

FOUNDATION OF FAITH!
CHRISTOLOGY: JESUS CHRIST
PART 8

This morning we are in part 8 of in our study of Jesus Christ, part of our Foundation of Faith series. And in our previous studies we have looked at Jesus and the attributes that were manifested in His life and we saw that they were the same as God the Father and thus, Jesus must be God. We saw the humanity of Jesus or how God became flesh and dwelt among us and manifested human qualities. He was fully God and fully man in the Incarnation.

And we talked about those who say there is no extra Biblical evidence for Jesus and we showed through various quotes that there are many outside sources that speak of Jesus. Yes, he was not a prominent figure in His day but the things He did made people take notice and they spoke of Him.

And we are currently looking at the deity of Jesus and how He claimed to be God. And as we have seen, there is no mistake about it. Even the Jewish religious leaders recognized what He was saying and wanted to stone Him to death for blasphemy. You see, He being a man, in their minds, made Himself equal with God and that was punishable by stoning the person to death! And we will be looking at this again this morning to show you what the Scriptures have to say regarding the sayings of Jesus, that He claimed to be God.

Before we get to that I want to share with you what some people say regarding Jesus being God. These responses were found on-line at Yahoo Answers to the question “Did Jesus Deny Being God?” And listen carefully to what they are saying for they are speaking as experts and yet, as we will see this morning, they are missing the point, Jesus did claim to be God and as I have said, at least the religious leaders of Jesus day were honest about that and they wanted him dead, they wanted to stone Him to death!

The first answer to that question comes from John S. who wrote:

As a Muslim we agree with you that there is no verse in the bible where Jesus says “I am God” worship me. He isn’t his son either because everyone in the bible are the son of god sons by the tons. He was a Messenger of God and may God have peace and blessings upon him.

- John S.

Now that is an interesting statement and totally wrong. First of all Jesus did claim to be God as we saw last week. Secondly, as we will see in our studies on Jesus that He was worshiped and Jesus knew very well that only God is to be worshiped, and thus, Jesus is God. And that title, “Sons of God” is important and it does not mean He is like every one of us, He, in the Incarnation is truly the Son of God and we are only adopted into the family of God by faith in Jesus. But, as we will see, that is not what that title or phrase is speaking of. And so, He is more than just a messenger of God, He is God Almighty and again, we will look at this more closely this morning and show you what the Scriptures have to say.

The next answer to that question is given to us by someone called LineDancer and this is what he wrote:

Yes. At John 10:33, the Jews said to Jesus: “The Jews answered him, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.” Did Jesus deny their claim? Yes. At verse 36, he told them: “I am the Son of God.”

Jesus’ apostles and friends repeatedly identified him in this way. Said Nathanael: “Rabbi, you are the Son of God.” (John 1:49) Peter exclaimed: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matt. 16:16) Martha confessed: “You are the Christ, the Son of God.” (John 11:27) The apostle John wrote so people might believe that “Jesus is the Christ the Son of God.” (John 20:31) And of the apostle Paul’s ministry it is said: “He began to preach Jesus, that this One is the Son of God.” Acts 9:20.

Did Peter, Paul, John or any other of Jesus’ followers preach that he was God? No, from these scriptures it is clear that they taught he was God’s Son.

- LineDancer

Once again, because this person called LineDancer doesn’t understand what this title means, he comes to the wrong conclusion. Thus, since this is a hot topic or seems to be, let me explain this title, “Son of God” to you because it is used often in the Scriptures as we have seen and been told by LineDancer!

In the Four Gospels that title is used 27 times and in the rest of the New Testament it is used of Jesus some 19 times or a total of 46 times in the New Testament, so we do need to understand what this title is all about. Now keep in mind that this phrase or title, “Son of” can be used in the sense of “offspring of” but it can also carry with it the idea “of the order of.” Let me explain. In the Old Testament we see the phrase, “**sons of the prophets**” and the idea here is the order of the prophets. (I Kings 20:35) Also, in Nehemiah 12:28 we are told of the, “**sons of the singers,**” and that was speaking of the order of the singers and not their offspring.

