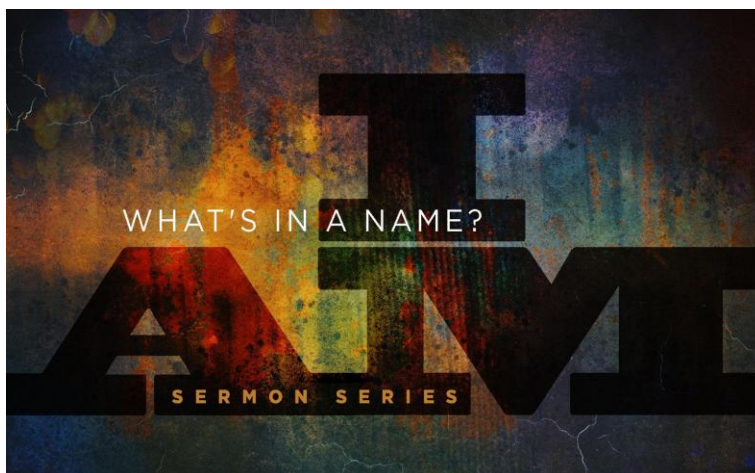




WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Series Introduction: We are in a 9-week journey through the gospel of John and into a deeper understanding of who Jesus is and what that means for us. This series is a comprehensive look at the **"I AM"** statements of Christ in the New Testament. We saw in message 1, like most things in the New Testament, how his declarations about his identity traces its roots back to the Old Testament. Together, these 9 lessons will offer a multi-faceted view of Jesus, and the ways he impacts everyday life – our struggles, fears, questions, hopes, and dreams!

Message 2: THE NAMES OF JESUS

Lesson Introduction: Last week, we talked about the name of God (YHWH – "I AM") and how it develops over the Bible to an ultimate point in bringing Jesus Christ, God's Son, into this world. In the book of John, here are the seven "I AM's" that clarify who Christ is and what it means to those who follow him.

1. I am the bread of life. 6:35
2. I am the light of the world. 8:12
3. I am the door. 10:7
4. I am the good shepherd. 10:11
5. I am the resurrection and the life. 11:25
6. I am the way, the truth, and the life. 14:6
7. I am the true vine. 15:1

Before we get into each of these in the coming lessons, the background is important to understanding the impact of Jesus' repeated use of the "I am" expressions in John's gospel. So let's get to know John and the account he left us of Jesus' life.

THE THEME OF JOHN IS " _____ IS JESUS?"

- John's gospel account of Jesus is much different from the other three: Matthew, Mark, and Luke (these utilize a lot of shared material, almost verbatim in some instances.)
 - Matthew quotes a lot of scripture
 - Mark lists many miracles of Christ
 - Luke emphasizes his parables
- John's gospel was written much later and leaves out several vital stories about "what" Jesus did.
 - Even when he mentions miracles ("signs"), it's in the context of who this man is and why he is here, not so much on the human conditions and experiences.
 - He is the Jesus John loved not just because he had healed the sick, but that he saved the world!
 - Consider the unique mission of this book in its closing statements: John 20:30-31; 21:25

BEFORE _____ WAS BORN, "I AM". John 8:58

- John's gospel has no lengthy buildup about Jesus' identity. He begins the book in this manner. John 1:1-14
- Chapter 8 reveals the identity of Christ coming to a head when he plays the "Abraham" card:
 - John 8:21-30 – a dispute over who Jesus is
 - John 8:31-47 – a dispute over whose children Jesus opponents are
 - John 48-59 – Jesus' claims about himself

WITH THE _____ AT THE WELL, "I AM HE." John 4:1-42

This story is one that has a very contemporary feel to it. This woman sounds like she was plucked right out of 2025 and transported back to the 1st century to encounter Jesus. He wants to help her, but she resists, and her excuses sound so familiar...

1. **"Why would God be _____ in me?"** verse 9

She was struggling against racial and gender stereotypes as well as self-esteem issues.

- You don't know who I am.
- You don't know what I've done.
- You don't know what I've been through.
- I'm damaged goods. I've failed too many times. I'm too far gone. I'm not worthy.

Yet Jesus said, "If you knew who asked you for a drink, you'd ask for living water." Verse 10

2. **"My _____ are physical, not spiritual."**

She was focused on H2O – material things like people today and ignoring spiritual issues. 11-12

- My problem is money
- My problem is my job
- My problem is my marriage
- My problem is my weight
- My problem is etc. etc. etc.

Jesus begins the shift to her understanding a deeper dimension of life. 13-15

3. **"I'm not interested in _____ - it's just a bunch of rules."**

This comes after Jesus exposes her sordid past. 16-18

So, she diverts the conversation away. 19

Jesus dismisses her excuse by pointing out the nature of "true" worship. 21-24

4. **"Of course, I _____ in God, but how does that help me today?"**

She has this "other-worldly", "pie-in-the-sky" view which makes the gospel irrelevant to problems today. 25

Imagine her shock when Jesus revealed his true identity to her! 26

Also note the impact this encounter had on others. 39-42