

I Am Who I Am

Exodus 3:13-15

January 20-21, 2007

Introduction

ILLUS – Alex asking me about my reputation in high school

1. Reputations. There are some that we wish we had, others we wish we never had associated with our name.
2. What kind of reputation does God have? What is God like?
3. Today, we will discover God's character and nature by studying His name. By doing so, I pray we will grow in our appreciation of Him and all that He wants to be to us.

READ – Exodus 3:13-15

Context

1. After 400 years in Egypt, God, in accordance with His Word to Abraham in Genesis 15, has come to deliver Israel from slavery.
2. The angel of the Lord, a preincarnate appearance of the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, commissioned Moses to be His agent through which the deliverance would be achieved.
3. In verse 13, Moses was concerned that the Israelites will ask him the name of the God who was calling him to deliver them.
4. God's answer was profound, "I am who I am."

I. God's Name Is Yahweh

A. The Eternal One

1. The word for God in Hebrew is "Elohim"
 - a. This word is used 2550 times in the OT
 - b. It speaks of God as the absolute and supreme source of all that exists
2. But the personal name of God is "Yahweh"
 - a. This word is used 6828 times in the OT
 - b. Because it is the personal name for God the Hebrews exercised great reverence and care to avoid dishonoring God's name

ILLUS – Tetragrammaton – YHWH and the Dead Sea Scrolls

3. The name Yahweh reveals that God is eternal
 - a. It is related to the Hebrew verb "to be"
 - b. His name reveals that He is timeless, not bound by time. Therefore He is able to speak about the future before it happens (See vv. 16-22)
 - c. God has no beginning or end

Psalm 90:1-2, "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were born, or Thou didst give birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."

ILLUS – Adam & Anna's difficulty when watching family videos

4. Since God is eternal He is therefore ever-present

Psalm 139:7-16 (Note: The link between God's eternity and ever-presence)

B. The Self-Existent One

1. Yahweh speaks of God's independence
 - a. He is not dependent upon anyone or anything for survival
 - b. He has life within Himself
 - c. He is complete!

ILLUS – Some suggest that God created man because He was lonely, but that implies that He was lacking something in Himself.

ILLUS – Moses said in Exodus 3:11, "Who am I?" thus declaring his inadequacy. But God said of Himself, "I am who I am" making it clear that He lacks nothing!

2. Since God is complete, He is immutable, changeless
 - a. Life is filled with change

ILLUS – Anna feeling cheated after watching the family videos

- b. But God remains the same

Malachi 3:6a, "For I, the Lord, do not change"

3. God is unchanging in His person, His purposes, and promises.

APPL – When you put together all of these facets of God’s character what do you discover? God is always faithful.

- Since He is eternal, God will never die so His promises stand until they are fulfilled
- Since God never changes, we never have to worry about Him changing His mind and breaking one of His promises

II. Jesus Christ Is Yahweh

John 8:56-59

John 17:6, “I manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world”

Transition: What else did Jesus reveal about the name Yahweh?

A. The Way To Life

1. *Have you ever felt lost, like you were surrounded by darkness; then a light appeared and you felt comfort?*

ILLUS – Walking through Paris, “The city of lights”

- a. In the Bible, darkness is often related to sin which ultimately will result in judgment

John 3:19-20, “And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.”

- b. But God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to light the way to life. Notice what He said during the Feast of Tabernacles...

John 8:12, “Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.’”

2. *With so many religions and cults proclaiming different ideas about God, have you ever wondered which way is true? Jesus solved our problem.*

John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.”

- a. Truth is exclusive

ILLUS – 2+2=4 (Always!)

- b. Jesus made it clear that there is only one true way to life with the Father, through Him.

Thomas a Kempis, “Without the way there is no going; without the truth there is no knowing; and without the life there is no living.”

3. *Do you want to be a member of God’s family; one of His children? You must go through Jesus to be saved and receive abundant life.*

John 10:7-10 (I am the door of the sheep)

APPL – You must trust in Jesus as your Savior to have your sins forgiven and receive eternal life...

Acts 4:12, “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.”

B. The Giver of Abundant Life

1. *Have you ever felt a hunger deep in your soul, sensing that there was something more to this life? Jesus promised to satisfy your hunger for true life.*

John 6:35, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”

F. F. Bruce, “To partake of the bread of life they must come to him, they must believe in him. This total self-commitment to Christ, this appropriating him by faith, is the secret of eternal life and perpetual soul-refreshment.”

ILLUS – Jacob shared how God satisfied his soul during a time of worship and prayer with members of the College & Career group

2. *Have you ever felt afraid or vulnerable?*

John 10:14-15, 27-30 (I am the Good Shepherd)

ILLUS – George Mueller (1805-1898) caregiver to orphans in England and a great man of faith kept a motto on his desk that brought comfort and strength to his heart which read, “It matters to Him about you.”

3. *Do you want a fruitful life? Jesus revealed the secret!*

John 15:5, “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.”

4. *And when this life is over, there is still more life to be lived. Notice what Jesus said to Martha after her brother Lazarus died...*

John 11:25-26, “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?’”

APPL – Do you believe this?

- **Jesus promised life in this life and life for the life to come!**
- **How do we know that He will keep His Word? Because He lives!**

ILLUS – Little Philip’s proclamation!

APPL - *Because Jesus is alive, the promises of God are guaranteed for all who believe!*

Conclusion

APPL – We covered seven “I am” statements, one enough for each day of this next week. I want to encourage you to take one each day, read the passage, and the prayerfully ask the Lord to make the reality of what He promised comfort your heart and bring life to your life.

Did you notice that each of the “I am” statements is associated with life?

What was Jesus trying to say to us? He is life and the secret to a life that is abundant and fulfilling!

- **How many marriages would be saved if the promises of Jesus were embraced?**
- **How many people seeking escape from life through destructive things like alcohol, drugs, gambling, and immorality would be liberated if they simply trusted in Jesus to fill that void and meet their deepest needs?**
- **How much bolder and fruitful would we be in our witness if we truly stood on Christ’s promises?**
- **Let God be who He is to you! The “Great I am”**