in the Gospel of John, I've been thinking a lot about overall themes of these great sayings of Jesus, and the messages we should take away from them.

Jesus is God

In each of these seven instances, Jesus is identifying himself as the "I AM" (ἐγώ εἰμι / **egō eimi**) in human form, which ties back directly to "I AM" (אֶהְיֶה / **ehyeh**) in Exodus 3:14. This is significant!

Beyond these first two words, in each of the statements Jesus is presenting characteristics of Himself that also point to His divinity and to Him being the Messiah. They are a reminder that we have a savior who is fully God even though He allowed Himself to be emptied into the form of man (**Philippians 2:5-11**).

Jesus Meets Us Where We Are

This is a point I didn't really emphasize in any of the sermons, but in each I AM statement Jesus is directly addressing the situation at hand, and several times even using that situation as a metaphor (bread, light, sheep, vine) for a much greater spiritual idea. Even when there was no metaphor (resurrection, way), He was still meeting His audience where they were to deliver a powerful message about His nature.

It is easy to think that in order to come to Jesus, we first have to "clean up our lives" or "figure things out". These statements show that Jesus is ready to meet us wherever we are right now. The only way we can truly clean up our lives or figure things out is by choosing to follow Him. If we wait until we do those things ourselves, we will be waiting forever.

Jesus Gives Us a Choice

In each of these I AM statements there is either an explicit or implied choice that must be made. We can choose to consume the "bread of life" or the bread that perishes. We can choose to follow the "light of the world" or walk around in darkness. We can choose to follow the "good

*you have
filled my
heart
with great
joy*

- PSALM 47

*"Sing aloud to God our
strength; make a joyful shout
to the God of Jacob"*

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*May the Word of Jesus Christ
Make its home in your heart
And dwell in all its richness
Permeating every part
So you may have His wisdom
In teaching one another
What you have learned from Him
Shared with sisters and brothers
And we will sing a new song
When His Holy Spirit comes in
Making melody in our hearts
With spiritual songs and hymns
And whatever you may do
In word, in thought, or deed
Do everything for Jesus
Praising Him and taking heed*

shepherd” and enter through “the door” or we can choose to follow “thieves and robbers”. We can choose to believe in “the resurrection and the life” or believe in our own ability to follow a doctrine. We can choose to follow “the way, the truth, and the life” or choose to make our own way. We can choose to be connected to the “true vine” or anchor our lives in a different vine. God has made us creatures of free will with the ability to choose. These statements make it clear that this is truly a life or death decision, but we have the ability to go either way.

Jesus is Seeking Genuine Relationships

By holding Himself up as the “bread of life”, “light of the world”, “door”, “good shepherd”, “resurrection and the life”, “way, truth, and life”, and “true vine”, Jesus is telling His audience to put their faith in Him instead of anything else. He must be the focus.

Throughout His ministry, Jesus is constantly battling with the Pharisees and Scribes who put their faith in their own ability to keep a doctrine. Jesus is instead saying that faith has to be in Him. He is the one who has conquered death. He is the only source of truth. He is the only way to the Father. He is the only way to eternal life. Yes, doctrine is important, but it is useless without faith in the Savior.

Jesus wants a personal relationship with His followers. When we realize that we can’t earn salvation on our own, we must instead put our faith in the One who has made salvation possible. Once we place our faith in the Christ, doctrine shows us how to live out our faith in Him. If we have faith in the doctrine without a personal relationship with Jesus, then our faith is really in ourselves. Jesus must be the center of our world.

This is not an exhaustive list of themes from these great I AM statements. What other things have you learned about the nature of Jesus?

-Timothy Agee

PRAYER LIST

- **Tate Cotten**, 7 months old, has been in Vanderbilt PICU for a week
- **Bill Gillock** had a stroke last week.
- We rejoice with **Kristine Garrett** as her cancer scans continue to be good, and her liver is now clear
- **Faye Waller** has moved to Oak Point Assisted Living
- **Maria Hunter Harrington**, a friend of the Billingsleys, has breast cancer
- **Forshia Pennington, Carolyn Pennington** and **Judy Grissom**, relatives of the Reeds, have breast cancer. **Vicki Reed** has been diagnosed with Myeloma as well
- **Donna Rawls Head** has cancer
- Continue to pray for: those in **Ukraine**; the **Brown** family, **Delores Coleman**, the **Krantz** family, **John Hayes**, **Nick Phifer**, **Gaynell Walker**, **Rosemary Douglas**, **Isabel Johnson**, and **Jim Sims**

SERVING TODAY (September 4, 2022)

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Read: M. Reed
Prayer: J. Walker

WORSHIP

Read: C. Baker
Wait On Table: D. Billingsley
Serve: J. Gupton, D. Demonbreun
Prayer: E. Walker