



I AM

A study of the statements made by Jesus in the Gospel of John

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Overview

These statements are unique to John and in many ways encapsulate the distinctiveness of John's presentation of Jesus.

"I am" often reminds readers of the revealed name of God from the burning bush

[Exod 3:14]

And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

In Exodus 3:14, where God reveals His name as "**I AM THAT I AM**", the speaker is God Himself, specifically addressing Moses. Traditionally, this declaration is understood as the self-identification of God, emphasising His eternal, self-existent, and unchanging nature. However, when we consider the New Testament's revelation of the Trinity, the question of whether this is God the Father or the Son becomes more nuanced.

Understanding the "I AM" in the Context of the Trinity

The "I AM" statement in Exodus 3:14 is spoken by the one true God, encompassing the fullness of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. At that moment in the Old Testament narrative, it isn't explicitly distinguished whether it is the Father or the Son speaking. However, based on New Testament theology, we can infer several points:

1. **The Unity of the Trinity:** The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God [Deuteronomy 6:4]. Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord;
2. The divine name "I AM" belongs to the entire Godhead, signifying the shared nature and essence of God.
3. **Jesus' Use of "I AM":** In the New Testament, Jesus explicitly adopts the "I AM" name for Himself, such as in John 8:58:
"Before Abraham was, I am."
Here, Jesus claims the divine name, identifying Himself directly with the God who spoke to Moses. His audience understood this as a claim to divinity, as evidenced by their reaction to stone Him for blasphemy (John 8:59).
4. **The Role of the Son in Revelation:** Throughout Scripture, the Son is often the one who visibly and tangibly reveals God to humanity. For example:
5.
 - In John 1:19: **"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."**

Colossians 1

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him;

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. These passages suggest that when God reveals Himself in a personal or physical way, it is often the Son who serves as the mediator of that revelation.

6. **Theophanie and Christ's Pre-Incarnate Role:** Many theologians believe that the "Angel of the LORD" and other Old Testament theophanies (appearances of God) are manifestations of the pre-incarnate Christ. If this view is correct, it is reasonable to consider that the Son may have been the person of the Trinity addressing Moses in Exodus 3:14.

Conclusion

While Exodus 3:14 does not explicitly identify the speaker as the Father or the Son, New Testament revelation allows us to see the Son as the one who frequently reveals God to humanity. Thus, it is reasonable to interpret that the "I AM" of Exodus 3:14 includes the Son, and Jesus later confirms this identification in His ministry. At the same time, the divine name belongs to the entire Godhead, reflecting the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Jesus will use, the same writing this gospel, in Revelation 1:8

[Rev. 1:8]

For he saith, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty

The I am from beginning to end is a way of him showing his authority and continuity.

and, to be sure, from the opening verse that the reader understood that' Jesus divine nature is front and center in John wrote

[John1:1]

In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the **Son was of God.**

I AM the Bread of Life

the first of the seven “I Am” statements in John’s Gospel.

[John 6:35]

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

So What does Jesus mean by proclaiming himself “the bread of life”?

At one level, the answer can be put simply: *Jesus means that he is the source of eternal life for the world*, an explanation expressed straightforwardly

[John 6:47-48]

47: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.
48 I am that bread of life.

If the meaning were this simple, however, there would be little reason for Jesus to have used the symbolism in the first place.

The context of the statement

The people have come to Jesus looking for another miracle, and for more free food

[John 6:26-33]

6:26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye desire to keep my sayings, neither because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.

6:27 Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man hath power to give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed.

6:28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

6:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

6:30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? What dost thou work?

6:31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

6:32 Then Jesus said unto them Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

6:33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

Instead, Jesus says they need to be seeking the "true bread from heaven" in order to obtain eternal life. Jesus has already clarified that this does not mean good works, but refers to belief in the One sent by God.

Key Themes:

1. **Misdirected Motives (6:26):**

Jesus confronts the crowd, pointing out that their pursuit of Him is not out of faith or a desire to follow His teachings but because He miraculously fed them with physical bread. This exposes a human tendency to seek temporary satisfaction rather than eternal truth.

