

GLEN BURNIE CHURCH OF CHRIST MORNING CLASSES  
May 3-5, 2017 (Wednesday – Friday)  
Brent T. Willey

**JESUS, THE GREAT "I AM"**  
Lesson #1

Introduction:

1. John's gospel account uniquely emphasizes the true identity of Jesus. Consider the bookend statements: John 1.1-4 ➔ 20.24-29.
  - a) John 1.1: "*The Word*" is the subject [nom.] and "*God*" is the direct object [acc.]. "*God*" complements "*the Word*;" hence, the definite article is not needed here for "*God*."
  - b) John 20.28: "*My Lord and my God*" has two nominatives ("*Lord*" & "*God*") and are very definite. Thomas identifies Jesus as both! [*HO KURIOS* MOU KAI *HO THEOS* MOU]
  - c) Analysis: The apostle John makes it very clear that Jesus is to be regarded as Deity, and not exclusively human.
2. John's gospel is a polemic, even an apologetic, and its theme or motif may very well be, **JESUS, THE GREAT "I AM."**

**I. UNDERSTANDING THE "I AM" PHRASE**

- A. Moses and the "*I AM*" revelation: "*I AM WHO I AM*" (Exod. 3.14) [*EHAYEH ASHER EHAYEH*]
- B. Read John 8.51-58 – Context: Christ's preexistence
  1. Jews claimed ancestry through Abraham (vs. 33, 39, 53)
  2. "*Before Abraham was, I AM*" (v. 58). [*EGŌ EIMÍ*: 1<sup>st</sup> per., present indicative mood – over 20x in John.]
  3. Contrast: "*Abraham was*" with "*I AM*" – timeless!
  4. Why did the Jews want to stone Jesus? (John 5.18; 10.33)
- C. John the Baptist: "*I am not the Christ*" (John 1.19-27; cf., 3.28). [*EGŌ OUK EIMÍ HO CHRISTOS*]

**II. THE EIGHT "I AM" STATEMENTS OF JOHN**

- A. "*I Am the Bread of Life*" (John 6.35) – Sustenance!
- B. "*I Am the Light of the World*" (John 8.12) – Vision!
- C. "*I Am the Door*" (John 10.7-10) – Access!
- D. "*I Am the Good Shepherd*" (John 10.11) – Leadership!
- E. "*I Am the Resurrection and the Life*" (John 11.25-26) – Life!
- F. "*I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*" (John 14.6) – Absolute!
- G. "*I Am the True Vine*" (John 15.1) – Connection!
- H. "*I Am the Alpha and Omega*" (Rev. 1.8) – Start to Finish!

Conclusion: There is no one like Jesus Christ – no one!

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JESUS, THE GREAT "I AM"  
Lesson #2: *"I Am the Bread of Life"*

Introduction:

1. Why did Jesus declare, *"I am the bread of life"* (John 6.35)?
2. In Greek: EGŌ EIMÍ HO ARTOS TĒS ZŌĒS  
*I am the bread of life*
3. What does this mean, and how does it apply to us today?

**I. JESUS IS THE SOURCE OF LIFE**

- A. *"All things were made by Him"* (John 1.3; cf., Col. 1.16).
  1. All physical life: animal & human. (Gen. 1.20-27; 2.7)
  2. God has high regard for life, but today's departure from that position is evident: abortion & euthanasia.
- B. The source of eternal life. (John 1.4; 3.16-17; 6.54, 68; 17.1-3)

**II. JESUS IS THE SUSTAINER OF LIFE**

- A. Bread (food) is vital to sustain life. (Gen. 3.19; Matt. 6.11)
  1. God gave Israel manna in the wilderness. (Exod. 16)
  2. Elijah & the widow of Zarephath. (1 Kings 17)
- B. Jesus gives and sustains eternal life.
  1. Born in *"Bethlehem"* = "house of bread" (Micah 5.2)
  2. Communion with His body. (1 Cor. 11.24; cf., 10.16-17)
  3. His words are life! (John 6.63; cf., Matt. 4.4)

**III. JESUS IS OUR SATISFACTION IN LIFE**

- A. *"He who comes to Me shall never hunger..."* (v. 35).
  1. *"...for they shall be filled"* (Matt. 5.6; cf., Psa. 107.9).
  2. *"...the food that endures to everlasting life"* (John 6.27).
- B. All other sources fail to satisfy: wealth, fame, success, etc.  
(Cf., 1 Tim. 6.6-10; Phil. 4.11-13)

Conclusion: Come to the *"bread of life"* and your needs will be met!

