

The “I Am” Sayings of Jesus

I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

John 14:1-14

Introduction

This week, we meet Jesus and the Apostles in the upper room on the night of Judas’s betrayal. We call this section (chapters 13 through 17) Jesus’s “upper room discourse.” It’s his last opportunity to teach the disciples before he goes to the cross—and it’s where we find Jesus’s last two “I Am” statements. In this lesson, Jesus brings everything he has taught us about truth and life to center on himself. His claims are personal, absolute, and exclusive. He wants us to center our whole lives in him. Have you?

Read John 14:1-14

- 1: **Have you ever had to say goodbye to a good friend? Describe that here:**

- 2: **Jesus begins this passage saying, “Let not your hearts be troubled.” Look at John 13:31–38. Why might the disciples have been anxious?**

- 3: **What perspective does Jesus give his disciples to help them through his coming departure? (vv. 2-4)**

- 4: **How can this perspective help you and me deal with our own anxieties and fears?**

- 5: **Look at verse 5. What was Thomas confused about? How can you relate to Thomas’s feelings?**

- 6: **How does Jesus respond to Thomas? (vv. 6-7) What do you think Jesus means?**

- 7: **What might it mean for Jesus to be the WAY?**

- 8: **What might it mean for Jesus to be the TRUTH?**

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9: What might it mean for Jesus to be the LIFE?

10: How might Jesus’s claims in verse 6 challenge the ways you think and go about life?

11: Discuss this common Hindu parable about approaching God and/or truth:

A group of blind men once heard that an elephant had been brought to their town, but none of them had any experience with one. None were aware of its form or nature. Out of curiosity, they said: “Let us go and inspect it by touch and find out what manner of creature this is.” So, they sought it out, and when they found it they groped about it. The man whose hand landed on the trunk said, “This elephant is like a thick snake.” Another’s hand reached up to the ear, and it seemed like a fan to him. The one who found its leg said, “The elephant is a pillar—like a tree-trunk.” The blind man who placed his hand upon its side said, “The elephant is like a leathery wall.” Another, feeling its tail, described it as a rope. The last man felt its tusk, coming to the conclusion that the elephant is hard, smooth, and like a spear.

12: What does the exclusive, close relationship Jesus has with his Father mean for us? (vv. 12–14)

Closing Thoughts

Nearly everything Jesus claims in our passage today runs counter to the way intelligent Postmoderns think about things. We live in a pluralistic, relativistic, inclusive culture. We think everyone should be free to make their own choices about spirituality, and they should be accepted whatever their choices. Our neighbors are hostile to any claims of absolute truth or exclusive spirituality. Our culture wants God to be okay with everyone and everything—so long as, you know, people are sincere, accepting, and loving.

Unfortunately, Jesus isn’t what anybody wishes he were. We all—at some level—want to think that Jesus is just like us. He likes the things we like, and he hates the things we hate. He is inclusive and affirming of people like us, but hostile, or at least irritated, towards people who don’t think like we do. Again, Jesus isn’t like us. He’s not on anyone’s side but his Father’s. His claims are so true, absolute, and *real* that we are the ones in trouble if we don’t line up our perspectives with his.

However, Jesus doesn’t make these claims in John 14 to cause us to fear. He’s not speaking to condemn our worldviews. Rather, he’s calling us to faith, to find comfort in walking with him. Yes, he is the only one who can give us eternal life. Yes, he is the only way to really get your head around the truth. Yes, life can only be found in him. But most importantly, Jesus offers himself to you freely. There’s no toll for walking across the bridge Jesus makes between us and the Father. There’s no admission fee for the truth. There’s no tax on the life he gives us. It’s all free. All you have to do is believe it, walk it, and enjoy it.