

JESUS IS...

THE SEVEN "I AM" STATEMENTS OF
JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

JESUS IS ...

Everybody has an opinion about Jesus — about who He is and His message. Where can we go to discover the truth? What if we zeroed-in on what Jesus said about Himself?

The apostle John was one of Jesus' closest friends and followers. He wrote an account of the life of Jesus. We call it the *Gospel of John* and it's one of the books in the Bible. In the coming weeks we'll set our hearts on the seven "I am" statements of Jesus recorded in John's Gospel. Jesus makes some big claims about Himself, and if we take time to explore them they can change everything.

Plan to join us at Woodmen each weekend for the teaching series, *JESUS IS*. This journal is designed to help you prepare and reflect along the journey. Each week during the series, take a few minutes to prayerfully consider the scriptures and questions in these pages. It's our hope and prayer that together, we'll discover a clearer and fuller understanding of the real Jesus.

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THE BREAD OF LIFE

A Word for the Week:

*“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.”*

Matthew 6:9-13

Jesus’ friend and follower, Matthew, left us his written account of the life of Jesus. Matthew recounts Jesus teaching on a hillside near the Sea of Galilee. As part of this Sermon on the Mount, Jesus models how to pray. In the Lord’s Prayer, He calls on his heavenly Father to “give us this day our daily bread.”

It’s telling that Jesus doesn’t ask for bread for the week or the year—just enough for today. We see this theme often in scripture: God fully meets our deepest needs in ways that lead us to trust Him day by day. The same bread that nourishes and sustains us will spoil if we try to stockpile more than we need.

As a way of life, we’re called to seek first God’s kingdom, and trust Him with the rest of life’s cares and worries.

Are there places in your life where you’re relying on yourself, instead of trusting God? You don’t have to go it alone. Knowing that God is all-mighty and always loving, what can you release to Him today? As you pray today, invite God to meet your needs and trust Him to provide bread for today.

More about Bread:

*Exodus 16:14-26, Isaiah 55:2, Matthew 4:3-4, Matthew 14:15-21,
1 Corinthians 11:23-26*

PREPARE FOR THIS WEEKEND’S TEACHING

READ JOHN 6:35-59

Take a few moments to pray and reflect on the scripture.

What is revealed about God—about His character, His conduct or His concerns?

What do I learn about people—about our identity, our tendencies, our condition or our relationships?

Is there an example or principle to follow?

How does this passage connect to the grand story of scripture and God’s plan to save His people?

How can I apply the truths of this scripture in my life?

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

A Word for the Week:

*The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?*

*The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?*

Psalm 27:1

When Jesus declares that He's the light of the world (John 8:12), He's saying a lot. Throughout scripture light symbolizes God's revelation, understanding, justice, rescue, good guidance, glory and beauty. Psalm 27 begins with the Lord as our light and salvation. Because of His light we have nothing to fear.

As you pray today, invite Christ's light into situations where anxiety and fear threaten to overwhelm. Ask Him to replace your fears with His perfect love. Rest confidently in the truth that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5).

More about light:

Isaiah 60:1, Psalm 37:5-6, John 1:5, Numbers 6:24-26, Matthew 5:15-16

PREPARE FOR THIS WEEKEND'S TEACHING

READ JOHN 8:12-20

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THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP

A Word for the Week:

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock.
If anyone hears my voice and opens the door,
I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*

Revelation 3:20

What's behind door number one? Back in the day, there was a popular TV game show called Let's Make a Deal. At the highpoint of each show, contestants excitedly picked one of three big doors. The door opened to reveal a prize. Sometimes it was a shiny new car. Other times the "prize" was a goat or a case of mac and cheese.

Throughout life, doors open up horizons of possibilities and pathways. From blood on the doorposts of enslaved people in Egypt, to God opening jail cells to free captives, doors are significant throughout scripture.

In the book of Revelation, Jesus knocks on the door and promises He'll sit down for a meal with anyone who lets Him in. In Matthew seven, Jesus calls on us to ask, seek and knock. He promises to open the door and welcome us as His family. In John 10, Jesus says He IS the door.

