

Jesus is God

Believers may not have a lot of money. But we have something we can share that is so much more valuable: the Gospel.

Acts 3:1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth *hour*, the hour of prayer.

Acts 3:2 And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple.

Acts 3:3 When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he *began* asking to receive alms.

Acts 3:4 But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!"

Acts 3:5 And he *began* to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene —walk!"

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Acts 3:7 And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened.

Acts 3:8 With a leap he stood upright and *began* to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

Acts 3:9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God;

Acts 3:10 and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to *beg* alms, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

We do not have the miracle gifts today. But we have the message of the gospel. You can enrich a person's life with it.

Jesus Christ is God. That is the focus of the lesson today.

When I was a teenager and an unbeliever, someone said to me that Jesus never said He was God. Some people ignore what the Bible actually says. Some discount various books of the Bible, like the gospel of John. The gospel of John focuses on the divinity of Jesus. More recently a person from a church in Dallas said they had a joint Christian-Muslim service. During the service, Muslims admitted that Jesus was a prophet. What they will not agree to is that Jesus is God. Many will say that Jesus was a good person, someone to emulate. But Jesus was the Messiah who went to the cross, was judged for all sin. Faith in Jesus is what provides

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salvation. But it was God working to provide His Son who was also God in order to provide a free salvation.

L. S. Chafer has extensive documentation of the divinity of Jesus. John Walvoord, another DTS president has an entire book on Jesus Christ which uses the same Bible passages and reasoning that Jesus is the manifest person of God.

Let us start with John chapter 1.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Here is a clear statement that the Word in the gospel of John, who is identified as Jesus Christ, is God.

John 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

Here is the eternal life of Jesus. God here is God the Father.

John 1:3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

Jesus Christ is the creator. God.

John starts his gospel with a declaration that Jesus is the Word, God and the creator of everything.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

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The second person of the Trinity, the “Son” was God who took on a human body being born of Mary.

Jesus, as God, “became flesh.” The first chapter of the gospel of John refutes the statement that the Bible never identifies Jesus as God.

The gospel of John is known for the “I AM” statements from Jesus. To understand the impact of these statements, a short journey into the Old Testament is needed.

Last week, there was a quote from the Old Testament identifying Yahweh as the name of God. This is the source of the “I AM” statements.

Exodus 3:13 Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?”

Exodus 3:14 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

The person of the Trinity that spoke to Moses called Himself “I AM.” The Jews of Jesus’ day understood that to call yourself “I AM” is a claim to deity. When Jesus called Himself “I AM” the Pharisees charged Jesus with blasphemy. They did not believe Him.

Exodus 3:15 God, furthermore, said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘The LORD (YAHWEH), the 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-name to all generations.

Jesus claimed to be “I AM.” If Jesus had not been God, He would have been guilty of blasphemy.

Misusing the name of God, blasphemy, was documented in the Law as a capital crime: death by stoning. This is the part of the Law that the Pharisees accused Jesus of breaking. Hence, in their eyes, they were justified in attempting to kill Jesus by stoning Him.

Exodus 20:7 “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

Deuteronomy 5:11 ‘You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

Leviticus 24:15 You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘If anyone curses his God, then he will bear his sin.

Leviticus 24:16 Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

Death to anyone that blasphemes the Name of God.

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Now, let us trace the I AM statements in the gospel of John. It is often said there are seven instances of this. But they are seldom traced together as a “package.” In each case, the first words in the sentence are “I AM.” Emphasis. The personal pronoun “I” precedes the verb. This is not a requirement in Greek. The first person singular carries the idea of “I.” So adding it indicates emphasis. Emphasis. I AM.

“I am the bread of life” (John 6:35).

“I am the light of the world” (John 8:12).

“I am the gate for the sheep” (John 10:7).

“I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11).

“I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25).

“I am the way and the truth and the life” (John 14:6).

“I am the true vine” (John 15:1).

1. I AM the Bread of Life

John 6:35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.

Here Jesus is feeding the 5,000 and referencing the feeding of the sons of Israel in the desert. It was Yahweh, God, who fed the sons of Israel. Now Jesus is doing the same to the sons of Israel in John chapter 6.

John 6:36 But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.

John 6:37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

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John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

In case the reader says that the “I AM” statement does not clearly state that Jesus is God, John adds that He came down from heaven.

2. I AM the Light of the world

John 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”

John 9:5 While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.”

Here just the verb is given without the personal pronoun.

While the statement in chapter 9 is not so blatant an identification with deity, the miracle and other statements of Jesus to the Pharisees in chapter 9 identify Jesus as associated with deity. You will notice that as the narrative in John continues, the pronouncements become more emphatic. And the response continues to be one of rejection until they take up stones to kill Him.

3. I AM the door

John 10:7 So Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

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John 10:8 All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

John 10:9 I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

4. I AM the good shepherd.

John 10:11 “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

If there were any question concerning Jesus’ deity and his mission as the Messiah (anointed One/Christ):

John 10:22 At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem;

John 10:23 it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon.

John 10:24 The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, “How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.”

John 10:25 Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father’s name, these testify of Me.

John 10:26 But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.

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John 10:27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;

John 10:28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

John 10:29 My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand.

John 10:30 I and the Father are one."

John 10:31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.

Once Jesus claim that He and the Father are one, the Jews understood He was claiming deity. That is why they picked up stones to stone Him. That was the punishment for blasphemy, in this case claiming to be God. Except that here, Jesus is actually God and what He said was not blasphemy, but the truth.

5. I AM the resurrection and the life

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,

John 11:26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

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John 11:27 She *said to Him, “Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, *even* He who comes into the world.”

6. I AM the way and the truth and the life

John 14:6 Jesus *said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

7. I AM the true vine (John 15:1,5)

John 15:1 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.”

John 15:5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

There are three other very blatant I AM statements.

A. John 8:58 I am before Abraham

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”

Jesus clearly states that He existed before Abraham. To do this He says “I AM.” That is why the Jews tried to stone Him. He actually is God so they are expressing their unbelief in their own Messiah and their own God.

John 8:59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

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B. I AM *He* (John 18:4-5)

John 18:4 So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and *said to them, “Whom do you seek?”

John 18:5 They answered Him, “Jesus the Nazarene.” He *said to them, “I am *He*.” And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them.

Note that “He” is italicized. That means the Greek is literally, “I AM.”

John 18:6 So when He said to them, “I am *He*,” they drew back and fell to the ground.

I wonder if Jesus has a recording of this event. If it was on YouTube, I would be watching it every day.

C. I AM *He* (John 4:26)

John 4:25 The woman *said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.”

John 4:26 Jesus *said to her, “I who speak to you am *He*.”

Notice that “He” is in parenthesis. It is not in the text. Jesus said, “I AM.”

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A more literal translation is, “Says to her the Jesus, I AM, who is speaking to you. The NASB 1995 obscures the force of the I AM.

No one has seen “God” i.e. the Father.

Exodus 3:20 But He said, “You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!”

1 John 4:12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.

Here John is saying that no one has seen God the Father. But, Jesus Christ is the visible manifestation of God.

Talking of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the writer of Hebrews

Hebrews 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Hebrews 1:4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

Although we cannot see the essence of God the Father, some have seen Jesus Christ who represented the Father on earth.

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John 14:8 Philip *said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”

John 14:9 Jesus *said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, ‘Show us the Father’?

John 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

John 14:11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.