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**JESUS, THE GREAT "I AM"**  
**Lesson #3: "I Am the Light of the World"**  
**John 8.1-12**

Introduction:

1. Consider the setting when Jesus made this declaration.
2. Are the scribes and Pharisees trying to catch Jesus between the "law" and "grace"? (Cf., Exod. 20.14; Lev. 20.10; Mark 2.1-12)
3. **"Light"** was frequently associated with the Messiah (Christ).
  - a) Prophecy (Isa. 9.1-7 ➔ Matt. 4.13-17; cf., Isa. 49.6; 60.1-3)
  - b) In John (John 1.4-9; 3.19; 9.5; 12.35)
4. Why did Jesus say, **"I am the light of the world"**?

**I. HIS LIGHT BRINGS US KNOWLEDGE – Vs. 1-9**

- A. Knowledge of sin. (John 3.19-21; cf., Eph. 5.11)
  1. The woman violated God' law – she was a sinner.
  2. But the **"light of the world"** exposes hypocrisy as well!
- B. Knowledge of God's loving grace.
  1. **"For the grace of God..."** (Titus 2.11-14)
  2. V. 12: It exposes sin & righteousness! (Cf., Heb. 4.12)

**II. HIS LIGHT BRINGS US HOPE – V. 10**

- A. Even hope to the hopeless!
  1. Hope to an individual captured in sin. (Vs. 4, 10)
  2. Hope to a wretched world. **"World"** [KOSMOS] is found 79x in John's gospel. (E.g., John 1.9; 3.16,19; 9.5; 12.46)
- B. **"Now hope does not disappoint..."** (Rom. 5.5-10).
  1. KATAISCHUNŌ: "to shame down, i.e., disgrace" (Strong).
  2. God's unfailing love: **"we shall be saved by His life."**

**III. HIS LIGHT BRINGS US DIRECTION – Vs. 11-12**

- A. **"Go, and sin no more"** (v. 11).
  1. With forgiveness comes faithfulness, but we need help.
  2. Christ's Word is that light! (Rom. 10.17; cf., Psa. 119.105)
- B. **"He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life"** (v. 12; cf., Psa. 118.27).
  1. These are the directions for the followers of Christ!
  2. Forgiveness is only the beginning! (1 John 1.5-7)

Conclusion: The world is a dark place, but Jesus is the light we need!

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JESUS, THE GREAT "I AM"  
Lesson #4: "*I Am the Door of the Sheep*"  
John 10.7-10

Introduction:

1. Why did Jesus assert, "*I am the door of the sheep*" (vs. 7-10)? They did not understand His teaching about the sheepfold.
2. Some background is imperative. (John 9.35-41; 10.1-6)
3. Why does Jesus use this "*I Am*" statement? Fascinating...

I. THE "SHEEPFOLD" & "THE DOOR"

- A. What is a "*sheepfold*"?
1. Hebrew- NAVEH: "a habitation, an abode of shepherds & flocks, a pasture" [B-D-B] (2 Sam. 7.8; 1 Chron. 17.7)
  2. Greek- AULĒN TŌN PROBATŌN: "fold of the sheep" (text).
  3. Two different kinds of sheepfolds: village & hillside.
- B. What was the "*door*" to the sheepfold? Greek- THURA: more likely a gate; "a portal, or an entrance" [Strong].
1. The village sheepfold had a strong door/gate.
  2. The hillside sheepfold had no literal door/gate.
- C. So Jesus said, "*I am the door of the sheep*" (vs. 7, 9).

II. HOW IS JESUS "THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP"?

- A. "*I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture*" (v. 9).
1. Through Him alone can we find access to the Father. (Cf., John 14.6; Eph. 2.18; Heb. 10.19-22)
  2. Through Him we will "*go in and out and find pasture.*" This is a well-known Hebraism. (Cf., Num. 27.15-17; Deut. 28.6-7; Psa. 121.8) It is a beautiful expression.
- B. He protects us from "*thieves and robbers*" (v. 10).
1. God's sheep had been in danger. (E.g. Matt. 23)
  2. Righteous people/prophets died. (Matt. 23.29-30, 34-35)
  3. Through His word we find protection. (John 5.24; 8.51)
- C. Jesus said, "*I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly*" (v. 10).
1. "*More abundantly*" is to have superabundance of a thing.
  2. Only when we live with Christ is life really worth living!

Conclusion: Have you allowed Jesus to become *the door* of your life?

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**JESUS, THE GREAT "I AM"**  
**Lesson #5: "I Am the Good Shepherd"**  
John 10.11

Introduction:

1. The shepherd was a familiar figure in the Judean uplands.
2. The shepherd's task was both constant and dangerous in that he had to guard the flock from wild animals, and there were always "*thieves and robbers*" (v. 8) ready to steal the sheep.
3. As the "**Good Shepherd**," Jesus reveals much about Himself.

