

Title: The Great I AM (Part 1 & 2)

Text: Exodus 3: 13-14

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Exodus 3: 13: And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? what shall I say unto them? 14: And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

Here we have God sanctifying Moses and sending him to deliver the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage. Since God is speaking with a sinful man, we know this is a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ the Son of God: “For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” This is the Angel of God who dwelt in the flame of fire in the bush—Angel means messenger—Malachi says Christ is the Messenger or the Angel of the Covenant. So this is the pre-incarnate Son of God speaking to Moses.

Wisely, Moses asked, “When...they shall say to me, What *is* his name? what shall I say unto them? V14: And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

This name declares Christ is eternal God—

Hebrews 13:8: Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

This name declares—Christ as...

Revelation 1:8: I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

When the Lord Jesus walked this earth, he called himself “I AM” many times. For instance, he declared himself God, saying

John 8: 24: I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that **I am** *he*, ye shall die in your sins...28: Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that **I am** *he*, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

John 8:58: Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, **I am**.

This name manifests he is the all-powerful God.

John 18: 4: Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? 5: They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, **I am** *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. 6: As soon then as he had said unto them, **I am** *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

Proposition: Each time Christ declared himself **I AM**, he declared himself to be everything his people need for salvation.

I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE

John 6: 35: And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst....48: I am that bread of life...51: I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world...54: Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. 55: For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed...56: He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

In order for a sinner to be made alive in righteousness, we need Christ. He says, "I am the bread of life." What does that mean?

When the innocent Lord Jesus was made sin for his people, he made his people righteous by his broken flesh and his shed blood. When God poured out justice on our Substitute, he poured out justice on his people—we were in Christ and we died in him.

Therefore, God will not impute sin to one for whom Christ died because Christ put away our sin. God will only impute righteousness to us because by Christ's obedience—his flesh and his blood—he made his people righteous. The reason Christ will not take no from his people but will give each one a new spirit of life is because the justice of God demands he give us life because we are righteous in him. Righteousness and life are vitally linked. Where you have righteousness you have life.

Romans 8: 9:...ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

As Christ declared himself to be "I am the bread of life" he said the believer dwells in me and me in him. Read verse 9 again. That is what it says.

Romans 8: 10: And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Note, the last phrase. The reason each of his people shall be filled with his Spirit is because Christ made us Righteousness by what he did for us—the justice of God demands it. And the reason the Spirit of Christ is life within us is because Christ is Righteousness within his people. Righteousness is life and Christ is that Righteousness. This is why he says, "I am the Bread of Life."

God does not impute righteousness to a believer because we are made righteous in spirit in the new birth. He imputes righteousness to those who believe on Christ because Christ worked out a righteousness for us to be imputed to us. But when God imputes righteousness to us it is not to treat us as if we are righteous. In Christ we are righteous because he made us so by his obedience. That is why God imputes righteousness to the believer in Christ. But when he does impute righteousness to us, which is only through faith, that believer has been created anew and that new man within is created in righteousness. So it is doubly evident that when God imputes righteousness it is because Christ has made us righteousness by his obedience. God is not making us righteous by imputing righteousness to us. Christ did that by his obedience. God only imputes what a person is and he imputes righteousness to a believer because that is what Christ has made us, apart from any work on our part.

No natural bread or drink can give us this righteousness and eternal life. But he says, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But hath eternal life!" You will never want for righteousness when you trust Christ. And to be righteous is to have eternal life.

I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

John 8: 12: Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

A sinner can only be saved by Christ being our Light. Not only are we born dead, we are born in complete spiritual darkness. But Christ said, “I am the light of the world.”

“Of the World” means Christ is the Light of his people who he calls “out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people.” (Rev 14: 6) His people are called from among Jew and Gentile, rich and poor; male and female; learned and unlearned; bond and free—he is the Light of the world. Christ is the Light of his elect wherever we are in the world.

The sun rises and shines all over the world. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness—the Light—who shines into the hearts of his people, enlightening us to life, wherever we be all over the world. He said, “I AM the Light of the world.”