Thus, when we look at this title or phrase when it speaks of Jesus it is not speaking of Him being the offspring but the order of God and the idea here speaks of His deity, that He is fully God! Let me share this with you from J. Oliver Buswell from his book on Systematic Theology. He wrote regarding this issue of Jesus being the Son of God,

In Jewish usage the term Son of . . . did not generally imply any subordination, but rather equality and identity of nature. Thus Bar Kokba, who led the Jewish revolt 135 – 132 B. C. in the reign of Hadrian, was called by a name which means “Son of the Star.” It was supposed that he took this name to identify himself as the very Star predicted in Numbers 24:17. The name “Son of Encouragement” (Acs 4:36) doubtless means, “The Encourager.” “Sons of Thunder” (Mark 3:17) probably means “Thunderous Men.” “Son of man,” especially as applied to Christ in Daniel 7:13 and constantly in the New Testament, essentially means “The Representative Man.” Thus for Christ to say, “I am the Son of God” (John 10:36) was understood by His contemporaries as identifying Himself as God, equal with the Father, in an unqualified sense.

Do you see how important it is to look at what is being said instead of what others are saying? We have to approach the Scriptures with a Jewish mindset, we need to look at the totality of the Scriptures and not just pull texts out of context like the cults are famous for doing! And yes, we do have many today who try to deny the deity of Jesus Christ and many are coming from inside the church itself, but please understand that this is not new. People have been trying to deny the deity of Jesus from the moment His ministry on earth began!

Very early on in church history, in order to try to rectify the problems, the controversies over the person of Christ, who is He, a large church council was convened in the city of Chalcedon near Constantinople or modern day Istanbul from October 8th to November 1st in 451 A. D. And out of this council they brought forth this statement known as the Chalcedonian Definition. And this became and still is the standard orthodox definition of the Biblical teaching on the person of Jesus Christ. Listen carefully to what they put down because it is what the Bible is teaching us no matter what this group or that group, this cult or that cult, this person or that person may say. Here is the Chalcedonian Definition:

Following, then, the holy fathers, we unite in teaching all men to confess the one and only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This selfsame one is perfect both in deity and in humanness; this selfsame one is also actually God and actually man, with a rational soul and a body. He is of the same reality as God as far as his deity is concerned and of the same reality as we ourselves as far as his humanness is concerned; thus like us in all respects, sin only excepted. . . . and now in these “last days,” for us and behalf of our salvation, this selfsame one was born of Mary the virgin, who is God-bearer in respect of his humanness.

We also teach that we apprehend this one and only Christ-Son, Lord, only-begotten - in two natures; and we do this without confusing the two natures, without transmuting one nature into the other, without dividing them into two separate categories, without contrasting them according to area or function. The distinctiveness of each nature is not nullified by the union. Instead, the “properties” of each nature are conserved and both natures concur in one “person” and in one reality. They are not divided or cut into two persons, but are together the one and only and only-begotten Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus have the prophets of old testified; thus the Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us; thus the Creed of the Fathers [a reference to the Nicene Creed] has handed down to us.

- Chalcedonian Definition

As I have said before, this is vital to our understanding because if we deny the deity of Jesus Christ, then we are still dead in our trespasses and sins. We are not saved, we are not born again! Now some may argue that point, but just one verse that shows you this is found in John 8:24 as Jesus warns us, **“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”** Please understand that the **“He”** was added for clarity, but it should not be there. This verse should read, **“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am, you will die in your sins.”**

In other words, Jesus is claiming to be the Great I AM, the voice from the burning bush, Almighty God! Thus, if you do not believe that Jesus is God, if you deny His deity, you will die in your sins. That is not what I have said; it is what Jesus has said!