2. **Eternal Nourishment (6:27):**

Jesus calls them to prioritise "**the meat which endureth unto everlasting life.**" This is a call to seek spiritual sustenance that leads to eternal life, which only He, as the Son of Man, can provide. The sealing by God the Father signifies His divine authority and mission.

3. **Faith as the Work of God (6:28–29):**

When the crowd asks what they must do to perform God's works, Jesus simplifies it: "**This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.**" Faith, not deeds, is the starting point for a true relationship with God. Believing in Jesus is the foundational "work" that aligns people with God's purpose.

4. **Demand for a Sign (6:30–31):**

The crowd's request for another sign reveals their limited understanding, despite having witnessed miracles like the feeding of the 5,000. They compare Jesus to Moses, who provided manna in the wilderness, demonstrating their focus on earthly provision rather than spiritual significance.

5. **The True Bread of Heaven (6:32–33):**

Jesus clarifies that the manna in the wilderness was not the ultimate bread from heaven; it was a temporary provision. The true bread, given by God, is Jesus Himself. He is "**he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.**" This bread offers eternal life, fulfilling humanity's deepest spiritual hunger.

Reflection:

This passage calls us to examine our motives in seeking Jesus. Are we drawn by the desire for temporary benefits, or do we hunger for the eternal life and spiritual fulfilment that only He can provide? Faith in Christ as the true bread of life transforms our focus from earthly needs to heavenly realities.

Jesus continues the analogy of food here, combining the ideas of spiritual hunger

[Matthew 4:4]

4:4 But Jesus answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
and spiritual thirst

[John 4:16]

4:16 But whosoever drinketh of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Here, saving faith is seen as an analogy to food and drink:

a person must take it inside of themselves—

It is not enough to have the understanding of the word we need to have direct knowledge of him by transforming ourselves into his outward image though our actions so that our inner self can mirror him also.

Acceptance is a requirement for these blessings to have any effect!

Consider the feeding of the 5000 all eating the same food it's a Symbol of how we are supposed to be as a people ..All fed from the same source and taking the name nourishment...Jesus Christ.

The true bread - The real support which is needed to keep the soul from death. It is not false, deceitful, or perishing. Christ is called bread, because, as bread supports life, so his doctrine supports, preserves, and saves the soul from death. He is the true support, not only in opposition to the mere supply of temporal wants such as Moses furnished, but also in opposition to all false religion which deceives and destroys the soul.

I AM the light of the world

[John 8:12]

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

In declaring Himself to be the Light of the world, Jesus was claiming that He is the exclusive source of spiritual light. No other source of spiritual truth is available to mankind.

There are two types of light in the world.

We can perceive one, or both, or neither!

When we are born into this world, we perceive physical light, and by it we learn of our Creator's handiwork in the things we see. However, although that light is good, there is another Light,

a Light so important that the Son of God had to come in order to both declare and impart it to men.

The symbol used by the Lord in this verse speaks of the light of His Truth, the light of His Word, the light of eternal Life. Those who perceive the true Light will never walk in spiritual darkness.

It is recorded in the book of Genesis that the first thing God called forth was light. He said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Thousands of years later, God's Son said He was light.

When we read, "In the beginning was the Word" in John's Gospel, we should immediately think of another Bible text that begins with the same introductory phrase. Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

[John 1:1]

In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the **Son was of God**.

[Genesis 1]

1:3 Yea, **in the beginning** I created the heaven, and the earth upon which thou standest.

1:6 And I, God, said, **Let there be light**, and there was light.

1:7 And I, God, saw the light, and that **light was good**. And I, God, divided the light from the darkness.

1:8 And I, God, called the light day, and the darkness I called night. And this I did by **the word of my power**; and it was done as I spake. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

We take a candle into a room to dispel the darkness. Likewise, the Light of Jesus Christ has to be taken into the darkness of sin that engulfs the hearts and lives of those who are not following Him.