I AM THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP

John 10: 7: Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8: All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 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. 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.

A sinner must have entrance into God’s presence. There is one way to enter into life, to enter into peace, to enter into God’s presence and be accepted of God—Christ the door. Christ said, “I AM the Door. By me if any man enter in...”

Anyone who tells us there is some other way to enter in other than Christ the Door—“the same is a thief and a robber—come to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.”

But Christ said, “I am” come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly. Life more abundantly is connected with they shall “Go in and out and find pasture.” It speaks of life and liberty. Christ is the Door to abundance of life and liberty in the green pasture of his grace.

Free from the law, O happy condition,
Jesus hath bled, and there is remission;
Cursed by the law and bruised by the fall,
Grace hath redeemed us once for all.

(But Christ says his sheep will not hear thieves—only Christ. Why? We will see that in the next hour in part two of this message.)

I AM THAT I AM (PART 2)

Exodus 3: 13: And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? what shall I say unto them? 14: And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

This is Christ speaking in the burning bush. He is declaring himself to be God—I Am that I am.

Proposition: Each time Christ declared himself **I AM**, he declared himself to be everything his people need for salvation. We saw Christ declare himself

We heard Christ declare, “I AM the Bread of Life, I AM the Light of Life, I AM the Door to Life. He said that his sheep do not hear false shepherds why?”

I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10: 11: I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep...14: I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. 15: As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16: And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd...24: Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. 25: Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me. 26: But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 27: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. 29: My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father’s hand. 30: I and *my* Father are one. 31: Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

The reason Christ’s sheep do not follow false shepherds is because the Lord Jesus Christ is I AM THAT I AM. As such his name is “I AM the good Shepherd.” The Lord Jesus Christ is the Shepherd, not of all without exception, not of the natural sons of Israel. But of the elect chosen by God and given to Christ to save. It is not our believing that makes us a sheep.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Shepherd of the elect, of those God the Father chose freely by his grace. When as yet we had not done any “good or evil that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of God that calleth.” (Rom 9: 11)

Romans 9: 16: So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

Christ did not say I know all men and lay down my life for all. We know that is not so because he just told some they were not his sheep. He said I know my sheep and I lay down my life for the sheep. It was only the elect of God for whom Christ died.

That is important because of what he accomplished when he said, “it is finished!” He did not make salvation possible. He saved his people from our sins. When the apostle John saw the book with seven seals and no one in heaven, earth or beneath worthy to lose the seals, he was shown Christ who had “prevailed.”

Revelation 5:5: And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath **prevailed** to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. 6: And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood **a Lamb** as it had **been slain**, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Christ is the Shepherd of his sheep because he laid down his life to become his sheep, as our substitute on the cross. He was made of a woman—why?—that he might be made under the law—that he might be made sin

for us, who knew no sin—that he might be made a curse for us—that he might redeem his sheep from the curse of the law, making his sheep the righteousness of God in him.

In Christ is where the very glory of God is set forth—the manifestation of the righteousness of God—how God is just and the Justifier of those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is God’s glory. That would not be so if Christ did not accomplish the redemption of God’s elect. But it is so because he did!

Hebrews 1: 3: Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;”

Whose sins? He said, “My sheep.”

Hebrews 9: 12: Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.

For whom? Christ said, “For my sheep.”

Hebrews 10: 14: For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Who are them that are sanctified? Christ said, “I lay down my life for my sheep.”

He fulfilled the law for his sheep. He satisfied justice for his sheep. He put away the sin of his sheep. He brought in everlasting righteousness for his sheep. He obtained eternal redemption for his sheep. Christ is the very certainty and assurance that God is glorified and all his sheep shall be saved. Justice cannot be poured out on one sheep now that it has already been poured out on Christ instead of them. Now, the very righteousness of God demands that they must be called by our gospel, regenerated and given faith in Christ Jesus, apart from their will and their works and they shall.

I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE

John 14: 4: And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. 5: Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6: Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. 7: If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8: Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9: Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?

Believers are such sinners that we must be taught the gospel over and over and over. Christ not only seeks his lost sheep and teaches us the gospel, but he continues to do so all our lives.