This morning we are going to be looking at the seven **“I AM”** statements that Jesus made, which will show once again that He is claiming to be God. So let’s continue looking at the deity of Jesus Christ and specifically the words that Jesus said that prove that He is God, His claim to be God!

4. THE DEITY OF JESUS

THE SEVEN “I AM” STATEMENTS MADE BY JESUS

To help set the stage for these “I AM” statements by Jesus let me just share with you from John 8:58. We covered this last time but it will help lead us to where we are going this morning. In John 8:58 we are told, **“Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.’”** Notice that Jesus did not say that before Abraham was born “I was” or “I will be” but that He is the Great I AM!

Now I realize that there are those who say that Jesus never claimed to be God here, that was not His point, although I am not sure what His point would be. And think about this for a minute. Look at how the Jews responded to what He said in John 8:59, **“Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”** Why in the world would they pick up stones to stone Jesus? Because He being a man made Himself equal with God and the penalty for that was stoning! They knew what He was saying and tragically, many refuse to see that today.

Now I want you to see what point Jesus was making here because it is crucial to our understanding of who He is. When Jesus called Himself **“I AM”** He was saying that He is the voice that came from the burning bush back in Exodus 3:14-15, the voice that spoke to Moses and we are told, **“And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ And He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”** **Moreover God said to Moses, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: “The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.”**

God is responding to the question from Moses regarding when the children of Israel ask who sent him, what should he say, what is your name? And the Lord tells him, “**I AM**” or the eternal One, the all-becoming One has sent him! And when you see the word, “LORD” in all capitals it signifies the name of God, Yahweh or Jehovah. When you see, “Lord” with a capitol “L” and lower case “ord” it signifies His title as lord or master. Now there is something of importance here, for the name of God is not a noun, like our names, but it is a verb. It is an action word and thus His name Yahweh means “the becoming one.” He is the Great I AM!

Now keep in mind that the Hebrew consonants YHWH are how it is written because they did not insert the vowels. God’s name was too holy to repeat and even today when they speak of the name of God, they will write it G-D or they will just say “the Name.” And thus, the speculation on how it is pronounced goes on. Some say it is Yahweh, which I believe is correct and others say Jehovah, we are not really sure. This combination of consonants, YHWH is known as TETRAGRAMMATON or “four letters.”

In the Old Testament we see many names of God, the same God but just how He meets us where we are. The all-becoming One! Here are a few names of God in the Old Testament:

- ***JEHOVAH JIREH***: The Lord will provide – Genesis 22:14.
- ***JEHOVAH ROPHE***: The Lord who hears – Exodus 15:22-26.
- ***JEHOVAH NISSI***: The Lord our banner – Exodus 17:15.
- ***JEHOVAH M’KADDESH***: The Lord who sanctifies – Leviticus 20:8.
- ***JEHOVAH SHALOM***: The Lord our peace – Judges 6:24.

- ***JEHOVAH ELOHIM***: Lord God – Genesis 2:4.
- ***JEHOVAH TSIDKENU***: The Lord our righteousness – Jeremiah 23:5-6.
- ***JEHOVAH ROHI***: The Lord our shepherd – Psalm 23.
- ***JEHOVAH SHAMMAH***: The Lord is there – Ezekiel 48:35.
- ***JEHOVAH SABAOTH***: The Lord of hosts – Isaiah 1:24.
- ***JEHOVAH YESHUA***: The Lord our salvation – Psalm 119:41

You see, our God is able to come to us in our time of need, no matter what that may be, because He is the all-becoming One, He is the Great I AM! This name speaks of God being self-existence, eternal. Think of it like this in regards to God, “I am the One who is/the one who will be.” That is the best way to look at it. From our text in John 8:58 and here in Exodus 3:14-15, we can see that Jesus is claiming to be that voice from the burning bush, the Great I AM, God Almighty. And even if you don’t understand Hebrew or Greek, like I have said, when you see the response of the Jewish religious leaders, you can clearly see the point that He was making and they didn’t like it. It did not fit with their theology!

