

## The Great I AM

John 8:30-59

Pastor Joseph J Graber 2/09/2014

John 8

30 As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.

31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

32 "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, 'You will be made free'?"

34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

35 "And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.

36 "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

38 "I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father."

39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.

40 "But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

41 "You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father--God."

42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.

Three Points:

(The first two points were ascribed to by the leaders of the Reformers)

1. We are saved by faith.
2. Of ourselves we can do nothing.
3. Faith without works is dead.

(This third point was a major point of dispute between the Reformers and the Anabaptists.

Ephesians 2

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

The Jews said, "Because we are Abraham's descendants, we are right with God."

The church of the Reformation said, "Because we live within the jurisdiction of the church and attend mass, we are right with God."

The Anabaptist leaders cried out, "Faith without works is dead. If you don't leave your sins you do not know God."

To the Jews Jesus said, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham."

To all of us Jesus says:

### **Matthew 7**

16 "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?"

### **John 8**

43 "Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

44 "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

45 "But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

46 "Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?"

47 "He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

48 Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?"

49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.

50 "And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges.

51 "Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death."

52 Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.'

53 "Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Whom do You make Yourself out to be?"

54 Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God.

55 "Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word.

56 "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."

57 Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

59 Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Exodus 3

13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. (KJV)

## **I AM Statements of Christ**

### **John 6**

35 And Jesus said to them, "**I am the bread of life**. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

### **John 8**

12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "**I am the light of the world**. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

### **John 10**

9 "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

### **John 10**

11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

14 "I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.

### **John 11**

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

26 "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

### **John 14**

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

### **John 15**

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

1. I AM the bread of life.
2. I AM the light of the world.
3. I AM the door.
4. I AM the good shepherd.
5. I AM the resurrection.
6. I AM the way.
7. I AM the truth.
8. I AM the life.
9. I AM the vine.

## **Revelation 21**

6 And He said to me, "It is done! **I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.** I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

## **Matthew 11**

28 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

**You have been invited into the Presence of the Great I AM.**

**How will you approach His Presence?**

## **James 4**

6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

## **Sacred Pathways (From the book by Gary Thomas)**

Different ways that we approach God.

What causes you to worship?

How is it easiest for you to draw near to God?

## **NATURALISTS**

### **Loving God Out of Doors**

Finding God in His “cathedral” - the out-of-doors.

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of his hands.” Psalm 19:1

“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities are clearly seen, being understood from what has been made.” Romans 1:20

## **SENSATES**

### **Loving God with the Senses**

Christians who are moved by the five senses of taste, touch, smell, sound, and sight- sensous- worship more than anything else.

Ezekiel feels a wind, sees flashing lightning, hears the sound of wings, and is asked to eat a scroll that tastes sweet. After all this he sits down, stunned for 7 days. Ezekiel 1, 3

Experiencing God with overwhelming stimulation.

## **TRADITIONALISTS**

### **Loving God Through Ritual and Symbol**

Embodying spiritual truths in religious practices. Approaching the altar, lighting a candle.

Abraham and Moses expressed their faith by building altars.

Our reaction to symbols often reveals our hearts’ reaction to God. If we’re flippant toward symbols, we’re often flippant toward what the symbol represents.

Peter and John observed regular, set times of prayer.

## **ASCETICS**

### **Loving God in Solitude and Simplicity**

The ascetic temperament gravitates toward solitude, austerity, simplicity, and deep commitment. An Ascetic may seek a barren wasteland or the monastic lifestyle.

John the Baptist lived a solitary and ascetic life.

Jesus fasted for 40 days in solitude, and had moments of solitude during ministry. Mark 1:35; Matthew 26:36

True ascetics are strict with themselves but treat others with supernatural gentleness.

# **ACTIVISTS**

## **Loving God Through Confrontation**

Activists are spiritually nourished through the battle.

John 4

33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?"

34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

The fear involved in confrontation creates a certain dependence on God that isn't normally there. Facing this fear, stepping out in faith, and finding God faithful as He meets you, brings deeper intimacy with God.

See: the life of Moses (Exodus, to start), Proverbs 24:11-12, Psalms 7, 68 & 140; Ezekiel 33:1-20

# **CAREGIVERS**

## **Loving God by Loving Others**

Caring for others is a prophetic activity.

Being concerned about others provides evidence of a supernatural touch by God.

The parable of the Good Samaritan reminds us that attending to 'spiritual concerns' is no excuse for refusing to get our hands dirty.

"If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" 1 John 3:17

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." Philippians 2:4

"Pure and faultless" religion is looking after orphans and widows in their distress. James 1:27

# **ENTHUSIASTS**

## **Loving God with Mystery and Celebration**

Enjoying celebratory worship and the more supernatural forms of faith. Letting go and experiencing God on the precipice of excitement and awe.

We worship and serve a supernatural God who manifests himself to us in supernatural ways.

Enthusiasts point toward faith, mystery, and expectancy. When the situation seems impossible, enthusiasts say, "Now God's really going to move!"

# **CONTEMPLATIVES**

## **Loving God Through Adoration**

The contemplative seeks to perform the first work of adoring God. God is known and described as the heavenly spouse in whom all the contemplative's delight is met.

Gazing lovingly into God's face and being caught up in the rapture of a lover's experience. Enjoying God and learning to love him in ever deeper ways.

This is Mary, in the Mary/Martha scenario.

# INTELLECTUALS

## Loving God with the Mind

An intellectual's adoration is unleashed by understanding something new about God or his ways.

Intellectual pursuit has played a key role in advancing God's work.

The early church was so successful in its witness to the pagan world not only because they outlived and outdied the world, but they out-thought it.

See: Psalm 49:1-4; Proverbs 1:5-7

Right thinking – conforming our thoughts to the thoughts of God – enables right living.

A vast majority of the difficulties Christians experience in life is caused because we don't understand the Scriptures well enough.

Matthew 11

28 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

(NKJV)

**You have been invited into the Presence of the Great I AM.**

**Will you come into His Presence?**

Psalms 34

8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!