

Jesus – “I am....”⁵ – The Way, the Truth, and the Life

Reading: John 14:6 “.... *I am the way, the truth, and the life* ¹.....”

Introduction:

This is the last lesson in the series on the “*I am*” statements made by Jesus in the gospel of **John**. The aim of these lessons is for us to learn more about the nature and attributes of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

On the night that He was arrested, Jesus had the Passover meal with His disciples (**Luke 22:7-15**). Following the meal, He washed the disciples’ feet, and then discussed several things with them (**John 13:1 – 18:1**). Towards the end of **John 13**, after Judas had left to betray Him (vs.**26-30**), Jesus told the disciples that He was about to leave them, and that they would not be able to follow Him (vs.**33**). They did not understand that Jesus was talking about His imminent death and later ascension to Heaven, so they questioned Him as to where He was going (vs.**36**). As we enter chapter **14**, Jesus talked about preparing a place for them in His Father’s house (*i.e.* heaven), but they still didn’t understand. Thomas asked (vs.**5**);

“Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

Jesus then replied (vs.**6**);

“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

What Jesus said in verse **6** summarises the way to get to heaven. In this lesson, we will consider the four claims made in this verse.

LESSON

1) Jesus – “*I am the Way*”

The aim of everybody should be to spend eternity in heaven with God our Father after our life here is over. The alternative is too terrible to contemplate (**Matthew 25:41; Romans 2:8-9**). It is also God’s desire that everyone turn to Him so that they can have eternal life (**2 Peter 3:9**). And He has provided a way for this to happen – that “way” is Jesus.

When Jesus said, “*I am the way*”, what did He mean by that? Well, there are a couple of ways (no pun intended) you could look at the term, “*the way*”. One view is that He is the “path”, like a roadway or footpath that leads a person towards their destination and provides a means of getting there. Another view is that He is the example, the pattern, in that by following and imitating His life, we will get to go where He is. Well, both views are correct.

a) Firstly, Jesus is the way (or means) by which we can have salvation and access to the Father.

It is sin that separates people from God (**Isaiah 59:2**), and everyone is guilty of it (**Romans 3:23**). And so for people to be reconciled back to God, something had to be done about the sin. Reconciliation is not possible by people simply endeavouring to do good works (**Galatians 2:16a; Ephesians 2:8-9**). Nor does the sacrifice of animals restore our relationship with God (**Hebrews 10:4**). Only one sacrifice had the power to take away

¹ All biblical quotes are from the New King James Version Bible.

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the stain of sin – the sacrifice of Jesus (**John 1:29; Hebrews 10:12**). That’s why He was sent by the Father (**1 John 4:10**). No one else could do this for us. No one else could save us – only Jesus (**Acts 4:12; Hebrews 5:8-9**).

Now that He has returned to heaven, He is sitting at the right hand of God as the one and only Mediator between God and man (**1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 12:2**).

b) Secondly, Jesus provides us with an example of the type of life we are to lead.

Jesus is also “*the way*” in the sense that His life is what we are to copy (**1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Peter 2:21**), *i.e.* by living the way He lived, we will be living the type of life that pleases the Father (**John 8:29; Colossians 1:10**). Sure, we cannot do the miracles that He performed, but we can copy His attitudes (**Philippians 2:5**); we can copy His compassion that led Him to help others (**Matthew 9:36**); we can copy His truthfulness (**John 16:7a**); and we can copy His humility and sacrificial obedience to the Father (**Philippians 2:8**). Jesus said in **Matthew 11:28-29**;

²⁸*Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

²⁹*Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”*

By saying, “... *learn from Me* ...”, He is telling us to look at His life, listen to His words, consider His attitudes, and follow His actions. It is the same idea as when a teacher instructs a student on how to do something by saying, “*Now watch closely what I do, then do it yourself*”. As we look at Jesus’ life and think about what His word says, we should be changing our life so that it becomes more and more like His life (**Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:6**). If we want to get to heaven, follow Jesus, because He is the way.

2) Jesus – “I am the Truth”

The second thing that Jesus said in verse **6** was that He is “*the truth*”. Truth is defined as “... *that which is true or in accordance with fact or reality* ...”, *i.e.* truth presents things the way they really are. For example, if I say that the earth is round and not flat, we know that what I say is the truth because we have all seen photos and films taken from space that show that the earth really is round.