That's the condition behind having this Light—that we follow Him. If we do not follow Him, we will not have this light, this truth, this eternal life.

Remember ..Darkness is the Absences of Light not a state that can be created of itself.

- Physical light is necessary for physical life. The earth would certainly change very rapidly if there were no longer any sunlight.
 - A forest full of trees with very thick canopies of foliage high above has very little plant life on the ground except for moss or lichen, which needs little sunlight. Plants will never move away from the light—they are said to be positively phototropic, drawn to the light.
- In the same way, spiritual light is necessary for spiritual life, and this can be a good test of our standing in Christ.
 - The believer will always tend toward spiritual things; he will always tend toward fellowship, prayer, the Word of God, and so on.

The unbeliever always does the opposite because light exposes his evil, and he hates the light.

As true followers of the Light, we will never follow the ways of sin, never live in a state of continually sinning. Rather, we repent of our sin in order to stay close to the Light of the world.

He commands us to be “lights,” too.

[Matthew 5:16]

Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

we see believers depicted as the light of the world. Just as the moon has no light of its own, reflecting the light of the sun, so are believers to reflect the Light of Christ so that all can see it in us. **The Light is evident to others by the good deeds we do in faith and through the power of the Holy Spirit.**

[John 10:7-8]

10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheepfold.

10:8 All that ever came before me who testified not of me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them.

1. Exclusive Nature of Salvation:

- Jesus declares that He is "**the door**"—not one of many doors, but the singular, exclusive way to enter the sheepfold. This sheepfold represents the community of believers who are saved and secure under God's care.
- By using the definite article "the," Jesus emphasizes that there is no alternative path to salvation. This is echoed in

[John 14:6]

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

2. Dual Role – Shepherd and Door:

- In the context of a sheepfold, the shepherd often acted as the "door," lying across the entrance at night to protect the sheep. This imagery shows Jesus as both the **protector** and the **entry point** for His followers.
- As the Shepherd, He leads, provides for, and guides His flock. As the Door, He is the only means by which they can safely enter God's kingdom and find eternal security.

"All that ever came before me... are thieves and robbers" (John 10:8):

1. Thieves and Robbers:

- Jesus criticizes false religious leaders and self-proclaimed saviours who came before or alongside Him, offering salvation apart from God's truth.
- These "thieves" and "robbers" exploit people for personal gain or lead them astray from true faith. They are contrasted with Jesus, who selflessly gives His life for the sheep

(**John 10:11**). 11 I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep.

2. Sheep Did Not Hear Them:

- True believers (symbolized by the sheep) have a God-given discernment and do not follow the deceptive voices of false teachers. This reflects the intimate relationship between Jesus and His followers, who recognize His voice and respond to His call
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(**John 10:27**).

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me;

Jesus as the Door – Salvation and Protection:

1. Entrance to Salvation:

- Jesus being the "door" signifies that salvation is exclusively found through Him. Entering through this door involves faith in His death and resurrection, repentance from sin, and a relationship with Him.
- This exclusivity challenges the modern idea that all spiritual paths lead to God, making it clear that salvation is only available through Christ.

2. Exit from Bondage:

- Just as doors allow entry into safety, they also provide an exit from danger or captivity. Jesus offers freedom from sin, death, and spiritual bondage.
- This aligns with His promise in **John 8:36**: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

3. Spiritual Protection:

- By entering through Jesus, believers find protection from the predators of the soul—Satan, false teachers, and spiritual deception.
 - The sheepfold becomes a sanctuary where the flock is under the watchful care of the Good Shepherd.
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Jesus' Role Today:

1. The Only Way to Eternal Life:

- Jesus reiterates in this passage that He is the only bridge to God the Father. Any other route or philosophy promising salvation apart from Him is false.
- This stands in stark contrast to liberal religious views that promote inclusivity at the expense of truth. Jesus boldly states that He alone is the pathway to eternal life.

