

I AM

It's two words and just 3 letters, but a super powerful truth. "I Am" comes from Exodus 3 when Moses is before God at the burning bush. Moses is uncertain and fearful about leading the Israelites out of Egypt, and he basically asks God, "Who are you? What's your name?" God's response is so powerful, "I Am who I Am." And He said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I Am has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3:14-15) Throughout the centuries the Jews have referred to God as Yahweh, which literally means "I Am".

Stop and think about the power of that statement for a minute. In it, God is saying I have always existed, I am the source and foundation of everything, I define reality, I will always exist, I am the source of truth, I am constant, I cannot be defeated, and I am all powerful. David Bowden's poem "I Am" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYTypUb_Jc4) is a powerful expression of this truth, and I would encourage you to listen to it before you begin today. Throughout his Gospel, John highlights all of Jesus' "I Am" statements, and today we will see one of Jesus' clearest declarations that He is God.

A few reflection questions before we look at God's Word:

- 1) Who is God to you? What is awesome about Him? What characteristics of God mean the most to you?

- 2) Without God in your life, what would be different? How do you see Him impact your life on a daily basis?

John 8:31-36 ³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ³³ They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"

³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

- 3) According to verse 32, Jesus wants to set us free. That means we must be trapped. What were all human beings slaves to? What does Jesus want to set us free from?

- 4) How does the truth practically set us free?

- 5) From verse 35, what is the difference between a slave and a son? How does this apply to Jesus setting us free?

John 8:37-47 ³⁷ I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. ³⁸ I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.” ³⁹ They answered him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, ⁴⁰ but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. ⁴¹ You are doing the works your father did.” They said to him, “We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God.” ⁴² Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. ⁴³ Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. ⁴⁴ You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵ But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. ⁴⁶ Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? ⁴⁷ Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.”

- 6) From this passage, what are the characteristics of those whose father is the devil (vs. 44)? What are the characteristics of those whose father is God? Contrast the two below:

Father is Devil

Father is God

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- 7) How does who your father is affect what you can understand? How might Satan be lying to you about who God is?

13) Why would Abraham rejoice to see Jesus' day? What does this show about what Jesus was fulfilling?

14) Why do you think the Jews tried to stone Jesus in verse 59? What does this show about what they believed Jesus was saying?

15) How would seeing Jesus more as the "I Am" practically impact your life today?

Consider ending your time by praying through Psalm 19 and all it says is true about God and His Word.