Now, fast forward from Exodus some fifteen hundred years to the time of Jesus and notice what Jesus is declaring, look at what He says about Himself. In the New Testament we see Jesus teaching us that He is the great “**I AM**” or that He is God. As you will see, this is very clear so to deny the deity of Jesus is just plain foolishness. Let me show you these seven “**I AM**” statements by Jesus and then we will expound on them because they are very important. We are told of Jesus, that He said of Himself that:

- *I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE* – John 6:35.
- *I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD* – John 8:12.
- *I AM THE DOOR* – John 10:7-10.
- *I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD* – John 10:11.
- *I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE* – John 11:25.
- *I AM THE WAY, I AM THE TRUTH, I AM THE LIFE* – John 14:6.
- *I AM THE VINE* – John 15:5.

Thus, Jesus is our all-becoming One, that no matter what we are going through He will meet us where we are. I believe the Lord was telling Moses this very thing – “Moses, don’t worry, *I AM* is with you and you have nothing to fear!” May we too remember that and apply it to our lives – He is the great “**I AM**” not the great “**I WAS**” or the great “**I WILL BE**”! I pray that this is clear to you because again it is important for us to understand. Now let’s take some time to look at these seven “**I AM**” statements that Jesus made.

A. **I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE** – John 6:35

The first of the seven “**I AM**” statements that Jesus made is found in John 6:35 where we are told, “**And Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.’**” And please understand that once again Jesus is appropriating the Old Testament name of God as we saw in Exodus 3:14 and thus, He is God and He is making that point known!

Let me give you a little background to what is going on here that prompted Jesus to make this statement about Him being the bread of life! The crowds tracked Jesus down in Capernaum and they were hungry, they wanted Jesus to feed them as He had done before. But Jesus was there for another issue, to feed their spirit and not their bodies!

And Jesus rebuked them and they responded by saying that Moses gave their fathers manna to eat in the wilderness. Jesus once again corrected them and said that it was not Moses that gave them this bread but it was God the Father who gave it to them. And the people wanted to have this bread always, to be fed continually from the Father but again, Jesus wants them to understand that no bread, no manna, no fish and bread that He just fed them with the evening before could permanently cure their hunger or their thirst!

Then what is the issue? It is as Jesus said in Matthew 5:6, **“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.”** The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“Blessed and fortunate and happy and spiritually prosperous (in that state in which the born-again child of God enjoys His favor and salvation) are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (uprightness and right standing with God), for they shall be completely satisfied! [Isa 55:1, 2].”**

You see, there is a human need and that human need is to know God and it is expressed in the terms of hungering and thirsting after God! You see, Jesus is that bread that came down from Heaven, the manna in a sense sent by the Father to man to save man from the mire of sin that he was in. God has done this for us and we must **“come”** to Him and **“believe”** in Him Jesus said here in John 6:35.

What does it mean to come to Christ? It means to turn away from the old life, to forsake that old way of living, that life of sin and rebellion against God and to follow after Him, submit your life to Him! And make no mistake about it, just because John did not use the word “repentance” in this verse does not mean it is not implied. You see, to come to Christ means that you have to repent, do an about face, to turn from the direction you were heading and now walk in the path the Lord has set for you. It is as Paul tells us in I Thessalonians 1:9, “**For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.**” The Amplified Bible once again tells us, “**For they themselves volunteer testimony concerning us, telling what an entrance we had among you, and how you turned to God from [your] idols to serve a God Who is alive and true and genuine.**” You see, they turned to God, they turned away from their idols, and thus, they repented of their sin! It is as Charles Spurgeon put it, “You and your sins must separate, or you and your God will never come together.” He is correct!

Not only must we come to Christ but we must also believe! What does it mean to believe in Christ? It means to completely trust Him as the Son of God, as Almighty God and to acknowledge that salvation only comes through Him for there is salvation in no other name! We have said this many times but Jesus tells us in John 14:6, “**. . . ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’**” And Peter reminds us in Acts 4:12, “**Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**” Repentance and faith are both needed, they are inseparable. We repent and turn from sin and we believe and turn to the Savior!

