

The 7 I Am's

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Opening Video

Gospel of John

The 7 I AM's

I am the Bread of Life	I am the Light of the World	I am the Door of the Sheep
I am the Good Shepherd	I am the Resurrection and the Life	I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life
I am the True Vine		

John's Gospel

- Author – John, the apostle, the "the disciple whom Jesus loved", author of 1, 2 & 3 John and Revelation.
- Audience – the World.
- Thought to have been written AD 70 before Jerusalem was destroyed, AD 85-90 is a more accepted time frame.
- Most theological of the four gospels.

John's Gospel

The uniqueness of the gospel of John:

- 90% of the material doesn't appear in the other 3 gospels (Matthew-Jews, Mark-Roman Christians and Luke-Gentiles)
- Written to the whole world as opposed to a specific group of people
- Presenting Jesus as "Savior of the World"
- Greater presence of the Holy Spirit in this book

Key Themes:

- The "Word" of God; "I Am" statements of Jesus; "Signs" (Miracles) Jesus performed; Belief and Unbelief; Light and Darkness; Life and Death; the authority of the Son of God

John's Gospel

"Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

- John 20:30-31

The 7 I AM's

- Found in the "Book of Signs" (Portrays Jesus' deity) and "Farewell Discourse" (Jesus' final words to His disciples) sections of John
- These statements made by Jesus are only found in John's gospel
 - Emphasis on Jesus' deity and being "Savior of the World"
 - Fulfilling the Law and the Prophets – God's plan from the beginning
 - God is "I AM" (Exodus 3:14)
- John is presenting Jesus as God of the Old Testament through the 7 I AM statements.

The 7 I AM's

"Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' What shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

- Exodus 3:13-14

The 7 I AM's

Why study them?

- Abiding in Christ produces life in us (John 15:5)
- Jesus makes God known to us (John 1:16-18)
- *"And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent"* (John 17:3)
- Not only does Jesus give us what we need, He IS what we need.

I am the Bread of Life

Context:

- Jesus just fed 5000 people by multiplying a few fish and bread (John 6:1-15)
- The people are looking for Jesus to fill their physical needs (John 6:26-27)
- Moses and Mana
 - Exodus 16 & Numbers 11
 - Jesus is BETTER than Moses and BETTER than mana, He is "true bread" (John 6:32-34)
- Jews grumble in response
 - "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day" (John 6:44)

I am the Bread of Life

- Jesus is nourishment, greater the physical nourishment
 - Jesus draws out their true need by meeting their physical need.
 - Bread that sustains
- Jesus is from God
- Self-sufficient existence – we need Him, but He doesn't need
- To eat his flesh and drink His blood is to believe in Him for atonement (6:53-54)
 - Belief --> Eternal life (6:28, 40, 47)
 - Eating bread --> Eternal life (6:50)
- Invitation for everyone
 - "Whoever..." (6:54)

I am the Bread of Life

"Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may life..."

-Isaiah 55:1-3

I am the Bread of Life

- We all have a "hunger" to know God. Only Jesus can fully satisfy that.
- Idolatry - looking to something besides Jesus to satisfy our God-designed needs
- Jesus is the only source for atonement, which comes through believing in Him
 - Not nationality or morality or religiosity or legalism or knowledge or ability
- We have hope for eternal life through belief

I am the Bread of Life

- Do you seek God for what He gives you? Or do you seek Him for Himself, because He fills you?
- What are the things that you look to for satisfaction/fulfillment apart from Jesus?
- How can you choose to find satisfaction in Jesus?

I am the light of the world

- Central Verse –
 - John 8:12: Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
- In the temple
- No human authority in Him
- 7 references that His authority is from the Father
- Opposition Increasing John 7:37-47

Breakdown

- John 8:12 **Light** of the **world** – He illuminates all things for what it should be. Disperses darkness and death.
- Declaring His absolute Deity-God, Supreme Being
- Assurance of Salvation
- O.T. connections to Light
 1. Let there be light Gen 1
 2. Moses and the burning bush Exodus 3
 3. Protective cloudy pillar of fire during wilderness wanderings. Exodus and Numbers
 4. Appearing to Israel on Mt. Sinai
- Exclusive source of spiritual light.

Breakdown Cont.

- John 8:12...Whoever follows me **will not** walk in **Darkness**
- We are all born into sin Ps 51:5
- Jesus states...We love Darkness John 3:19
- Jesus is getting to the condition of man's heart
 - 1 John 1:5..."that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."

Breakdown Cont.