2. The Door to Transformation:

- Jesus is not only the door to salvation but also the door to abundant life (**John 10:10**). Through Him, believers can experience peace, joy, and purpose.
- He is the entrance into "good things" like spiritual blessings, and the exit from "bad things" like guilt, fear, and despair.

3. **Accessibility for All:**

- A door is universal in function—accessible to anyone willing to approach it. Jesus extends His invitation to all, saying, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (**John 10:9**).
 - This assures that salvation is available to anyone who believes, regardless of their past.
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Jesus and the World of Predators:

1. **Guarding Against Spiritual Predators:**

- The imagery of thieves and robbers reflects the spiritual dangers in the world, such as false doctrines, temptations, and destructive ideologies.
- Jesus positions Himself as the ultimate guardian, ensuring that those who enter His fold are safe from spiritual harm.

2. **Sacrificial Love:**

- Unlike thieves who come to "steal, kill, and destroy," Jesus, as the Good Shepherd, lays down His life for the sheep (**John 10:11**). This sacrificial love underscores His role as the only trustworthy shepherd and door.
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Practical Application for Believers:

1. **Entering the Door:**

- Faith and repentance are the keys to entering the door of salvation. Once inside, believers experience God's peace, provision, and guidance.

2. **Recognizing His Voice:**

- Just as sheep know their shepherd's voice, believers must cultivate a relationship with Jesus through prayer, scripture, and obedience to discern His guidance amidst competing voices.

3. **Living in the Fold:**

- Being part of Jesus' flock means enjoying the security and abundance He provides. It also includes trusting Him to lead, even when the path is unclear.

4. **Sharing the Door:**

- As followers of Christ, we are called to direct others to the door—proclaiming Jesus as the exclusive way to salvation and demonstrating His love through our lives.
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In summary, Jesus' declaration in John 10:7-8 reveals His dual role as Shepherd and Door, emphasizing His unique and exclusive authority to grant salvation and protection. This passage is a profound reminder of His love, sacrifice, and the security found only in Him.

I AM the Good Shepherd

In John 10:11 and 10:14, Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd." Notice He did not call Himself a shepherd. He described Himself as the good shepherd.

A good shepherd cares for His sheep no matter what. In biblical times, shepherds slept outside with their sheep year-round. They knew their sheep, and their sheep knew them.

According to Psalm 23, the shepherd provided for and protected the sheep. On occasions, the shepherd had to use his rod and staff to keep them in line and out of danger.

Today, we can say like the sheep, "The Lord is my Shepherd. I shall not want." That's because the shepherd provides for us by giving us everything we need, and He protects us and keeps us out of harm's way.

Psalm 23

- 1** The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2** He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.
- 3** He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4** Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
- 5** Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
- 6** Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Sheep are vulnerable to danger from wolves and other predators because they cannot run very fast, and they are not always smart enough to avoid danger. To care for them correctly and safely, sheep require a shepherd to take them to the fertile areas to graze, protect them from predators and other hazards, and keep them together so they don't stray from the group. This is the job of the shepherd. One can extend this idea and say that God does this for us, if we submit to His will.

Let us now explore Psalm 23 line by line and phrase by phrase:

Verse 1:

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

1. **"The Lord is my shepherd":**

- The imagery of God as a shepherd is deeply personal. A shepherd knows each sheep by name, cares for them individually, and ensures their well-being. This metaphor portrays God as a loving and attentive caregiver.
- In ancient Israel, shepherds were symbols of leadership, provision, and protection. By calling God a shepherd, the psalmist expresses trust in His leadership and provision.

2. **"I shall not want":**

- This reflects complete confidence in God's provision. It doesn't mean the absence of desires but rather the assurance that all needs—physical, emotional, and spiritual—will be met by God.
 - It conveys contentment, acknowledging that God provides what is truly necessary for life and peace.
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Verse 2:

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters."

1. **"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures":**

- Green pastures are a picture of abundance, nourishment, and peace. Sheep lie down only when they feel safe, fed, and free from fear. This reflects God's ability to provide a secure and abundant life for His people.
- It signifies rest, both physically and spiritually. God grants us peace and a place of renewal.