The only way we know that Christ is the great I AM, the Way, the Truth and the Life, is by Christ teaching us again and again. There is no way to the Father except through faith in Christ. There is no truth by which we can be made righteous and the Father accept us except through faith in Christ. There is no way we have eternal life with God the Father except through faith in Christ. He said, “No man cometh to the Father but by me!”

It was Christ our eternal God who taught this to all his saints from the beginning. He taught Adam and Eve—I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life. He taught Abel, Enoch and Noah. He taught Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses.

My son is often asking me how Christ could have created the world and appeared to his saints way back then when he was not born yet. Remember, Christ is God! God was not born. Christ the Son of God is I AM, he said, “before Abraham was, I AM.” He has eternally been the Way, the Truth and the Life.

For our next point, consider that in most pulpits today the message is all about how believers are to bear fruit. They put sinners under the law, they turn new testament commands into law, they promise rewards and they watch and threaten and whip and on and on. The truth is if we would bear any fruit it will only be by Christ the I AM.

I AM THE VINE

John 15: 5: I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

When we were in the flesh, the motivation of our hearts was to receive honor from men. It was to keep up an outward whitewashed appearance. We attempted to produce fruit by the letter of the law. We lived unto ourselves, unto other religious folks just like us and we were a worthless, withered branch producing no fruit.

But since we have been put in Christ by God’s grace, now life and grace comes from him just like a vine and its branches. We partake of the same divine nature of Christ which is a nature of righteousness and true holiness. The flesh is sin and in it dwells nothing good. But God has created a new man, a new spirit, which is created after God in the righteousness and holiness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:24: And that ye put on the new *man*, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Colossians 3:10: And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

1 John 3:9: Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Like the sap flows into the branch from the vine all our support and strength and perseverance comes from him. God looks on the new man—the new heart, on the new motive. Christ gave us a new heart with a new motive. He produced the two firstfruits of faith and love—faith in Christ and a heart to obey and honor him constrained by his great love wherewith he loved us.

We are branches. The fruit he produces in these branches is the fruit of mercy, temperance, kindness, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, making us willing to forgive one another even as Christ forgave us.

One brother and I were talking after service Thursday night. He made the point that the fruit is not for the tree and not even for the branches, the fruit is for others. So it is with the fruit Christ produces in his people. We indeed benefit from it. But the fruit Christ produces in us is for the good of those around us. It is for their good as Christ fills us with this treasure and causes us to bear witness of him and calls out his lost sheep. Our fruit is simply so that we will not be a distraction from Christ and his gospel.

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

John 11: 25: Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

At last, our vile bodies will need to be raised incorruptible and immortal like our spirit is now.

1 Corinthians 15: 54: So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55: O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? 56: The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. 57: But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Scripture says that if salvation is of grace it is no more of works but if of works it is no more of grace. (Rom 11: 6) So if a sinner does one work, he must do all. If there is one work a sinner cannot do then he must have Christ to do them all.

Can you and I resurrect ourselves from the dead? Of course not. Neither are we capable of performing any other work to save us. If we would be partakers of resurrection glory and eternal life, he who is the Resurrection and the Life must be ours. He said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live"

Imagine closing your eyes in this life and opening your eyes in glory with God our Savior. Will he take care of our resurrection that thoroughly, that completely, that perfectly for me? Just as he has taken care of every other aspect of our salvation.

So as Moses went forth to declare to Pharaoh and to the children of Israel who had sent him, Christ said, tell them "I AM THAT I AM hath sent you." I AM The Bread of Life, I AM The Light of Life, I Am The Door to Life, I Am The Good Shepherd who gives his sheep eternal Life, I AM The Way, the Truth and the Life, I Am The Vine giving the Branches Life, and I Am The Resurrection and the Life.

John 20: 31...these [things] are written, that **ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**; and that believing ye might have life **through his name**.

Acts 4: 12: Neither is there salvation in any other: for **there is none other name** under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Hebrews 11:6: But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that **he is**, and *that he is* a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Amen!