

I AM - Day One

[NAME GAME]

- **Description:** Toss ball around and have each person say their name and age as they catch it. Continue tossing the ball and switch from age to favorite color and then food. Purpose is “get to know” each student on a surface level.

[INTRO]

(Person A) During this name game we have found out certain things about each other such as name, age, etc., but there is still a lot we do not know about each other.

- Perhaps for some of you the same is true with Jesus Christ. You have heard certain things about Him, but you do not know Him fully. Over the next two days we are going to look at God’s Word and explore who Jesus Christ really is.

So our question for the next two days is, “**Who is Jesus Christ?**”

- If you asked this question in our culture you would get many different answers. For example some people say...
 - Jesus is God, while others say Jesus is just a good man.
 - Some say Jesus is A way to heaven, while others say Jesus is THE way to heaven
- Because there are so many opinions about Jesus Christ in both America and Nicaragua, we are going to take two days and explore who the real Jesus Christ is.
 - In order to learn who Jesus Christ really is, we are going to look at what Jesus says about Himself from eight “I AM” statements in John’s Gospel.

Before we begin... I want you to put aside everything you have heard about Jesus, and let Jesus speak for Himself and tell you exactly who He is from the pages of scripture.

[JESUS IS GOD]

(Person B) Our first “I AM” statement comes from John 8:58, which says:

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

In this passage Jesus Christ says, “**before Abraham was, I AM**”, and the crowd of Jews listening to Jesus picked up stones to kill him!

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- Here is the first question we must ask:
 - Why did the Jews try to kill Jesus for saying, “Before Abraham was, I AM”?
- Does anybody know who Abraham was? (**Pause for answers**)
 - Abraham was the father of the Jewish people who lived 2,000 years before Jesus Christ was born.
- Now think about this: Jesus, who at this point is around 30 years old, claims to have existed before Abraham, who lived 2,000 years before He was even born!
 - This would be like me saying, “Before my great, great, great grandfather was born, I was alive.” (That would be pretty hard to believe right?)

So first in this statement we see Jesus claiming to have existed at least 2,000 years before his very own birth.

(Person C) Next, not only does Jesus claim to be very old, but He also claims to be God himself!

- Notice Jesus did not say, “Before Abraham was, I was” (write I was on board), but “before Abraham was, I AM” (write I AM on board).
 - This phrase “**I AM**” is very important, and these two words are the reason the Jews tried to kill Jesus.
 - So what is the big deal about “I AM?”

To find that out we must look at Exodus 3:14, which says:

*Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” 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.’”*

Here God tells Moses that His name is “I AM.”

- Do you see now why the Jews got so angry at Jesus?
- Jesus was claiming to be God when He said, “Before Abraham was, I AM.”
 - 1st by saying He existed before Abraham who lived 2,000 years before His own birth.
 - and 2nd by taking the revealed name of God “I AM” and applying it to Himself.

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After looking at the first “I AM” statement. We conclude that Jesus says He is God.

- (Write “Jesus is God” on top of board.)

Now before we move on, what would you say if I told you that I was God?

- Would you assume I was crazy? Tell me to prove it?

It’s important to remember that Jesus not only said He was God, but proved He was God by His actions.

- For example Jesus was born of a virgin, never sinned, walked on water, forgave sins, multiplied food, healed sick, made blind people see, cast out demons, raised people from dead, rose from death Himself.

[JESUS IS SAVIOR]

(Person A) If Jesus is God, then we must ask, “Why did He become a man and live among us?”

To answer this question we look at our next “I AM” statement found in John 10:11 which says:

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

Here we see why Jesus became a man, and that reason was to die for those He loved!

But why did Jesus have to die for those He loved? (Does anyone know?)

- Because all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.
 - Since God is Holy, pure, and good, He must punish sin.
 - And His punishment for sin is death, eternal death in hell forever.

That’s the bad news. We have all sinned and must pay the price of eternal death.

- In light of that bad news, the good news is Jesus, the Good Shepherd died FOR us!
- Jesus Christ became a man and lived the perfect life we could not, and died the death we all deserve on a cross 2,000 years ago.
- And the reason He died was to become your Savior.

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- Taking your sins away through His death, so God can forgive you in Christ.
- So in this 2nd “I AM” statement we conclude that Jesus is Savior who dies in our place for our sins.

Lets Review so far:

- Jesus is God
- Jesus is Savior

[JESUS IS LIFE]

(Person B) Next we are going to see that Jesus not only died for our sins, but He also gives us eternal life so we can live forever with Him in heaven when we die.

Our 3rd I AM statement is found in John 11:25, which says,

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

Jesus is speaking these words to Martha, who had just lost her brother to death.

- With these word Jesus gives us hope past the grave.
- Jesus says for those who believe in Him, which means to have faith and commit their lives to Him, they will be resurrected from the dead and live forever, just like He was resurrected from the dead and lives forever.
- Write “Jesus is Life”

Review:

- Jesus is God
- Jesus is Savior
- Jesus is Life

[JESUS IS THE WAY]

(Person C) The last “I AM” statement we are going to look at today is found in John 14:6, which says:

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Here Jesus says He is only way to the Father who is in heaven.

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- How many of you would like to go to heaven when you die and spend eternity with God?
- Here Jesus tell us the way, and that way is Him!
- It is only through what Jesus did on the cross for us that we can receive forgiveness of our sins and spend eternity with God when we die.

The reason Jesus tells us He is the ONLY way is because He knows people will try other ways.

- One of these false ways includes being a good person
 - Many think if they are good enough people, follow the 10 commandments, treat others well, then they will go to heaven when they die.
 - The problem with good works is that none of us can be good enough, because God does not require us to be good, but perfect, and none of us are perfect.
- Another false way is being a religious person
 - Many believe if they go to church, honor Mary, honor the saints, confess their sins to the priest, then they will go to heaven when they die.
 - According to Jesus this way is false also, because salvation is not about religion, but about having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

In this last I AM statement, Jesus very clearly shows us that the way to heaven is through Him, apart from good works or religion.

- Write “Jesus is the Way”

(Person A) So who is Jesus?

- Let’s sum up what we have learned so far from Jesus Himself:
 - Jesus is God - who became a man
 - Jesus is our Savior - who died for our sins
 - Jesus is Life - who gives us eternal life
 - Jesus is the Way - who alone brings us to the Father in heaven

Now the question is... How will you respond to Jesus?

- Will you acknowledge that He is God and turn from your sins and confess Him as your Lord and Savior and live for His honor and glory for the rest of your life?

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[Craft]

In order to help you remember who Jesus is, we have brought each one of you a backpack that we want to you to decorate with these statements from Jesus.

- At the top center of your bag, write: Jesus is...
- Then under that write: God, Savior, Life, Way and any you want to, just keep in mind that you are going to learn four more statements tomorrow that you will add to this list on your bag, so leave room.