



Just Who Is Jesus?

People in our culture generally don't have any problem with God, they even like him. You can generally get away with talking about God without offending anyone. Muslim's like God, Jews like God, Mormon's, Sikh's, and Christians all like God. The problem is that, "god" is too generic of a term. You can fill in any definition you want when people talk about "god." However, things start to get a bit touchy when you bring up Jesus. Almost no one argues about the *existence* of Jesus anymore. The argument comes when you start speaking about his *identity*. Christians claim that Jesus is one third of the Trinity, an equal member of the Godhead. Other religions have to deal with Jesus in some manner. Usually they will say that he is either a prophet or a good teacher of some kind, but what did Jesus actually claim about himself?

We are currently going through a sermon series on the seven "I AM" statements of Jesus. This use of the first person in Jesus' speech gives us a unique perspective on what Jesus taught about himself, and therefore serves as a good starting point in understanding not only who Jesus thought he was, but who God is from a Christian standpoint.

The I AM

When God told Moses to go to Egypt and lead God's people out of slavery Moses asked God a question. He wanted to know God's name. "Who shall I say sent me?" And God tells Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites, 'I AM' has sent me to you." So the name that God wished to be known by in Israel was, "I AM. When the Old Testament was translated from its original Hebrew into Greek the term they used to translate the name of God was, "ego eimi." The form is emphatic and not normally used in everyday speech. It would be like saying "I, myself." Sometimes we will hear that phrase used, but it is not something that is just going to slip off the tongue in an everyday conversation. On top of that, the Jews avoided saying it because of its connection with the name of God. However, the gospel writers record that Jesus used that phrase. In Matthew, Jesus uses the "ego eimi" phrase five times. Mark records it three times and Luke four, however, John records Jesus saying this phrase around 30 times! This term, "I AM" clearly carries a unique importance in John's gospel.

To Convey Information

The majority of these references are simply to convey information in the same way that you or I would use the phrase "I am." However, even in these seemingly mundane usages there are hints that he just might be implying more than what is on the surface. In John 4 when Jesus is speaking to the Samaritan woman *about the messiah* Jesus says, "I that speak to you **am** he." I Am. In John chapter six as He's walking on the water He tells the disciples not to be afraid because, "**it is I.**" I AM.

When the Pharisees were challenging Jesus over what He had been saying about himself they said he needed someone else's testimony. But Jesus said, "**I am** one who testifies for myself, my other witness is the Father." I AM. Then in the garden of Gethsemane as they are trying to identify Jesus in order to arrest him three times Jesus says, "**I am** he." I AM. And the officers literally fall all over themselves trying to figure out what to do with him. There are some ordinary uses of this, "I AM" phrase, but even in some of those there are hints at something greater.

To Identify Himself with God

However, there are a few times when John records Jesus using this phrase where it could mean nothing else. Jesus puts no predicate at the end of his sentence. In their culture everyone would see that as clearly identifying with the name of God. Most of our modern translations fill in the predicate. They will translate it as "I am he" because simply ending the sentence without a predicate is bad grammar, but it is great theology! Four times John records Jesus doing this. Jesus says, "If you do not believe that **I am he**, you will indeed die in your sins" (8:24). "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that **I am he**" (8:28). "Very truly I tell you," before Abraham was born, **I am!**" (8:58). Finally to the disciples, "I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that **I am who I am**" (13:19).

To Teach About His Identity

So Jesus used the "I AM" phrase to hint at His identity, and to boldly declare His identity, but there is a third way He uses this phrase as well and that is to teach about His identity. He puts a predicate at the end of the "I AM" but it's not just a normal usage He attaches a metaphor to it. He hangs a picture at the end of the name of God in order to teach us something about His nature. He says, "I am the bread of life" (6:35); "I am the light of the world" (8:12); "I am the gate" (10:2,7,9); "I am the good shepherd" (10:11,14); "I am the resurrection and the life" (11:25); "I am the way, the truth and the life" (14:6); and "I am the true vine" (15:1,5). These seven statements all point to Jesus teaching that he is the giver and sustainer of life; a claim that could only be made by God.

There are other conversations and teachings of Jesus' that also show that he completely identified himself with God, but these usages of the name of God clearly show his perspective. Jesus believed and taught that he was the son of God, sent by God for the salvation of the world. People may try to insist that he was something else, but as C.S. Lewis says, "Either this man was, and is, the son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

February 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3 LBS 9:30 DINNER 6:00 PM CLASSES 7:00 PM	4	5	6
7 SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM	8	9 S&A Mtg 1:00PM Church	10 LBS 9:30 DINNER 6:00 PM CLASSES 7:00 PM	11 ELDERS 6:00 PM DEACONS 6:30 PM BOARD 7:00 PM	12 Family Game Night 6:30	13
14 JOYSHIP LUNCH SS & Worship HBS-Morey6:30 HS-Skiles5:30 EK-Colston's 6:00PM	15 OFFICE CLOSED FOR PRESIDENT'S DAY	16	17 LBS 9:30 DINNER 6:00 PM CLASSES 7:00 PM	18 Education Committee Meeting 6:00 PM	19 HG- Craford's 6:00 Pot Luck	20
21 SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM HS-Skiles 5:30PM	22	23	24 LBS 9:30 DINNER 6:00 PM CLASSES 7:00 PM	25	26 HG- White's 6:00	27
28 SS & Worship HS-Skiles5:30 HBS-Dalton 630PM EK- Colston6:00PM	29					

