

Cottonwood Bible Study
The Deity of Jesus Christ: I AM He
9/28/22

Q: What is something you appreciate about the Body of Christ?

Q: Of all the "I AM" statements we've covered in John's Gospel, which aspect of Jesus' divine nature most resonates with you and why?

Each time Jesus called Himself "egō eimi" He was calling Himself God. This reality that He is the eternal God benefits His disciples (us) in specific ways. For example, because Jesus is the eternal Living God, we have everlasting life in our union with Him. Likewise, because Jesus is the eternal resurrected God, we have resurrection after death in our union with Him. The last egō eimi proclamation in John's Gospel brings the entire Bible and Gospel purpose full circle. It is beyond encouraging, incredibly humbling, and too awesome to truly understand all of God's love for us as we see His eternal purposes playing out in our history.

Genesis 2:15, 21-22

Genesis 3:8

Genesis 3:15

Salvation for people is union with God. When we are intimately and personally *with God* we have everlasting life, cleansed hearts, and true worship. We were created to be with God with God in His perfect and everlasting location (Garden of Eden with the Tree of Life) to love Him and worship Him with our very lives. Adam and Eve walked with God, who is the pre-incarnate Jesus, in this Garden. Sin broke that union and brought separation between us and God. We were separated from His holy presence, His everlasting life (Tree of Life), and condemned to spiritual and physical death as a result. God promised to bring us back to Him and restore our intimacy with Him and our life with Him through the seed of Eve who would defeat our sin and the devil's work. Jesus is that offspring. His purpose to fulfill that prophecy is clear in John 18.

John 18:1-3

Q: Does anything sound familiar about this location? This is the night of Jesus' betrayal and the beginning of His physical ascension to His cross the following day. Jesus *walks with* His disciples to a *garden* that is geographically within the same location as the God of Eden prior to the Fall of Man. Jesus entered into this Garden with His disciples. We see the similarities between God's creating of and walking with His people in Genesis. The passage states Jesus *often* met there *with* His disciples, just as He created people to do in the very beginning. It is a reminder of what should have been humanity's history if not for our sin. It is also about to be a proclamation of what it will be again in Christ.

John 18:4-5

John 18:6-8

Jesus knew everything that was going to happen. He knew He was going to be captured that night. He knew whom they were seeking. He could have fled but He chose to

remain. He wants us to know what is truly going on in this moment so He asks them to identify the person they are seeking to capture. They respond with "Jesus of Nazareth". They state they are looking for the *man* named Jesus. Jesus responds by saying "I AM" in a way that identifies Himself as the **man named Jesus *who is God***. There is no "he" in the original Greek. Jesus responds by stating the man they are seeking is God and He is that God. His revelation of Himself causes the attackers to fall back onto the ground. This is but a taste of what He could have done in this moment. It is also a reminder that Jesus our God chose to withhold the fullness of His eternal power on earth so He could be captured by these men.

Q: What goes through your heart and mind as you read these verses?

This is the full circle. God walked with His people in the Garden of Eden and His people had union and salvation with Him. Our sin destroyed our union with God and He rightly separated us from Him. Thousands of years later God became a man named Jesus to bring us back into union with Him. The way that would happen would be through Him being captured, taking our sin and putting it upon His own being while on a cross, being punished to death in our place, and rising victorious over sin and death for us. He chose to be captured in this garden to remind all of us why He was doing this in the first place. He was going to bring us back into union with Him in everlasting paradise.

Our union with God is through Jesus. Our everlasting life is through Jesus. Our forgiveness of our sins is through Jesus. Our resurrection from the dead is through Jesus. Our entrance into the Garden with God is through and with Jesus, our God who became a man for us and who unites us to Him by His Spirit.

The power of Jesus can cause us to fall down backwards or it can cause us to have union with God. Let's pray and ask God to graciously cause us to move toward Him and with Him in faith and never rejection or denial.

Revelation 22:1-5

Q: This is our history in Christ and our future in Christ. This is who we are and why we are. How does this clear presentation of God's Gospel plan help us live for Him today?

John 20:28-31 tells us we must believe in Jesus as our Lord and our God and by believing we may have life (Garden of Eden with God type of life!) in Jesus Christ. So believe and live for Him because living for and with Him is why we are here.

All the Gospels together reveal: who Jesus is (Messiah/God), His call for us to believe/follow Him, to love each other, to proclaim Him, and how the cross makes that possible. The rest of the New Testament reveals more of who Jesus is, how to follow Him, more of what to believe about Him, how to love each other as saints, and how to proclaim Him to the Church and to the lost world. That is in part why our next series will be Biblical Church Leadership: What is my role? We will look at these truths to know how and why we do church and how that involves each of us.