

I AM Part 1: "The Burning Bush" (11-5-2017)

This new series . . . As we begin to move towards Christmas this year, instead of exploring the Nativity, we will be looking at the Identity & Mission of the child that came into the world.

The series is titled: I AM . . . we will be exploring Jesus identity & mission through the eyes of the apostle John

There are 7 proclamations Jesus made in John's Gospel, about His Identity . . . The 7 "I am" statements

There are 7 proclamations Jesus made in John's Vision (Revelation), to His People . . . The 7 letters to the churches

We will be looking at the connection between Jesus' Identity & Mission, and our own.

1) Jesus through John's eyes (The Gospel of John)

In the 8th chapter of John:

- Jesus and the woman caught in adultery
- Jesus answers questions, and it leads to verse 30 . . .

John 8:30 (ESV)

As he was saying these things, many believed in him.

So, Jesus begins to talk more in-depth about who he is to those who have believed . . .

John 8:31-36 (ESV)

(31) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, (32) and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (33) They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" (34) Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. (35) The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. (36) So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Note: If I will truly see Jesus for who He is, then it will affect who I am & what I do.

- Abide in Jesus word, and you will be a disciple
- And the result is knowing the truth & being set free
- However, if we don't do this, then we remain slaves to sin. Why does that happen to us?

John 8:43 (ESV)

Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word.

Note: "You can't handle the truth!"

Truth exposes Reality, and often we won't like what we see. All too often we would rather hide than be exposed. Even though we are told that this exposure will lead to healing & freedom!

The Jews reaction to being told this truth, is to dis-credit Jesus. . .

“You are a demon” “You are a Samaritan”

Notice, they attack his identity. In order to dis-credit what he is saying they have to dis-credit who he is.

So Jesus cuts through all of this and makes a final bold proclamation . . .

John 8:58-59 (ESV)

(58) Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." (59) So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

Note: They freak out, and try to kill him. We may not understand this statement by Jesus, but they sure did.

Jesus is claiming to be the Everlasting God (no beginning & no ending), the one revealed to Moses as the “I AM”

2) Moses & the Burning Bush

Exodus 2:23-25 (ESV)

(23) During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. (24) And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. (25) God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.

Note: God saw His people, and He knew their condition & suffering. Then . . .

Exodus 3:1-4 (ESV)

(1) Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. (2) And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. (3) And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." (4) When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."

Note: Notice Moses reaction to all of this . . . He looked, beheld, turned aside to see

Notice God’s reaction . . . when God saw that Moses turned aside to see, then He spoke to him by name!

Then, there is a whole conversation that takes place: Moses is told he is on holy ground, God is going to save his people from Egypt, and he is going to do it with Moses help.

Exodus 3:14-15 (ESV)

(14) God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (15) God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The LORD, 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 thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

Note: Now do you see why the Jews freaked out to kill Jesus – He is claiming to be this voice. He is claiming to be the "I AM"

The reason Christmas is so offensive is because we have to deal with the question: **Who is Jesus?**

And we aren't necessarily excited about the answer, because He also will tell me who I am: **A slave!**

3) Jesus through John's eyes (The Book of Revelation)**Revelation 1:1 (ESV)**

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. . .

Note: This book is about seeing Jesus, and hearing what he wants to say to his church.

Revelation 1:3 (ESV)

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

Note: A Special blessing is promised to the one who reads, hears, and keeps these words!!!

Verses 4-8: This letter is written to the church (originally to 7 churches and was to be read by all), and then some visuals are given to describe who Jesus is . . . **Faithful, Eternal, Savior, and King**

Revelation 1:9 (ESV)

I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Note: We like John are . . . In tribulation, in the kingdom, and patiently enduring in Jesus

Let's read the vision of Jesus that John is shown . . .

Revelation 1:10-20 (ESV)

(10) I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet (11) saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea." (12) Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, (13) and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. (14) The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, (15) his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. (16) In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. (17) When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, (18) and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. (19) Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. (20) As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Conclusion:

Jesus is in our midst, and He wants to reveal himself - His Identity & Mission.

He wants to speak truth & set us free!

The Question is:

Will I turn aside to see & know who He is?

Will I hear & keep His Words?

Jesus is in our midst, and over the next 6 weeks we will explore who He is & what He wants to say to us!