**I. THE BIBLICAL PICTURE OF THE SHEPHERD**

A. In the Old Testament:

1. The Psalms. (Psa. 23.1; 77.20; 79.13; 80.1; 95.7; 100.3)
2. The Prophets (Isa. 40.11; 63.11; Ezek. 34; Micah 5.4)

B. In the New Testament:

1. The shepherd risks his life for one sheep. (Luke 15.4)
2. Pities people like sheep with no shepherd. (Mark 6.34)
3. Jesus called the disciples His "*little flock*" (Luke 12.32).
4. If the shepherd is slain the sheep scatter. (Mark 14.27)
5. He shepherds the souls of His flock. (1 Pet. 2.25)
6. Elders "*shepherd*" the flock. (Acts 20.28; 1 Pet. 5.2)

**II. JESUS AS THE "GOOD SHEPHERD" REVEALS...**

A. **HIS CHARACTER** – **THREE INCOMPARABLE TITLES:**

1. The "*Good Shepherd*" dying for His sheep. (John 10.11)
2. The "*Great Shepherd*" risen for His sheep. (Heb. 13.20)
3. The "*Chief Shepherd*" coming for His sheep. (1 Pet. 5.4)

B. **HIS CARE** – **GENUINE CONCERN** (John 10.1-30)

1. He calls to His sheep by name. (Vs. 3-5, 14)
2. He leads the sheep by going before them. (Vs. 3-4)
3. He protects & preserves His sheep. (Vs. 12-13, 28-29)

C. **HIS CROSS** – **THE DEPTH OF HIS LOVE** (John 10.11)

1. He lays down His life for His sheep. (V. 15; John 15.13)
2. He provided salvation for all His sheep. (Vs. 16, 27-28; Cf., Rom. 10.12-13)
3. He conquered death for His sheep. (Vs. 17-18; Rom. 1.4)

Conclusion: Jesus, the loving Shepherd, is calling to us today...

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**JESUS, THE GREAT "I AM"**

**Lesson #6: "I Am the Resurrection and the Life"**

John 11.17-27

Introduction:

1. Consider the exchange between Jesus and Martha. (Vs. 20-27)
2. Jesus is poised to declare His fifth "I Am" statement: ***"I am the resurrection and the life..."*** (Read vs. 25-26)
3. I see three applications in this beautiful exchange:

**I. JESUS: THE GREATEST OF ALL PERSONALITIES**

- A. Martha chided, *"Lord, if You would have been here..."*
1. Jesus: *"Your brother will rise again"* (vs. 21-23).
  2. Later, Mary would make a similar comment (vs. 32-34).
- B. Upon seeing the sorrow of others, *"Jesus wept"* (v. 35).
- C. We should be moved by the compassion of Jesus. (Matt. 9.36)

**II. JESUS: THE GREATEST OF ALL POWERS**

- A. ***"I am the resurrection and the life"*** (v. 25).
1. ***"Resurrection"*** – A power He displayed earlier.
    - a) The widow's son at Nain (Luke 7.11-17)
    - b) The daughter of Jairus (Luke 8.40-51)
  2. ***"Life"*** – He created life, and He can restore it from death! (John 10.28; Rev. 2.10; John 10.17)
- B. Jesus may very well have been addressing two realities:
1. Death by sin – rebirth by conversion. (John 3.1-7)
  2. Life to come – death is not the end. (2 Thess. 4.13-18)

**III. JESUS: THE GREATEST OF ALL PROMISES**

- A. ***"He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die"*** (vs.25-26).
1. Life is short at its longest. (Psa. 90.10; James 4.14)
  2. Jesus promises life that lasts: eternal life! (John 3.15-17)
- B. ***"Do you believe this?"*** (v. 26).
1. Many do not believe this. Lives without hope!
  2. It takes faith and is always conditional! (John 3.36; 8.24)

Conclusion: The only life worth living is one that lives for Jesus; the only death worth dying is one that will be victorious in resurrection!

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**JESUS, THE GREAT "I AM"**

**Lesson #7: "I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"**

John 14.6

**Introduction:**

1. Jesus had said, *"I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me"* (John 7.33).
2. The disciples struggled to understand what Jesus meant.
3. Jesus responds to Thomas, saying, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*

**I. JESUS: "I AM THE WAY..."**

- A. The Jews spoke much about the way in which men must walk in the ways of God.
  1. The Law declared the ways of God. (Deut. 5.32-33; 31.29; Isa. 30.21; 35.8)
  2. But they routinely violated God's ways. (Isa. 59.1-2, 7-8)
- B. But here is Jesus saying, *"I am the way"* (cf., Eph. 2.18).