In the world today, there are literally millions of teachings, writings, books, articles, *etc.* But unless what they say is a 100% reflection on the way things really are, then they cannot be considered to be the truth². The same principle applies in the religious world, where there are also many doctrines. Some may contain part of the truth; others may be completely false (**Matthew 15:9; Colossians 2:21-23; 1 John 4:1**). But if we want to know the truth, the 100% truth, then we need to turn to God’s word, for Jesus said in **John 17:17b** with regard to God the Father;

“... Your word is truth.”

² It is acknowledged that many writings in the world do not claim to be truth – they are deliberately written as fiction.

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Jesus came to bring us this truth. In fact, in the gospel of **John**, He is described as “.... *the Word (which) became flesh and dwelt among us*” (**John 1:1, 14**). When answering Pilate during His trial, Jesus said;

“For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth”
(**John 18:37**)

In other words, one of the reasons for His coming was to “bear witness”, or to “reveal/declare”, to us God’s truth (**John 12:49-50**) – the truth. He came to show us what is reality when it comes to living a life that is pleasing to God (**John 15:10**), and also the consequences if we choose to live differently (**John 5:28-29**).

The truth that Jesus revealed covers more than just the outward actions that we should do. In **Hebrews 4:12** we read;

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

The truth goes right to the heart, to the very core of our being – what we are on the inside. Examples of this can be seen in the sermon on the mount - consider **Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28**. Jesus showed that righteousness is not limited to external actions alone. The thoughts of the heart are also involved, because it the internal heart that drives the external actions (**Matthew 12:35**).

Jesus is the truth, because He is God, and He showed us the truth in His life - in His character, in His attitudes, in His words, and in His deeds.

3) Jesus – “I am the Life”

In the beginning, Jesus created the physical bodies of Adam and Eve, the original man and woman (**Genesis 1:26-27; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16**). We exist (physically) because we are their descendants.

It is also because of Jesus that we can have spiritual life, eternal life. When we sinned, we were condemned to eternal punishment (**Romans 6:23a**). We were “.... *by nature, children of wrath*” (**Ephesians 2:3**). And there was nothing that we could do; no works that we could perform, to redeem ourselves – we were helpless (**Romans 5:6a; Ephesians 2:8-9**).

But Jesus came to seek and save the lost (**Luke 19:10**). He came to pay the penalty for our sins (**Romans 5:6b-10**). All our guilt was laid upon Him (**Isaiah 53:5-6**). As a result, He became the “.... *author of (or, the reason for) eternal salvation to all who obey Him*” (**Hebrews 5:9**). Now, those who are in Christ no longer stand condemned before God (**Romans 8:1**) – they are presented before Him as holy and blameless (**Colossians 1:21-22**). In **1 John 5:11** we read;

“And this is the testimony; that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.”

Jesus is indeed the life.

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4) Jesus – “No one comes to the Father except through Me”

The fourth and final thing that Jesus said in **John 14:6** is that no one comes to the Father except through Him. This is a very exclusive statement. In fact, all four parts of the verse are exclusive statements, *i.e.* when Jesus said, “the way, the truth, the life”, it implies that all other ways, *etc.*, are not valid.

And so it is with coming to the Father - if we want access to God, then Jesus is absolutely the one and only means of doing so. No one else provides that avenue – not Mohammad³, not the Pope⁴, not the Dali Lama⁵, nor any other religious leader. There are other passages that show the exclusivity of Jesus.

- a) It is Jesus whom the Father has made our Lord and Christ⁶.

“Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”
(Acts 2:36)

- b) If we don’t believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, then we will die in our sins;

“... if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”
(John 8:24)

- c) Jesus is the only one who can provide salvation for us. In the context of talking about Jesus, Peter said in **Acts 4:12**;

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

- d) Jesus is the one and only mediator between God and man;

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.”
(1 Timothy 2:5).

No-one comes to the Father except through Jesus

Conclusion

If we want to have salvation; if we want to have eternal life with the Father in heaven, then we need to look to Jesus and learn from Him (**Matthew 11:28-29**). His way is the only way. What He says is the truth. And it is only through Him that we can have eternal life and access to the Father. There is no other way.

³ The prophet of Islam.

⁴ The head of the Roman Catholic church.

⁵ The spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism.

⁶ The word, “Christ” means *the anointed one*.