

Theme: Jesus is the Great I AM - the eternal, sovereign God, and the only source of true life and salvation.

## I. Intro - The Identity of Jesus

- A. Many today have their own conception of Jesus
- B. Many think of Him as teacher, example, historical figure or life coach
- C. “Jesus through the Centuries” - we have done this a long time!
- D. But Who does Jesus say He is?
- E. For Lent - the I AM sayings of Jesus

## II. The Background: Arguing With Jesus

- A. Jesus is at the Temple teaching during festival
  - 1. The Pharisees did not like His teaching
  - 2. They said He was speaking with too much authority
  - 3. There is increasing debate throughout chapter 8
  - 4. Jesus is making increasingly bold statements
- B. The climax of the argument
  - 1. An argument about Abraham and Jesus
    - a. Jesus - keep my word, never see death (v50)
    - b. Jews - demon possessed; Abraham died! (v52)
    - c. Jews - are you are greater than Abraham? (v53)

- 2. Jesus’ response about him and Abraham

Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.” John 8:56

  - a. Abraham saw my day - and He rejoiced!
  - b. Implied - why don’t you rejoice at my day as well?
  - c. Many Jews thought Abraham saw future - Messiah
  - d. But who is Jesus saying He is?

Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.”<sup>57</sup> “You are not yet fifty years old,” the Jews said to him, “and you have seen Abraham!” John 8:56–57

- a. They reverse the order - you saw Abraham?
    - 1. Can’t believe He is saying that He is the Messiah
    - 2. So they make Abraham the greater - you saw Him?
  - b. Surely Jesus will back down - right??
- 3. This is the central question: Who is Jesus
  - a. Everything hinges on this
  - b. Pharisees might accept he is a teacher
  - c. Some said He was a prophet (Mark 8:28)
  - d. Same thing happens today - teacher; example; life coach; friend
  - e. But who does Jesus say He is?
  - f. What is His identity?

### III. Jesus' Response: I AM

#### A. Jesus climactic response

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" John 8:58

1. I tell you the truth - Amen, Amen - solemn truth
2. Listen up - this is clear truth I am saying
3. Before Abraham existed, I AM
  - a. You think I am 50 - I was around before Abraham!  
Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are [God]. Psalms 90:2
    1. Reminiscent of this saying - before; you are!
    2. Uses same Greek words for brought forth/was
    3. Jesus is implying pre-existence!
    4. Like God was before creation I was before Abraham
  - b. Not just pre-existent - something more!  
"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" John 8:58
    1. Pre-existence - before Abraham was, I was!
    2. Jesus claims something more - I AM
    3. Abraham was temporal - I am eternal!
    4. Emphatic - **I** am

#### B. Jesus - the Great I AM

1. I AM - God's Covenant Name in the Old Testament  
God said to Moses, "**I am who I am**. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: '**I am** has sent me to you.'" Exodus 3:14
  - a. This is God's revelation of His Name to Moses
  - b. Hebrew - ehyeh asher eyeh... eheyeh
  - c. Greek - egw eimi ho on.... Ho on
  - d. Jesus say Egw eimi - I AM; a claim to full Deity
2. I AM statements elsewhere in Isaiah in the LXX  
"Who has done this and carried it through, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord—with the first of them and with the last—**I am** he." Isaiah 41:4  
  
"You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that **I am** he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. Isaiah 43:10  
  
Even to your old age and gray hairs **I am** he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you. Isaiah 46:4  
  
"Listen to me, O Jacob, Israel, whom I have called: **I am** he; **I am** the first and I am the last." Isaiah 48:12  
  
"**I, even I, am** he who comforts you. Who are you that you fear mortal men, the sons of men, who are but grass, Isaiah 51:12 (literally "I AM, I AM comforts you")

- a. The LORD is speaking to exiles
  - b. Goes back to His name revealed at time of exodus
  - c. The Great I AM is with us to deliver and restore us!
  - d. I AM is the Eternal One
  - e. I AM is the Sovereign One
  - f. I Am is the source of life
  - g. I am is the only way to salvation
3. Jesus is the Great I AM!
- a. I am not only older than you; I existed before Abraham
  - b. I am not just pre-existent; I am eternal
  - c. I am not only greater than Abraham; I am one with Yahweh!
  - d. I am not just a prophet of God - I AM the God of the prophets!

#### IV. Applying the Word of the Great I AM

- A. Do we see Jesus is the Great I AM
  - 1. Some want to domesticate Jesus
  - 2. They want to make Him into their own image of Who He should be
  - 3. To them He says: I AM WHO I AM - not who you want me to be
  - 4. We come to Jesus on His terms - not ours
- B. How do we respond to Jesus, the Great I AM?

- 1. The Pharisees wanted to kill Him! (v59)
- 2. Many will still utterly reject Him and His message
- 3. But I urge all to receive Him openly
- 4. I urge all to embrace Him as He is - I AM
- 5. Those who do will find life, sustenance, salvation
- 6. This Lent, focus is on Jesus' I AM sayings
  - a. Devotional readings - see Who Jesus is
  - b. Fast 1 day each week to feast on Jesus
  - c. Ask God to help you in a specific area of focus

#### C. The Table of the LORD

- 1. Jesus invites us to come to the Table for deliverance
- 2. Jesus invites us to come to the Table for life
- 3. Come and receive life and salvation anew!

#### Jesus Is The Great I AM

John 8:56-59  
 February 7, 2016  
 Communion  
 Number 6:24-26

Teaching keywords: Deity of Christ; name of God

The Lord bless you and keep you; <sup>25</sup> the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup> the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. Numbers 6:24–26

Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.”

<sup>57</sup> “You are not yet fifty years old,” the Jews said to him, “and you have seen Abraham!”

<sup>58</sup> “I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!”

<sup>59</sup> At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds. John 8:56–59