**II. JESUS: "I AM THE TRUTH..."**

- A. The Psalmist said, *"Teach me Your way, O LORD, I will walk in Your truth..."* (Psa. 86.11).
  1. He also said, *"I have chosen the way of truth..."* (Psa. 119.30).
  2. Pilate asked, *"What is truth?"* (John 18.37-38).
- B. Embodying the truth, Jesus said, *"I am the truth..."*
  1. Moral truth must be conveyed in example.
  2. The fact of moral perfection finds its realization in Jesus! (Cf., John 1.14, 17; 8.32)

**III. JESUS: "I AM THE LIFE..."**

- A. *"For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life"* (Prov. 6.23; see also Prov. 10.17; Psa. 16.11). The Law revealed life!
- B. But then Jesus says, *"I am the life..."*
  1. *"All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made"* (John 1.3).
  2. What man is seeking for is life. (James 4.14; Eccl. 3.11)

**Conclusion:** Jesus concluded, *"No one comes to the Father except through Me."* This fact makes Him the Great *"I Am"*!



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JESUS, THE GREAT "I AM"  
Lesson #8: "*I Am the True Vine*"  
John 15.1-8

Introduction:

1. Why did Jesus use this metaphor?
  - a) In connection to the Lord's Supper? (Matt. 26.27-28).
  - b) Because of the vineyards near Kidron? (John 18.1).
  - c) Because of the golden vine over the temple-gate? (Westcott)
  - d) Old Testament imagery? (Psa. 80.8-19; Isa. 5.1-7; Jer. 2.21)
2. The Father is the "*vinedresser*" [GEÖRGOS] - a "landowner, i.e., a farmer. KJV: husbandman" (Strong). (19 x in the N.T.)
3. What is our relationship to the "*true vine*"?

**I. ABIDE IN THE VINE!**

- A. "*Abide in Me, and I in you*" (v. 4).
  1. Christ, the "*true vine*," is our life source. (John 1.4; 3.36)
  2. Faithful dedication. (Rev. 2.10)
    - a) To worship in spirit & truth. (John 4.23)
    - b) To encourage others in assembly. (Heb. 10.24-25)
    - c) Proper priorities. (Matt. 6.33)
    - d) Self-sacrifice. (Rom. 12.1-2)
- B. Warning: Abide, or be thrown into the fire! (V. 6)

**II. BEAR GODLY FRUIT!**

- A. "*I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing*" (v. 5).
  1. When Christ lives in us, look what happens! (Gal. 2.20)
  2. What fruit? The "*fruit of the Spirit*" (Gal. 5.22-23).
- B. Warning: Even productive vines are pruned! (V. 2)

**III. GLORIFY THE FATHER!**

- A. "*By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples*" (v. 8).
- B. Two critically important factors:
  1. We are to glorify the Father, not self. (Matt. 5.16)
  2. Bearing "*much fruit*" denotes discipleship! (Matt. 7.20)

Conclusion: Without Christ we can do nothing to please God!



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**JESUS, THE GREAT "I AM"**  
**Lesson #9: "I Am the Alpha & the Omega"**  
**Revelation 1.8**

Introduction:

1. We began with the "*I Am*" statement made to Moses when God called him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. (Exod. 3.13-22)
2. The "*I AM*" revelation: "*I AM WHO I AM*" (Exod. 3.14)
  - a) John 8.51-58 – Context: Christ's preexistence.
  - b) "*Before Abraham was, I AM*" (v. 58). [EGÖ EIMÍ]
  - c) Contrast: "*Abraham was*" with "*I AM*" – timeless!
3. Completing the series in *Revelation*...

**I. THE "I AM" STATEMENTS REGARDING JESUS**

- A. "*I Am the Bread of Life*" (John 6.35) – Sustenance!
- B. "*I Am the Light of the World*" (John 8.12) – Vision!
- C. "*I Am the Door*" (John 10.7-10) – Access & Protection!
- D. "*I Am the Good Shepherd*" (John 10.11) – Leadership!
- E. "*I Am the Resurrection & the Life*" (John 11.25-26) – Life!
- F. "*I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*" (John 14.6) – Absolute!
- G. "*I Am the True Vine*" (John 15.1) – Connection!

**II. "I AM THE ALPHA & THE OMEGA"**

- A. "*I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.'*" [ESV]
  1. "*The Alpha and the Omega*" – The Aleph & the Taw!
  2. He provides all we need – from "A" to "Z"! (Eph. 1.3)
- B. Jesus Christ is the One "*Who is to come*"! What will happen?
  1. "*All*" the dead will be resurrected. (John 5.22-30)
  2. "*We who are alive and remain...*" (1 Thess. 4-13-18)
  3. He made it all – He will end it all! (2 Pet. 3.7-13)

Conclusion: The Great "*I Am*" is our only hope. Who is He to you?