2. **"He leadeth me beside the still waters":**

- Still waters represent calmness and safety. Unlike rushing streams that might scare sheep, still waters provide a peaceful place to drink and refresh.
 - Spiritually, this symbolizes God's restorative care, guiding us to places of serenity and replenishment when life feels overwhelming.
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Verse 3:

"He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

1. **"He restoreth my soul":**

- Restoration implies healing and renewal. God revives the weary, mends the broken, and breathes life into what feels lifeless.
- The soul, the deepest part of a person, finds rejuvenation in God's presence. This restoration may come after physical exhaustion, emotional turmoil, or spiritual drift.

2. **"He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness":**

- Paths of righteousness are right living according to God's will. God leads His people in ways that reflect His character and bring glory to Him.
- This leadership is not coercive but gentle, aligning with the idea of a shepherd guiding sheep.

3. **"For his name's sake":**

- God's actions are consistent with His nature. He leads and restores not because we earn it but because it reflects His faithful and holy character.
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Verse 4:

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

1. **"The valley of the shadow of death":**
 - This represents life's darkest and most threatening moments. The "shadow" implies the nearness of danger or death but not its triumph.
 - The valley symbolises a low point, yet it's a temporary passage, not a permanent state.
 2. **"I will fear no evil":**
 - Despite being in perilous circumstances, the psalmist expresses unwavering trust in God's protection. The focus is not on the danger but on God's presence.
 3. **"For thou art with me":**
 - God's presence is the source of courage and peace. The assurance of His nearness transforms fear into confidence.
 4. **"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me":**
 - The **rod** is a symbol of protection, used by shepherds to defend their sheep from predators.
 - The **staff** is a tool of guidance, used to gently direct and rescue sheep. Both symbolize God's protective and guiding care.
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Verse 5:

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

1. **"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies":**
 - A table signifies abundance, honour, and celebration. The preparation of a table in the presence of enemies demonstrates God's power to bless His people even amid opposition.
 - It's a declaration of victory and assurance that God's provision is not hindered by adversaries.
2. **"Thou anointest my head with oil":**
 - Anointing was a sign of blessing, healing, and being set apart for a special purpose. In this context, it shows God's favour and care for the psalmist.
 - Oil also had practical uses for sheep, soothing wounds and protecting from pests, further emphasizing God's restorative care.
3. **"My cup runneth over":**
 - This image of an overflowing cup reflects abundance and the immeasurable blessings of God. It highlights the idea of not just having enough but having more than enough.

Verse 6:

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

1. **"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me":**
 - **Goodness** signifies God's blessings and provision.
 - **Mercy** represents His steadfast love and forgiveness. These qualities "follow" the psalmist, meaning they actively pursue and accompany him throughout life.
2. **"All the days of my life":**
 - This reflects the constancy of God's care. His blessings and presence are not temporary but endure throughout life's journey.
3. **"I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever":**
 - Dwelling in God's house signifies eternal fellowship and communion with Him. For the psalmist, this is both a present reality (living in God's presence) and a future hope (eternal life with God).
 - It conveys a sense of belonging, security, and peace in God's care.

Conclusion:

Psalm 23 is a profound declaration of trust in God's shepherd-like care. Each verse builds on the themes of provision, guidance, protection, abundance, and eternal hope. It offers comfort in the present and confidence in the future, reminding us of God's unwavering presence in every aspect of life.

I. IS THERE LIFE AFTER DEATH?

A. This is a question that has been asked by man from the beginning.

1. The book of Job,

at the news of the death of his ten children in a tragic accident, Job asked the question,

[Job 14:14] asks a profound question: *"If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."*

This verse captures Job's deep struggle with the nature of life, death, and what lies beyond. It provides us with an opportunity to explore these timeless questions from a faith perspective.