You see, if you partake of Jesus you will never know spiritual hunger again, you will be satisfied in Him. Not only will Jesus fill our spiritual hunger but He will satisfy our thirst. In John 4:13-14 we see Jesus at the well in Samaria and He says to the woman there that He has a cure for her thirst as He told her, “**... ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.’**”

The bottom line is this folk’s. The great “**I AM**” of Exodus chapter 3, the EGO AMI in the Greek, the becoming one has become the bread of life for our spirits to partake of. You see, if you come to Jesus, partake of Him, you will “never” hunger or thirst again and in the Greek it is emphatic, you will always be filled, your thirst will always be met in Him! If this is not speaking of God, please show me a person who can satisfy my hunger and thirst so I am completely satisfied forever! You will not be able to because Jesus is the bread of life and thus, He is God!

B. I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD – John 8:12, 9:5

The second of the seven “**I AM**” statements that Jesus made is found in John 8:12 where we are told, “**... ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.’**” We also see this statement in John 9:5 as Jesus is preparing to heal a man born blind and we are told, “**As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’**”

Now let's look at what Jesus is saying here, the point He is making for us. Think about this world we are living in, it is pretty dark, right? Of course it is, just open your eyes and you can see the affects that sin has had upon this world and as you look at things, it seems to be getting worse. It is like a piece of meat that is rotting away. And people are looking for answers, they are looking for the truth, they want help in these dark days so they can see what they should do, where they should go and the problem is they don't have the capacity or the capability to find it!

And what happens to a person who is spiritually blind? They only stumble deeper and deeper into the hopelessness of sin trying to find a way out but they are trapped in the snares of the Devil that he has them in bondage to. Listen to a few verses so you can see what I mean. In Proverbs 4:19 we are told, "**The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know what makes them stumble.**" And please understand that there is light out there, they just substitute darkness for the light of God as Isaiah 5:20 tells us, "**Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!**"

And yes, there are those who have all kinds of excuses of why they are walking in this darkness, why they are doing the things they are doing, but there is no excuse Paul tells us in Romans 1:18-23, **“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man — and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.”**

You see, they are without excuse and the darkness they are walking in will only grow darker because they refuse to come to the light of Jesus. God will give them over to more darkness if that is what they want. And the bottom line is this, Jesus makes this point of those that are not in the light of God, **“... he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.”** John 12:35.

Now keep in mind that during the Feast of Tabernacles they would light many lamps in the court of the women and it illuminated the temple area and it reminded them of the Shekinah glory that was present in the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:34) and in the Temple (II Chronicles 7:1). The Shekinah glory was the glory of God, His presence and as the children of Israel rebelled against God, as they were going into captivity, the Shekinah glory departed as Ezekiel 10:18 and 11:23 tell us, **“Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. . . And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city.”**

But now, after several hundred years, the glory has returned in the person of Jesus Christ! Thus, if we follow after Him we will not walk in darkness for there is no darkness in Him at all, only light! It is as John said in I John 1:5-7, **“This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”**

So when Jesus says that He is the light of the world, literally “I am the light of the world” and that those who join with Him will no longer walk in darkness what He is saying is that God has put His light in our path. We do not need to be ignorant of spiritual matters any longer because we now have the power to understand these things, the things of God.

Think about this. The Shekinah glory was gone and now the darkness is pierced with the light of Christ as John reminds us, and this is from The Amplified Bible, “**And the Light shines on in the darkness, for the darkness has never overpowered it [put it out or absorbed it or appropriated it, and is unreceptive to it]. . . . There it was — the true Light [was then] coming into the world [the genuine, perfect, steadfast Light] that illumines every person. [Isa 49:6.]**” John 1:5, 9.

