

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Aftermath: The 7 'I Am' Statements of Jesus

February 19, 2023

The AFTERMATH

For the next several weeks our sermon series will focus on the "I Am" statements Jesus makes in the book of John. This Discussion Guide is designed to help you think more deeply about the sermon and engage with others through thoughtful conversation, biblical exploration and real-life application.

➤ CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are the 3 most important things people should know about you?

➤ EXPLORATION

Throughout history, people have made bold claims about themselves. Julius Caesar claimed to be as constant as the North Star. Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) said, "I once wrestled an alligator, I tussled a whale - I float like a butterfly and sting like a bee, I am the greatest boxer of all time." Just last week during the Super Bowl Rhianna sang, "I am unstoppable." Jesus can also be added to the list of those who make bold claims.

Jesus says, I Am...

- **The Bread of Life** - John 6:35
- **The Light of the World** - John 8:12
- **The Gate** - John 10:7-9
- **The Good Shepherd** - John 10:11,14
- **The Resurrection and the Life** - John 11:25
- **The Way, The Truth and The Life** - John 14:6
- **The True Vine** - John 15:1-5

Which of these claims are you most curious about? Why?

These claims were truly bold for those who first heard them and are still radically challenging for us today.

"Christ's claims are either cosmic or comic."

~John Blanchard

In John 6:35, Jesus says, "**I am the bread of life.** Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." In order to understand why this is a radical statement, we need to know what was happening before he spoke these words.

For each scripture in this guide, pull out your bibles and then have someone read the passage out loud.

John 6:1-15

A large crowd was following Jesus because they had seen the signs he had performed by healing the sick. They were motivated to see what Jesus was doing, hoping to get their own needs met. Jesus fed all 5000 of them and had plenty of food left over from just 5 small barley loaves and 2 fish that a little boy brought in his sack lunch. Pretty incredible, right? But instead of standing up and taking a bow for providing a satisfying meal for all those people, Jesus withdrew from the crowd and slipped away to the other side of the lake.

Why do you think Jesus chose to withdraw after feeding the crowd that day?

When the crowd found Jesus on the other side of the lake, they had some questions for him and he had some direction for them.

John 6:25-29 (Read aloud)

Jesus challenges his followers to think about their motives for following him. Did they truly desire to serve God, or did they just want to get their immediate needs met? It seemed that they were more interested in getting a good meal than they were in truly understanding who Jesus was.

The same might just as easily be said of people today. Author and Theologian N.T. Wright says this:

Made for spirituality, we **wallow** in introspection.
Made for joy, we **settle** for pleasure.
Made for justice, we **clamor** for vengeance.
Made for relationship, we **insist** on our own way.
Made for beauty, we are **satisfied** with sentiment.

In what ways do you see this played out in the world today? Give specific examples.

John 6:30-35 (Read aloud)

Jesus didn't say, "I am one of the many ways you can nourish your soul." He makes it clear in this passage that in order for our soul's hunger and thirst to be satisfied, we must believe that Jesus is who he claims to be; the **Bread of Life**.

What is the significance of Jesus using bread as the symbol here?

John 6:35-40 (Read aloud)

Jesus came to give life to God's people. He used the practical element of bread to illustrate that fact and over 5000 people had enough to eat. But even in that miraculous moment, each person had to decide how to respond.

Some people believed and some doubted. Others got angry and left Jesus. But Jesus' true disciples began to

radically follow him with a new understanding of his identity.

> TAKE AWAY

Jesus reveals himself as the "Bread of Life" and reminds his disciples that it is God's will that everyone who believes in Jesus will have eternal life (vs. 40). What an incredible gift we have in Jesus! But just like the disciples and the crowd, we have to decide how we will respond to that gift.

Looking back at the N.T. Wright quote, we are reminded of our human tendency to settle for less than all that God has for us.

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In what ways are you tempted to settle for less than Jesus provides? Why?

Take some time to pray together, asking God to show you how to faithfully follow Jesus as you look to him to provide everything you need.*

**Leader - if here is time and openness, ask people to share what they feel God is leading them to change this week.*

> SERVE OPPORTUNITY



BLOOD DRIVE
At Hillside in the
Community Center

Saturday, February 25
9AM to 2PM

The need for blood is urgent in Southern California. Please consider donating. Scan the QR Code or call LifeStream Blood Bank at 800.879.4484 to make an appointment. Give the gift of life to someone in need!