- John 8:12...The light of **Life**
- Many religions present the darkness and light symbolism. John presents Jesus Christ as the only true light.
 - Jesus alone gives us eternal life.
- John 1:4 "In Him was life and the life was the light of men."
 - Spiritual light that gives us life.
- Illumination of Christ turns the heart.
- Promise of reflection
 - Matt 5:16 "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good ..."
- From Satan to God.
 - Acts 26:8 Our goal in witnessing to the unsaved is "to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God."

I am the light of the world

- Do you believe the light of Christ alone can lead you and direct you?
- What are some things you put your trust in to lead your life other than Christ?
- How has God illuminated your heart through your faith in Christ?

The Sheepfold & The Shepherd

- Jesus' teaching illustration: the Sheepfold and the Shepherd
- Cultural significance
- Religious significance
 - God is Israel's Shepherd (Psalm 23, Psalm 80:1, Isaiah 40:10-11)
 - Religious leaders described as "shepherds" (Jer. 23:1-4, Ezek. 34:1-10)

The Sheepfold & The Shepherd

- Entry authenticates the shepherd (v. 1-2)
 - Religious leaders
- The sheep know and follow their shepherd's voice (v. 3-5)
 - Jesus' previous discourse in John 8-9
"Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God" (John 8:47)

I am the Door of the Sheep

"So Jesus again said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture."

-John 10:7-9

I am the Door of the Sheep

- Entry through Jesus (v. 1-2, 7, 9)
- Contrasted with "thieves and robbers"
- Entry grants the ability to go in and out and find pasture

I am the Door of the Sheep

- Jesus is the entry point into belonging to God. And He is the only way.
 - Any other way we seek to enter into life will not provide it.
- Entry through Jesus provides freedom, safety and nourishment
 - "Short-cuts" or "alternate routes" don't provide
- Anything that does not come through Jesus is not of life-giving intent
 - Bad shepherds
 - *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy, I came that they may have life and have it abundantly"* (John 10:10)

I am the Good Shepherd

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because He cares nothing for the sheep."

- John 10:11-13

I am the Good Shepherd

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd."

-John 10:14-16

I am the Good Shepherd

"For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father. "

-John 10:17-18

I am the Good Shepherd

- Qualities of the Good Shepherd:
 - Sacrificial (v. 11)
 - Stays with and protects the sheep (v. 12)
 - Cares for the sheep (v. 13)
 - Knows his sheep and is known by the sheep (v. 14)
 - Brings the sheep into the fold and is the sole shepherd of the fold (v. 16)
- Contrast with "hired hand"
- Relationship
- Authority

I am the Good Shepherd

- Jesus is the atoning sacrifice. He literally laid down His life to give us life. This offer still stands.
- Jesus knows His own and His own know Him – belonging and relationship
- Jesus cares for and does not forsake those who belong to Him.
 - Not like leaders who forsake their own
- Jesus' own listen to His voice.

I am the Door & the Good Shepherd

- Do I trust Christ alone for salvation? Am I looking to any other person, idea, thing, etc. to make me right, give me safety or security, or find value?
- Whose voice am I listening to?
- How is Jesus nourishing my soul?
- What is my relationship with Jesus like? Is it marked by knowing and being known?

I am the Resurrection and the Life

- Central verse –
 - John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Call to faith: Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live..."
- Deliberate plan in allowing Lazarus to die (puzzled Disciples)
- For the Glory of God
- Martha meets Jesus in Bethany
- Displays Jesus authority over humankinds greatest enemy, death
- Resurrection is of the God-Man Jesus Christ

I am the Resurrection and the Life

- Jesus loved and knew Lazarus
 - Mary and Martha's brother
- Delay in Gods purpose Isa 64:4, James 1:4, Abraham, King David, Paul
- His delay is for His Glory
- The sign of death - would increase the disciples faith and demonstrate Jesus' identity.
 - Believe in His works John 14:11

I am the Resurrection and the Life

- Lazarus dead (asleep) for **four** days.
- Martha limits Jesus authority and power – "If you were here."
 - Luke 7 and John 4 – Jesus heals from a distance.
- Jesus is about to show He is the Old Testament promise.
 - Isaiah 26:19 "Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead."

I am the Resurrection and the Life

- Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life v25-27.
 - Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."
- Double claim to this statement v25.
 - He is the Resurrection (overcome death)
 - Romans 8:11, 1 John 3:2
 - The Life – sustainer of life Col 1:17, John 10:27-28.
- Its only through Him do we overcome death 1 Cor 15:55
 - More than life, He gives eternal life, death has no power.
 - Imparts eternal life to believers 1 John 5:11-12

I am the Resurrection and the Life

- Future expectation of the resurrection.
- Victory over death is a present reality.
 - 1 John 1:2 "The life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us..."
 - 1 Corinthians 15:19 "If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied."
- Death and time are no obstacle to Jesus
 - Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

I am the Resurrection and the Life (validation)

- Raising of Lazarus v43-44.
- Called Lazarus by name.
- Jesus raises Lazarus by His word.
- Raising of Lazarus is an acted parable of the Christian life.
 - From death to life.
- Jesus rose in a spiritual body, never to die again.