I don’t know about you but for me, if I am in a totally dark room, I am looking for any light, just a little light so I can try to see where I am going. But, for sinful man, as hard as it is to believe, they don’t flock to the light of Jesus but they flee from it. They love the darkness rather than the light lest their deeds be known. In other words, they can do their deeds in the darkness because no one will see them but once the light is turned on, everyone will see what they are doing. Thus, they hate the light, they try to extinguish the light, put it out! That is exactly what Jesus said in John 3:19-20, “**And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.**”

But here is the awesome thing about our God. He keeps shining, drawing people to Him and we have choices to make, to go to the light of Christ or to reject the light, reject Jesus. But once you come to Christ, once you repent of your sins and place your faith in Jesus, you will “**. . . turn . . . from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, [and] . . . receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me [God].**” Acts 26:18.

Listen carefully to where you have come from and what God has done in your life. Paul tells us in Colossians 1:13-14, **“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”** And The Amplified Bible puts these verses like this, **“[The Father] has delivered and drawn us to Himself out of the control and the dominion of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, In Whom we have our redemption through His blood, [which means] the forgiveness of our sins.”**

Back in verse 12 Paul is thanking God and in verses 13 and 14 he is speaking of what God has done. He has rescued us from Satan’s grip upon our lives and He has taken us out of that darkness and placed us into His Kingdom, which only God can do, man cannot accomplish this by his own efforts! And to accomplish this the price had to be paid and it was, the blood of Jesus was the purchase price to set us free!

And Paul speaks of the **“forgiveness of sins”** and at times we don’t fully believe that, we can’t let our sins go, and in believing that you are saying that the blood of Jesus was not enough to cleanse you of all your sins, only some of them!

The Greek word for “**forgiveness**” is APHESIS and it speaks of “a sending away.” Vaughan put it this way; “It thus speaks of the removal of our sins from us, so that they are no longer barriers that separate us from God.” Don’t put those barriers back up, the ones that God has removed for the Scriptures tell us, “**As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.**” Psalm 103:12. And in Isaiah 43:25 we are told, “**I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.**”

Thus, may we be thankful to God for all He has done as Paul reminds us, “**For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.**” The Amplified Bible puts Ephesians 5:8 like this, “**For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of Light [lead the lives of those native-born to the Light].**” And The Living Bible says, “**For though once your heart was full of darkness, now it is full of light from the Lord, and your behavior should show it!**” He is the light of the world and has taken us out of the power of darkness and placed us into His kingdom, that is our Jesus, that is our God, the light of the world!

C. I AM THE DOOR – John 10:7-10

The third “I AM” statement that Jesus made is found in John 10:7-10 where we are told, **“Then Jesus said to them again, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.’”**

Is Jesus saying that He is literally a door? In a way He is THE DOOR so I guess we can answer that “Yes and no!” Let me explain. Obviously Jesus is using a metaphor here and He says that He is the door of the sheep. What does that mean? As the weather started to improve the shepherds would move their flocks farther and farther out and there were areas that were walled off with brush except for the door. Even in and around the city their may have been walls for the sheep to stay in but there was no door to the sheepfold. And at night, to protect the sheep, the shepherd would sleep at the opening of the sheepfold to guard the sheep. Thus, no one can get in and no one can get out! There was safety, there was protection and only the sheep that belonged to the shepherd were in the sheepfold, at least the ones in the country. The ones in the city there were other sheep kept there, a communal sheepfold you might say, but when the shepherd calls his sheep they come to him! And thus, no sheep could get out except through Him and no thieves could get in to steal the sheep.

Now I think you are seeing the picture that is emerging here. Jesus is saying that He is that person, that shepherd who is guarding, protecting, watching over His sheep. Now there is something that is very important, something that I want you to see here because if you miss it, you may come to the wrong conclusion. What I want you to notice is that Jesus doesn't say "I am a door" or "I am one of many doors" but He says "I am the door" of the sheep. Over and over we have seen in the Gospels and especially here in John that Jesus is the only way. To say that all roads lead to God you have to deny what the Scriptures say and guess who is wrong, and I will give you a clue, it is not God!