Job is speaking from a place of immense suffering, reflecting on the swiftness of life and the seeming finality of death. His question,

"If a man die, shall he live again?"

is one that has echoed through human history.

While Job doesn't yet have the full revelation of resurrection that we find later in Scripture, he clings to the hope of a "change"—a transformation that only God can bring.

The relationship between doubt and faith is dynamic and often misunderstood. While doubt is commonly seen as the opposite of faith, in reality, it can be an integral part of a believer's spiritual journey. **Doubt forces us to confront our beliefs**, wrestle with uncertainties, and ultimately deepen our faith as we seek answers and trust in God.

1. Doubt as a Catalyst for Growth

Doubt often arises in times of hardship or when life presents us with unanswerable questions, such as those posed by Job in the Bible. Job's struggle with the meaning of life and death, expressed in Job 14:14, shows that doubt is not a sign of weak faith but an honest response to life's challenges. It drives us to seek understanding and rely more deeply on God's wisdom.

2. Faith is Not the Absence of Doubt

Faith does not mean having all the answers. Rather, it is the decision to trust God despite unanswered questions. In moments of doubt, faith allows us to hold onto God's promises and character, even when circumstances seem to contradict them. Job, though filled with questions, waited on God's timing and trusted in His ultimate plan.

3. Biblical Examples of Doubt and Faith

The Bible gives us numerous examples of faithful individuals who wrestled with doubt. Thomas doubted Christ's resurrection until he saw the evidence, yet his faith afterward was unshakable. In Mark 9:24, a father seeking healing for his son cries out, *"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."* This demonstrates that faith and doubt can coexist as we grow in our

trust of God. he acknowledges his belief in Jesus but also admits the struggle of incomplete faith

4. Doubt Brings Us Closer to God

Rather than separating us from God, doubt can bring us closer to Him when we seek His guidance and understanding. Through prayer, study, and fellowship, doubt becomes an opportunity to reaffirm our faith and discover more about God's character.

Conclusion

Doubt is not a failure but a bridge to a deeper, more resilient faith. Like Job, we can bring our questions and uncertainties to God, knowing that He is patient and faithful. When we engage with our doubts through the lens of trust, they can lead us to a greater understanding of God's purpose

Job is not condemned for questioning; instead, his honest grappling with life's hardest questions invites us to do the same. We see that faith is not about having all the answers but trusting in God's plan, even when we cannot understand it fully.

We also find a fuller answer to Job's question in the New Testament. Jesus declares in **John 11:25**: *"I am the resurrection and the life."* Christ's resurrection is the ultimate assurance of life after death and the hope of eternal change.

2. There was no definite, definitive answer given to Job, just a hope. "I know that my redeemer liveth, and shall stand in the last days upon the earth, and though the worms destroy this body, in the flesh, I shall see God." **19:25-26**

This declaration by Job stands as one of the most profound statements of faith in the Bible, spoken amidst his intense suffering and despair. It reveals Job's unshakable trust in God's justice, his belief in a living Redeemer, and his hope for ultimate restoration.

1. The Redeemer Lives

Job's use of the word *Redeemer* (Hebrew: *Go'el*) refers to someone who acts as an advocate or rescuer, typically a family member responsible for protecting and restoring rights. In Job's context, this term transcends human relationships and points to God as the ultimate defender. Despite his pain and lack of immediate answers, Job affirms that his Redeemer is alive and active.

For Christians, this verse takes on even deeper significance, as it foreshadows Christ, who is our living Redeemer. Jesus stands as the advocate for humanity, fulfilling the role Job longed for by offering redemption and resurrection.

2. The Hope of Resurrection

Job's statement, *"though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God,"* is one of the earliest Scriptural glimpses of the hope of resurrection. Even as Job

contemplates physical death, he expresses confidence that he will one day see God face to face. This hope sustains him in the midst of suffering, offering a powerful perspective on the temporary nature of earthly trials.

