

**I Am...**  
**The Way, the Truth, and the Life**  
**John 14:6**

**April 7, 2013**

**Dr. Steve Horn**

**Text Introduction:** We are in the Gospel of John again today. We began this year considering the 7 miracles of Jesus as told by John. Now, we are considering the 7 “I Am” statements of John. Seven times, John records Jesus proclaiming Himself with the introductory formula “I am.” We have considered the statement “I am the bread of life.” We said that just as bread sustains our lives physically, Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the One who sustains us spiritually and eternally. We have considered the statement, “I am the light of the world.” This statement gives us a radical claim (I am the light of the world) which calls us to a radical discipleship (anyone who follows me will never walk in the darkness) which guarantees for us a radical promise (but will have the light of life). Then, there were the statements, “I am the door” and “I am the Good Shepherd” that point to Jesus being the only way to salvation. Last time, we looked at that glorious Easter themed claim, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Today, we have before us what one has called the “premier expression of the theology of this entire Gospel.” (Gary Burge, *NIV Application Commentary*, p. 392)

The statement comes at verse 6, but I read the verses surrounding it to provide context.

**Text:** “Your heart must not be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also. <sup>4</sup> You know the way to where I am going.”

<sup>5</sup> “Lord,” Thomas said, “we don’t know where You’re going. How can we know the way?”

<sup>6</sup> Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

<sup>7</sup> “If you know Me, you will also know My Father. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him.”

<sup>8</sup> “Lord,” said Philip, “show us the Father, and that’s enough for us.”

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, “Have I been among you all this time without your knowing Me, Philip? The one who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? <sup>10</sup> Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words I speak to you I do not speak on My own. The Father who lives in Me does His works. <sup>11</sup> Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me. Otherwise, believe because of the works themselves.

**Introduction:** I suspect that this particular text has been read more times in the pulpit of First Baptist Church, Lafayette, than any other one text. Bro. Perry Sanders, my predecessor, and pastor for 47 years, used this passage at most every funeral, and I have at many funerals. It is a wonderful text in the whole setting of chapters 14-16. Our aim today is to look at it in the string of the “I am” statements. As such, it

is another example of Jesus proclaiming Himself to be God and therefore the only way to a relationship with the True God and therefore the only way to Heaven.

Now, a statement like that is alarming to some folks, so we deal with this text in a way today that deals with the criticism that such an exclusive truth claim is going to produce.

First Peter 3:15 says, “but set apart the Messiah as Lord in your hearts, and always be ready to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.”

Rabbi Shmuley Boteach (a popular rabbi with a modern following) captured the belief of many when he wrote, “I am absolutely against any religion that says that one faith is superior to another. I don’t see how that is anything different than spiritual racism. It’s a way of saying that we are closer to God than you, and that’s what leads to hatred.”

**How do you defend against this kind of assessment of Christianity? We can make our defense with a series of questions.**

#### **The Question of Unbelievers:**

Here is the question of many unbelievers: Isn’t it offensive to claim Jesus is the only way to God?

- Christianity is not the only religion that claims exclusivity. Even those religions and philosophies who say there is some truth in all beliefs are making their own statement of exclusivity. They are saying that you are only right if you believe that there is no right.
- All truth claims are by definition exclusive. This is what makes something true. If  $1+1=2$ ,  $1+1$  cannot also equal 3. If I say that I-10 West will take you to Baton Rouge, I cannot also say that I-49 will take you to Baton Rouge. Truth is always going to make an exclusive statement or else the statement would not be made as though it was true.

By simple logical assessment, if we believe that the claims of Christ are true, claims in opposition to Christ cannot also be true!

#### **The Question for Believers:**

If we are believers in Jesus Christ, if we are believing in Him for our eternal life, then we must ask ourselves a question.

Isn’t it hypocritical to trust in Christ and not believe He is the only way to God?

#### **The Question for everyone:**

How can I know for sure? That’s what this book is about!

John 20:30-31 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of His disciples that are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written so that you may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and by believing you may have life in His name.

John 21:24-25 This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.

<sup>25</sup> And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which, if they were written one by one, I suppose not even the world itself could contain the books that would be written.

### **This Man named Jesus**

- His eternal nature (John 1:1-3)
- His virgin birth to a woman named Mary (John 1:14; Luke 1)
- His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15)
- His death and resurrection (John 19-20)

These pivotal events in the life of Jesus establish two important truths about Him.

#1 He is fully human.

#2 He is fully Divine.

Since Jesus is both human and Divine He is the only one capable of being our Savior. (See also 2 Corinthians 5:21)

The Message of Jesus

We can also point to the message of Jesus—what did Jesus say about Himself and what did others in the first century say about Him?

### **What did Jesus say about Himself?**

- In reference to the Messiah, “I am He.” (John 4:26)
- In reference to being God, “The Father and I are one.” (John 10:30)
- In reference to eternal life, “I am the resurrection and the life. The who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live. Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die—ever.” (John 11:25-26)
- In reference to His death, “As for Me, if I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to Myself.” (John 12:32)

### **What did others say about Jesus?**

- John the Baptist: (John 1:15, 1:29-34, 36) **“Behold, the Lamb of God!”**
- Early Disciples: (John 1:41, 49) **Christ, son of God**
- Samaritans: (John 4:41-42) **“this one is the Savior of the world.”**
- Thomas—Post resurrection: (John 20:28) **“My Lord and my God.”**

### **What did God say about Jesus?**

- At Baptism: (Matthew 3:17) **This is my beloved Son. I take delight in Him!**

- On Mount of Transfiguration: (Matthew 17:5) **“This is my beloved Son. I take delight in Him. Listen to Him!**

The message of Jesus Himself and the message of others about Him clarify that He is the Savior of the World.

### **The Miracles of Jesus**

There are seven in the Gospel: Water into wine, Healing of nobleman’s son, Healing of man at Pool of Bethesda, Feeding the 5,000, Walking on the water in midst of storm, Healing a blind man, Raising Lazarus from the dead.

The miracles of Jesus confirm who He is, what He said about Himself, and what others said about Him.

So What?

Believe it!

Live it! Be confident about it. Be comforted by it.

Share it! If this statement is true, and you believe it is truth, and if Jesus is the only way to Heaven, don’t you think everybody ought to know it?

Have you ever been given directions and didn’t quite understand the directions? Go two blocks and take a right. Go east, then back north. When you get to where the store that burned down ten years ago was, go left again, etc. Compare those directions with someone saying, “Come, let me take you there.” That’s what Jesus said. “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” You don’t have to find the way, He is the way.