

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

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

February 26, 2023

### The AFTERMATH: Jesus says, "I AM..."

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 *allow God to work* in your life as you apply what you discover.

#### ➤ CONVERSATION STARTERS

**Have you ever been afraid in the dark?  
Share your story**

#### ➤ EXPLORATION

The following scriptures help give us context to what Jesus is communicating about himself to the disciples. Read each scripture out loud, pausing in between to consider what it says about Jesus and what it says about his disciples (us).

**John 8:12** - "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

**John 8:23-24** "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am he, you will indeed die in your sins."

**John 8:28-30** "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father

has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.' Even as he spoke, many believed in him."

**John 8:31-32** "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

**John 8:36** "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

**John 8:58-59** "Very truly I tell you,"... "before Abraham was born, I am!" At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

Take a moment to go back through each of these passages. Underline what they tell us about who Jesus is and circle what they say about the disciples (us).

**What captures your attention about Jesus?**

**What do these scriptures reveal about us?**

**John 8:1-12 (From your bible, read aloud)**

Imagine for a moment that you were in the temple that day, listening to Jesus teach and all of a sudden the doors burst open and the story unfolds. There are so many questions we could ask about this story. The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees were trying to create a scenario where they could trap Jesus so they could force him to stop teaching. But Jesus went to the heart of the matter, exposing their darkness to his light.

### ***John 8:12 (From your bible, read aloud)***

There is a big difference between the light of the sun and that of a single light bulb. The concept of light and life are closely associated in John's Gospel, having both moral and spiritual significance.

**"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it but because by it, I see everything else."**

*~CS Lewis 'The Weight of Glory'*

### **How has your relationship with Jesus caused you to see the world differently?**

Throughout the Gospel of John we see that Jesus reveals important truths about himself, about the world and about his followers.

#### **What Jesus reveals about Himself:**

- Relationship to God the Father - John 8:27-30
- Relationship to their religious history - John 8:58-59
- Relationship to the world - John 8:12; John 1:1-9

In Exodus 3:14-15, God said to Moses, "I AM Who I AM". This is something that the people would have understood clearly as God's declaration of sovereign authority. When Jesus started to reveal his own identity, using "I am" statements it suggested that Jesus was equal to God the Father. This was a radical claim for the people to hear, and John doesn't shy away from this truth. In John 1:1-5 he clearly states that Jesus was with God and was God from the very beginning of time.

#### **What Jesus reveals about the world:**

- Darkness is around us and in us - John 8:12; Eph 5:8-13
- Deception is the language of the world - John 8:43-44
- Death is a result of sin - John 8:23-24

The concept of darkness and light is a common theme in John's writings. Apart from Jesus, we are living life in the dark. Only he provides the light of life. If we don't pay attention to the dangers of the dark we will be lost and without hope.

#### **What Jesus reveals about us:**

- True life is available to all who believe - John 3:16
- Truth and freedom are found in Jesus - John 8:31-32
- Testimonies come from following Jesus - Matt 5:14-16

Jesus is shining a light on what real life looks like and how to experience that life. When we live in the light, we cannot hide, hidden things are exposed, and the true path of life is revealed. God invites us to experience the light of his love, but we have to choose whether or not we are willing to confess the things that we keep hidden.

### ***1 John 1:6-7 (From your bible, read aloud)***

Jesus was talking to people who were very skilled at pointing out the sin of others, and also very subtly, maybe even blindly, attempting to hide their own sin. The light must shine "in" us before it can shine "through" us.

The light of Christ is not meant for condemnation but for restoration. It is like the difference between a knife and a scalpel in the hands of a surgeon. For those of us who believe that Jesus is the light, it brings conviction not condemnation.

### **What are some of the ways you intentionally invite the light of Christ into your life?**

#### **> TAKE AWAY**

As we finish our time together, take a few moments to prayerfully read through the prayer below from Psalm 139:23-24. As you slowly read, pause between each line and take a few deep breaths. Notice what thoughts and feelings come up. Invite God to reveal anything that needs to be examined in the light of Christ.

***Search me, God, and know my heart***

***Test me and know my anxious thoughts***

***See if there is any offensive way in me***

***And lead me in the way everlasting***

**What came to mind as you prayed this prayer? What is God revealing to you?**

**How will you respond?**

**Pray together for God's light to shine in you this week.**