Jesus made this point in Matthew 7:13-14 where He said, "**Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.**" You see, there is the broad way that leads to death. In other words it is the way that the false prophets are leading. The all roads lead to God mentality and Jesus is saying that if you feel that way you are dead wrong! It is the narrow gate, the narrow road; it is only through Him, the Door!

Yes, there are thieves and robbers out there. And please understand that a thief uses deception, trickery to get what he wants. A robber uses violence to get what he wants. They didn't add to life but they did take it away. A good example of a thief is Rob Bell who is a Pastor and yet, he leads people away from Jesus and he uses deception, trickery to get you hooked into his lies. A robber is one who will still your salvation away from you with violence. And I am not saying you can lose your salvation, but the salvation that may be presented to you is taken away by violence and we can see that in the Muslim faith. Yes, there are other examples, but that gives you an idea of what these thieves and robbers are doing, they are ripping us off!

On the other hand, Jesus Christ, the true shepherd, and He gives to us abundant life if we enter by Him, the Door! What do I have to do to get in? Jesus says you just have to enter; you have to come to Him by faith, believing He is almighty God, your Savior and ask Him to be Lord and Savior of your life. That is the key to entering in. Now some may not like the door, they may think there are other doors to get in, they may not believe the door exists, but that does not change the fact of the matter. Jesus makes it very clear that you can't enter into a relationship with God the Father except through Him!

Again, listen to what Jesus said, **“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”** John 10:9. What are we saved from? We are saved from sin and hell! We can experience God’s tremendous, unending love in our lives! We can experience His rich and deep and lasting forgiveness in our lives! We can experience His everlasting salvation in our lives! We have the freedom to go out and come in freely, what does that mean? It means that we always have access to God’s blessing and protection and thus, there should be no fear of harm or danger, the Lord is with us. And notice that satisfaction that we find in Christ and yet, outside of Christ people just can’t get no satisfaction! Jesus has come to give to us that eternal, abundant life while, on the other hand the thieving, robbing false shepherds came to steal, kill and destroy the sheep.

And think about this going in and going out, there is that liberty that we have in Christ, that freedom we have in Christ, we are not weighed down by the law or rules and regulations but we can come and go! You see, our relationship with Him is based on love and like my marriage relationship; I am free to do what ever I want. Now that may shock some of you, it may scare some of you, but my wife does not worry. Why? Because even though I am free to do what ever I want, I don’t do many things because I love my wife, not because she has a list at home of all the things I can and can’t do, because that is not what our marriage is based upon!

And the same is true with the Lord! The Lord tells us those things that will harm us but we do have a free will to exercise and many times, instead of obeying the Lord we disobey and in the end we find out that He was right all along. Now here's the thing. Now that you know that, now that I know that, isn't it better to listen to Him in the first place? Absolutely!

As I begin to rap this up, let me share this with you to show you what I mean about the shepherd being the door. We are told,

A tourist in Syria observed with interest how a shepherd drove all his sheep into a sheepfold one evening. The fold was an enclosing wall with only one opening. On that opening he noticed that there was neither door nor gate. He remarked to the shepherd: "Can't wild beasts get in there?" "No," answered the shepherd, "because I am the door. When the sheep are in for the night, I lie down across that doorway. No sheep can get out except over my body, and no wolf or thief can get in except over me."

- Paul Lee Tan, Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations, 1956

And so, as we have seen, Jesus is the Door, the only way to God the Father and you can not enter in any other way! Next time we will continue looking at these seven **"I AM"** statements that Jesus made but I hope that you have seen this morning that our Great I AM, Jesus Christ is the bread of life, He is the light of the world, and He is the door! That is our God, may we love Him even more knowing what He has done for us, who He is. May we tell others about this bread that will satisfy their hungry hearts? May we tell others about the light of God who will light their path? May we tell others about the door to everlasting life? May share with them Jesus!