I am the Resurrection and the Life

- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14
- But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.
- Victory is a present reality.

I am the Resurrection and the Life

- Have you fully trusted in the new resurrected life you have in Christ?
- What fears or doubts do you have if any about death?
- Anyone in your life you are praying for in hopes they would hear the call of Jesus Christ?
- Do you believe as Martha did (11:25) in the promise that in Jesus you will live forever?

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going."

-John 14:1-4

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

"Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

-John 14:5-6

The Father's House

- Heaven: Country (Lk 19:12), City (Heb 11:10), Kingdom (2 Peter 1:11), Paradise (Lk 23:43), Father's House (John 14)
- Jesus prepared the place by going to the cross.
- "Home" is where we belong. We don't belong here.
- Marriage imagery
- Assurance

The Way

- Answer to Thomas' question. He is how they get to His Father's house.
- Exclusivity of God's presence.
 - Tabernacle/Temple curtain (Ex 26:33, Levit 16)
 - Rejection of different ways of entrance
 - God's holiness, our depravity and the necessity of faith
- Jesus is the only way to God
 - "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)
 - Through the Cross

The Truth

- Reveals the true God (Jn. 1:14, 17; 5:33; 8:40, 45-46; 14:9; 18:37)
- Embodies the supreme revelation of truth (Jn. 1:18; 5:19; 8:29)

"See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ..."

- Colossians 2:8

The Life

- He contains and imparts eternal life (Jn. 1:4; 3:16; 5:26; 11:25; 1 Jn. 5:20)

- Destroys the curse of sin
"...When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

'Death is swallowed up in victory.'

'O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?'

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

- 1 Cor 15:54-57

I am the Way, the Truth and the Life

Do I trust Jesus alone as my way to righteousness with God? Am I trying to get there any other way?

What are times in your life you doubted Jesus' words of being the Truth?

Where do I seek life apart from Christ?

In light of Jesus being the way, the truth and the life, how should I consider and engage the culture?

I am the true vine

- Central Verse -
 - John 15:1, 5 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser...I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."
- Preparing the 11, His friends for His departure
- Though we cannot physically see Him
- Jesus is the One all people need to be connected to; He is the vine, we are the branches.
- Spiritual fruit in Him.
- To abide is to be with the Father and the Son.

What does it mean to abide in Christ?

To abide is having a saving faith but also to cultivate the Word of God

- Be a disciple
- Have an intimate relationship
- Devote daily
- Bear fruit

I am the true vine...

- Jesus is the One who would and will produce good fruit as God intended.
- Statement people of Israel would understand
 - Isa 5:1-7, Jer 2:21
- Used to portray Jesus as the One all people need to be connected to.
- Jesus and the Father occupy different roles – remember they are equal.

To bear fruit

- "In Me"...v2 used 16x in the Gospel of John.
- Fruit bearing is the normal but not the inevitable consequence of having divine life.
- The branches that are taken away - "...that does not bear fruit he takes away..."
- Pruning process Prov 3:7-8, Heb 12:4-11
- Times of not abiding and not fruit bearing – He is always with us.

I am the vine; you are the branches...

- Every day we ask to stay connected.
- No believer can achieve anything of spiritual value apart from Christ.
 - Acts 17:28 "For in Him we live and move and have our being."
- Lack of fruit bearing does not necessarily mean someone is not saved.
- How often are we told that fruitlessness is the sure sign of a non believer.
- A believer is always secure in Christ but may no longer be growing or moving forward. This person could be spiritually sick.

I am the true vine...I am the vine...

- What are ways we look to stay connected to Christ throughout each day?
- How can we encourage others to continue persevering in Jesus?
- Do we pass judgement on others when we don't see fruit bearing in there lives?
- Can you remember a time recently you felt you were not connected to the vine?

I am

- Jesus is our unending sustenance – Bread of Life
- He is the one who illuminates our heart and gives life – Light of the world
- Through Him is how we enter – the Door
- Jesus knows His sheep – the Good Shepherd
- In Him we live and will rise again – Resurrection and the Life
- There is only one way to the Father – I am the Way, the Truth and the Life
- Apart from Him we can do nothing – I am the true vine, I am the vine