Serving In February

February 07

Meditation: Jerry Gibson
Servers: Brenda Gibson, *Iris Felix
 John Signorelli, Rebecca Cullen
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Nursery: Sarah Skiles, Wanda Jones
Lord's Supper Prep: Shawn & Rebecca Cullen

February 14

Meditation: Doug Dalton
Servers: Brenda Risner, Ruth Carson
 Tara Coffman, *Wanda Jones
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Nursery: Meshell Pruitt & Lindsie Sirmons
Lord's Supper Prep: Shawn & Rebecca Cullen

February 21

Meditation: Randall Coffman
Servers: Brenda Gibson, Iris Felix
 *John Signorelli, Rebecca Cullen
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Nursery: Sheena Ziemann & Christina Barns
Lord's Supper Prep: Shawn & Rebecca Cullen

February 28

Meditation: Lloyd Colston
Servers: Brenda Risner, Ruth Carson
 Tara Coffman, *Wanda Jones
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, Jerry Gibson/FHD
Nursery: Rebecca Cullen & Kristen Partin
Lord's Supper Prep: Shawn & Rebecca Cullen



February 12, 2016 at 6:00 P.M.

Bring games & Snacks to Share

Your Elders

Phil Carson, Randall Coffman, Doug Dalton,
 Gene Drechsler, Jerry Gibson, Jim Jones

Your Deacons

Crystal Crawford, Rebecca Cullen, Brenda Gibson
 Joe Price, Rick Weinkauff, Daniel White

In Our Prayers

Larry Allen - heart
 Reba Stephens - health
 Jackie Garland - cancer
 Charlotte McPherson
 Diana Williamson - cancer
 Marcia Sharma - stomach cancer
 Kaybree Mann - brain tumor
 Nita Walker - health
 Andrea Matthews - heart problems
 Robert Ramer -experimental therapy
 Sam Smith - mass in esophagus
 Tammie Crowder - infection
 Sandy Farris - cancer
 Arnold Goucher - cancer
 Herb Lacey - liver cancer
 Linda Crandal - leukemia
 Billie Vaughn - Jerry's cousin

Periodically the Prayer List will be updated. If we remove someone that you still want on the list, please let us know and we will be glad to put them back on.

If you have a prayer need or know of any changes, please contact the church office.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

02/01 Isaiah Jordan & Iris Felix
 02/08 Marilyn Wright
 02/17 Ruth Carson
 02/19 Lydia Desroches
 02/24 Doug Garland



Sunday Services

Sunday School 9:30 am
 Worship Service 10:30 am

Wednesday Night

Dinner 6:00 pm
 Classes for all ages 7:00 pm

Secretary's Report

January 2016

Average Attendance 68
 Average Visitors 33.6
 Total Average Attendance 101.6
 Total Offerings \$11,349.00

Up Coming Events



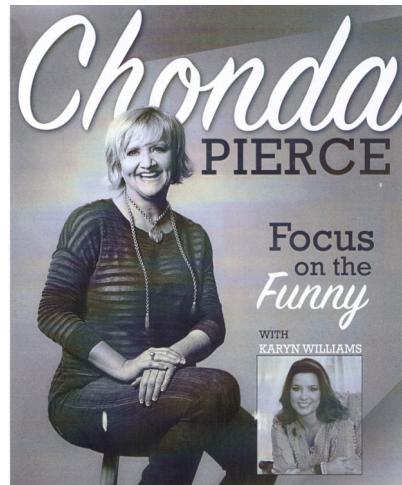
If you are interested in being one of the three spellers for the "GRATE" Altus Spelling Bee please contact Rebecca Cullen or Brenda Risner. Deadline to reserve our entry team is March 29.



2015 Spelling Bee participants for First Christian Church—Sarah Skiles, Rebecca Cullen, and Heather Erickerson

EASTER EGG CANDY NEEDED

Easter is March 27th so if you would like to donate candy, a box will be available at the front entrance and in the fellowship hall.



SUNDAY · MARCH 20
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
LAWTON, OK

iTickets.com
800-965-9324



If 10 people or more want to attend this funny concert at Lawton First Baptist Church Sunday March 20th at \$20 a person, contact the church office by February 22 so tickets can be ordered on line at the discount price. I do not know the time of the performance at this time.

ADD TO YOUR DIRECTORY

Ben & Kristen Partin
605 Navajoe Road
Altus, OK 73521

(505) 603-5121 Ben
(505) 603-5233 Kristen