

## "I AM" SAYINGS OF JESUS

*There are seven sayings of Jesus in the book that begin with the words: "I am". Each of these sayings gives us a different picture of Jesus' identity, and they help us to understand him. In John, Jesus gives the fullest teaching in any of the four Gospels about his relationship to God the Father. He says that he was sent by the Father, that he is the only way to the Father, and (most shocking of all to his listeners) that he and the Father are one. These passages in John were later crucial to the church in formulating belief in God as a trinity. They are...*

1. I am the bread that gives life! No one who comes to me will ever be hungry. No one who has faith in me will ever be thirsty.

John 6:35

2. I am the light of the world! Follow me, and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life.

John 8:12

3. I am the gate for the sheep.

John 10:7

4. I am the good shepherd, and the good shepherd gives up his life for his sheep.

John 10:11

5. I am the one who raises the dead to life! Everyone who has faith in me will live, even if they die. And everyone who lives because of faith in me will never really die.

John 11:25-26

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

John 14:6

7. I am the true vine and the father is my gardener.

John 15:1

### "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE" john 6: 25 – 35

Jesus answered them and said, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled.

Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, <sup>15</sup> which the Son of Man will give you. For on him the Father, God, has set his seal." So they said to him, "What can we do to accomplish the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent." So they said to him, "What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do? Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" So Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." So they said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." ***Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.***

**"I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD" John 8: 12 – 16**

Jesus spoke to them again, saying, **"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."** So the Pharisees said to him, "You testify on your own behalf, so your testimony cannot be verified." Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I do testify on my own behalf, my testimony can be verified, <sup>4</sup> because I know where I came from and where I am going. But you do not know where I come from or where I am going. You judge by appearances, <sup>7</sup> but I do not judge anyone. And even if I should judge, my judgment is valid, because I am not alone, but it is I and the Father who sent me.

**"I AM THE GATE FOR THE SHEEP" John 10: 1 – 10**

Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber. But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice, as he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers." Although Jesus used this figure of speech, <sup>4</sup> they did not realize what he was trying to tell them. So Jesus said again, "Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came [before me] are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. **I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.** A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.

**"I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD" John 10: 11 – 18**

***I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*** A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep <sup>7</sup> that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. <sup>8</sup> This command I have received from my Father."

**"I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE" John 11: 17 – 27**

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles <sup>5</sup> away. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. (But) even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." **Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.** Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world."

**“ I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE”** John 14: 1 – 14

Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where (I) am going you know the way." <sup>4</sup> Thomas said to him, "Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" **Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth <sup>5</sup> and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.** If you know me, then you will also know my Father. <sup>6</sup> From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Master, show us the Father, <sup>7</sup> and that will be enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else, believe because of the works themselves. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it.

**“ I AM THE VINE”** John 15: 1 – 11

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and everyone that does he prunes <sup>3</sup> so that it bears more fruit. You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you. Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. **I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.** <sup>4</sup> Anyone who does not remain in me will be thrown out like a branch and wither; people will gather them and throw them into a fire and they will be burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete

**ACTIVITY ON I AM SAYINGS**

**In small groups work on the following questions.** You will be sharing your reflections and I am saying with the large group.

What does Jesus say he is? Why?

What does the saying reveal about Jesus' identity?

What aspect of the saying indicates that Jesus is divine?

Why is this image of Jesus, this aspect of Jesus' identity, important for young people to encounter? What does it mean for them?

Write an **I am statement** that Jesus might use today. The goal is to capture the truth of Jesus' identity through a saying that uses images or stories familiar to young people today.

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