Although the imagery in these three passages varies slightly, we can trust God's promises that when the door opens, what is revealed will be true and beautiful.

Have you opened wide the door of your heart to Jesus? If you're ready to invite Him in today, turn to the last page in this journal to find out more about how you can welcome Him to transform your life.

More about Doors:

Deuteronomy 11:18-20, Psalm 24:7-10, Proverbs 8:32-34, Matthew 7:7-14, Acts 5:18-21

PREPARE FOR THIS WEEKEND'S TEACHING

READ JOHN 10:1-10

Take a few moments to pray and reflect on the scripture.

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THE GOOD SHEPHERD

A Word for the Week:

Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.'

Luke 15:4-6

Shepherds were a common sight around the Galilee in Jesus' day. The scriptures often use shepherds as a symbol for God's care and protection for His people. The shepherd watches over his flock with faithful guidance and humble devotion.

In Luke 15, Jesus tells a story of a lost sheep and a good shepherd. The shepherd mirrors Christ's own purpose: He came to sacrificially seek and save the lost. He finds joy in the rescue of one who had wandered. Like the father in the parable of the prodigal son, mercy and love win the day and a celebration begins to welcome a lost one home.

Do you feel lost? Know that God is seeking you—not to punish you but to restore your relationship with Him. If you're a Christ-follower, ask Him to open your heart to others in your life who might be lost today. Who can you pray for? Who can you care for and help guide toward a truer and deeper understanding of the Good Shepherd?

More about the Good Shepherd:

Psalms 23:1-3, Psalm 95:6-7, Ezekiel 34:11-12, Micah 5:4-5, Revelation 7:17

PREPARE FOR THIS WEEKEND'S TEACHING

READ JOHN 10:11-18

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THE RESURRECTION & THE LIFE

A Word for the Week:

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

Matthew 1:23

God with us. It’s a big theme in the Bible. It’s one of the names given to Jesus and it’s God’s design for our close and abundant relationship with Him.

When the first people God created turned their back on Him, the relationship was broken. They were sent out of His good garden. An angel was set to guard the gates. How could we ever return home, to the beauty of an intimate relationship with our creator? We’d made a mess of things.

But when the time was right, God stepped into the story, in the form of Jesus. He was with us ... until He was crucified. It looked like His death was the end.

But the story continued three days later when women who loved Jesus went to His tomb. They were amazed to find an angel had rolled away the stone. Jesus was alive again! Just as an angel marked our separation from God in the garden, an angel announced the resurrection of Jesus. Death and darkness are defeated. Jesus Has made a way for us to be forgiven and our relationship with God to be restored!

Before Jesus ascended to Heaven, He said, “I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” We can take heart because Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to guide and be with us in the brokenness and beauty of every day.

As you go through this week, find moments to be aware that Jesus is Immanuel: He is with us, with you, always. Thank Him for His life, death and resurrection that rescues us and restores our relationship with Him.

More about the Resurrection and Life:

Matthew 28:5-10, 1 John 5:11-12, Romans 8:11, 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 2 Timothy 1:8-10

PREPARE FOR THIS WEEKEND’S TEACHING

READ JOHN 11:17-27

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How can I apply the truths of this scripture in my life?

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

A Word for the Week:

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 1:14-17

Have you ever had a brookie? It's a chocolate chip cookie baked into the top of a brownie. We all owe a debt of thanks to the inventor of this chocolatey goodness. When you can't make up your mind, stacking two flavors is the perfect answer.

The Gospel of John opens with Jesus coming into the world. John describes Jesus as "the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." It's easy to think that Jesus is a mix—like a brookie made of 50% grace and 50% truth. But John is saying something different: Jesus is always full of grace AND Jesus is always full of truth.

People often strive to find the right balance of grace and truth. But if we're to live in the way of Jesus, our hope and calling is to be brimming with both. Seems like a big ask—like the kind of growth that can only happen through opening our lives to the work of the Holy Spirit on the regular.

Both grace and truth are essential to who Jesus is. Do you find yourself more easily drawn to one of these qualities in the ways you relate to God and others? As you pray today, invite the Spirit to cultivate grace and truth in your life and your relationships.

