

PLEASANT VIEW PROCLAIMER

September 11, 2022

Before Abraham Was, I AM (John 8:48-59)

Today we have bonus “I AM” lesson number two and will be looking at a statement that Jesus made in John 8 while in the temple, shortly after the “I AM the light of the world” statement. Jesus has been continuing in dialog with the Jews when it escalates dramatically at the end of the chapter.

P _____ (48-50, 53-55)

The Jews accuse Jesus of being a Samaritan and having a demon. While Jesus denies their accusations, He uses the opportunity to point out how He and the Jews have different objectives. Everyone must choose what path they will travel on in this life (**Matthew 7:13-14**), and we can't pick both (**Matthew 6:24**). Jesus is emphatically saying that He and the Jews are on different paths. Because of this, they do not truly know the Father (**John 8:19**) and they dishonor the Son with their accusations. In John's gospel, Jesus was accused of demon-possession on two other occasions (**John 7:20; 10:20**).

P _____ (51-53, 56)

Here, Jesus promises if we choose His path we will “Never See Death”. This is quite a promise! This is not a promise of escape from mortality but of eternal life. Compare this to **John 10:10**, “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly”. It is the summary of his mission, “to destroy the works of the devil” (**1 John 3:8**) and to undo the penalty for sin in the garden: “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (**Genesis 2:17**). A fuller statement of this principle appears later in Jesus' promise to Martha: “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live” (**John 11:25**). He additionally points out that Abraham “saw” the day when Christ would bring life to the world. This sparks quite a reaction from the Jews!

P _____ (57-59)

This is the foundation upon which His promise is based. How can He possibly say that those who follow Him will have “eternal life”? By claiming that He existed before Abraham, He is...



“Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, The creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable.”

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Threatened by darkness
Our suffering light
Submitted His power
Gave in to the night
Abandoned, forsaken
Dismayed, but not lost
He willingly gave up
His blood on the cross
Treasure of Heaven
For a world stained with sin
The King's Son was ransom
Our lost souls to win
Soaring fire of His Spirit
By our sin was brought low
Yet Love's burning ember
Continued to glow
Great light faced great darkness
But Light overcame!
The fuel for my heart's fire
The cure for my shame

(1) Claiming to be God - The Jews clearly recognized “I AM” as the meaning of the name of Yahweh as given to Moses in **Exodus 3:14-15**. They knew what He was claiming as evidenced by their response in attempting to stone Him for blasphemy. They did not believe Jesus’ words, but they clearly understood what His words meant (**Lev 24:16; Mark 14:61-63**). There can be no denial that Jesus was claiming equality with God (**John 1:1-5**).

(2) Claiming to be Eternal - “I AM” is not intended to mean that Jesus came into existence before Abraham did, but instead means “I have always existed and will continue to exist.” He always has been and always will be (**Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:13**), just like the Father. Because He is the original uncaused, cause, He existed prior to Abraham (**John 1:1**). Scripture tells us that God had planned out His intention to save the world through His son “before the foundation of the world” (**Ephesians 1:4**). He also continues to exist at the right hand of the Father even beyond His death on the cross (**Matthew 26:64; Mark 12:35-37; 14:62; 16:19; Lk 20:41-44; 22:69; Acts 2:34-36; 5:31; 7:55-56; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Colosians 3:1; Hebrews 1:13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; I Pet 3:22**), and is mediating on our behalf (**1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 4:14-16; 9:15**).

P _____ - How do we choose the path that Christ has traveled?

(1) F _____ **in Him** - One of the major themes of all the “I AM” statements is that Jesus is seeking those who will put their faith in Him instead of anything else in this life. He wants a relationship with us. At some point we must come to the realization that no matter how hard we try, or how good a life we think we can live, we will always come up short (**Matthew 5:3; Rom 3:23**). We must use this realization to take faith off our own shoulders and place it on Him and His promises (**Rom 4:20-21**). This decision must be accompanied by a transformation of our life.

(2) F _____ **His Words** - If our faith is truly in Him, we will then desperately look for the way in which we can serve Him (**Matthew 5:6**). This comes from keeping His word (**John 8:51; 14:15, 21, 23-24; 1 John 2:3-6; 3:24**). Our motivation for serving is love, because of what He has done for us.

PRAYER LIST

- **Tate Cotten** is at home recovering from RSV and croup
- **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 11, 2022)

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Read: J. Gupton
Prayer: L. Gregory

WORSHIP

Read: C. Baker
Wait On Table: J. Walker
Serve: J. Buchanan, D. Demonbreun
Prayer: R. Mayo