More about Truth:

Psalm 25:4-5, John 8:31-32, Ephesians 6:13-17, 1 John 3:17-19, 2 Timothy 14:15

PREPARE FOR THIS WEEKEND'S TEACHING

READ JOHN 14:1-14

Take a few moments to pray and reflect on the scripture.

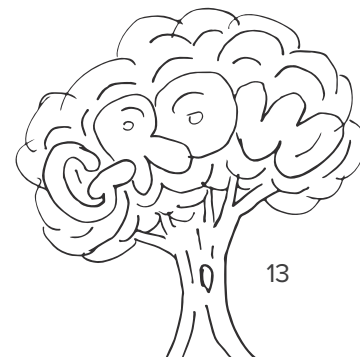
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THE TRUE VINE

A Word for the Week:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23

God begins the story of humanity in a good garden. The first people He created are at home as they walk with God in the beautiful, green surroundings. So it's no surprise that in God's Word, trees, vines and fruit are important symbols of our relationship with Him.

In the fifth chapter of Paul's letters to the Christ-followers in the city Galatia, he writes about the fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These qualities grow out of a life rooted in the true vine, Jesus. We're nourished and sustained as we dwell in inseparable connection to Christ.

Which fruit of the spirit do you see in your life? Thank God for the places in which you're thriving. Is there a fruit of the Spirit that's absent in your day-to-day? As you pray, invite the Lord to help you flourish as you seek to dwell more closely and fully in Him.

More about the Vine:

Genesis 1:11-13, Jeremiah 17:7-8, Matthew 7:15-20, Romans 11:17-24, Revelation 22:2

PREPARE FOR THIS WEEKEND'S TEACHING

READ JOHN 15:1-17

Take a few moments to pray and reflect on the scripture.

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READY TO FOLLOW JESUS?

God created each of us to know and love Him. The Bible, God's written word, makes it clear that a life of deep joy and lasting satisfaction is found only in relationship with Him. God wants us to have this life on earth and in eternity.

From the first people He created, right up through today, we've each turned from God and chosen to go our own way. Our rebellion shows up in many different forms and the Bible calls it sin. Sin breaks our relationship with God.

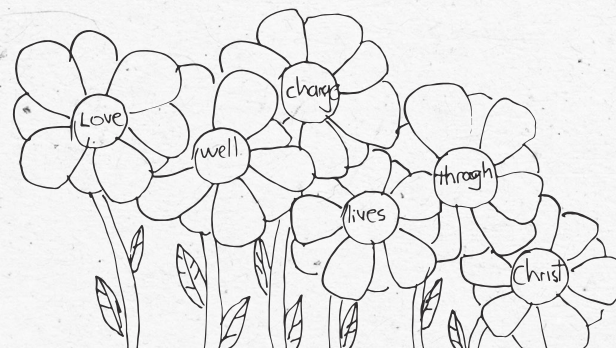
But God's unending love doesn't change regardless of where we've been or what we've done, so He sent His son, Jesus, to earth to restore our relationship with Him. Jesus was God in the flesh. He lived a perfect life and died to save us from sin. He was crucified, murdered on a cross.

It looked like Christ's death would be the end of the story, but God was just getting to the best part: Jesus rose from the grave. He defeated death and sin!

Through Jesus' death and resurrection, God made a way for us to be forgiven and welcomed into a right relationship with Him. What an amazing gift! Each of us can begin a relationship with God by simply receiving His gift in faith. Through the power of His Holy Spirit, we can trust Him to bring about what's best for us now and for eternity.

You can pray right now to receive Jesus. Prayer is simply talking to God. You can pray something like this:

"Jesus, I recognize I am a sinner and believe that You are God, You died for me, and You rose again. Thank you for giving Your life to save me. I need You. I open my heart to You. Help me to live a life that reflects Your love."



WANT TO DISCOVER MORE ABOUT JESUS?

Join us for Jesus 101, a safe place to ask questions as a small group and find out more about who Jesus is.

Monday nights, April 22, 29 and May 13.
Scan the code to sign up or find out more.



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