3. Faith in God's Justice

Despite feeling abandoned and misunderstood by friends and family, Job holds onto the conviction that God's justice will prevail. His confidence that God will "stand at the latter day upon the earth" reflects a belief in divine judgment and vindication.

B. There really is not much teaching on the subject in the Old Testament.

Daniel 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Psalms 22:29 All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship; all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him; and none can keep alive his own soul.

Psalms 23:4 Yea, though **I walk through** the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

David spoke of **walking through** the valley of the shadow of death, not in the valley. At the end of the psalm he declared, "And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Psalms 49:15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for he shall receive me. Selah.

5. Not much upon which to base a doctrine of resurrection.

C. The age of philosophy was born and the greatest minds of men were engaged in a search for meaning to life, and the possibility of life after death. And the philosophers found no adequate answers for man.

D. It took the coming of Jesus to bring us insight and knowledge of the resurrection.

- **John 11:1-3** introduces the family: *"Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick."*

- The story unfolds with Lazarus's illness, Jesus's delayed arrival, and ultimately His miraculous act of raising Lazarus from the dead. This miracle demonstrates Jesus's power

over death and is a profound revelation of His identity as the "resurrection and the life" (**John 11:25-26**).

"I am the resurrection and the life, He that believeth on Me though he were dead yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die, believest thou this?"

3. Here is a straightforward, clear answer to the question of life after death.

4. There are two scriptural definitions for death:

- a. The separation of a man's consciousness from his body. In the scripture it says, "And he gave up the ghost."
- b. The separation of a man's consciousness from God.

- a. Jesus was referring to the second definition. If you live and believe in Him you will never be separated from God.

5. This is a radical claim made by Jesus, one that demands a decision. You either believe it or not.

- a. Jesus asked Martha, "Do you believe this?"
- b. The question is, "Do you believe that?"
- c. Martha answered in the affirmative. "Yes Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God."

6. It is now up to Jesus to prove the claim, so he went to the grave of Lazarus and commanded that the stone be rolled away from the entrance to the cave.

7. He then called Lazarus to come out.

II. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH?

A. It teaches that the real you is not your body, but your spirit.

- 1. That your body is just a tent in which your spirit lives.
- 2. Your body is the medium by which your spirit expresses you.
- 3. Your body is like a well-designed machine that has certain needs to keep it functioning properly. Much like the engine in your car that needs the oxygen, the fuel, the cooling system and the exhaust to keep it running.
 - a. It needs oxygen to fuel the cells. The whole marvelous design of the lungs and the heart, and the blood distribution system, bringing the oxygen to all the cells.
 - b. It needs moisture to keep it cool because the cells are burning up so much energy.
 - c. It needs food to nourish the cells so the design of the mouth, teeth, stomach and all the acids and chemicals to dissolve the food into the basic chemicals to be carried into the body to feed the cells.
 - d. It needs to dispose of the waste material, so the marvelous design of the bowels and bladder.
 - e. It needs sex to perpetuate the human race.
 - f. These needs all make their demand on us in the form of drives.

4. **Man is more than just a machine, he is a spirit.** He has a consciousness, the capacity to think and to know, to analyse and to choose.

- a. **The lower side of man's nature is the body,**
the mechanics of the body, the various body drives.

The higher side of man's nature is the spirit.

The capacity to know and understand and to worship the one who created the body with all of its marvelous capacities.

- b. We can choose to live after the lower or higher side of his nature.
- c. We can live after the flesh or after the spirit.

d. **To live after the flesh is spiritual death,** the separation of his consciousness from God.

e. To do this is to live life on a purely mechanical level. You go through the motions, but you actually abide in death. Your mind is controlled by the body needs, and thinks basically on the things of the flesh which are temporal and will perish. The result is worry, anxiety, lust, strife, and envy.

f. **To live after the spirit** is to live in fellowship with God the Creator, and your mind is on Him and the things that are eternal. The result is life, joy and peace.

5. To the one that lives and believes in Jesus Christ, there is life after death. It is eternal life. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." You really do not die, but only move out of this body, into a new body that Jesus has prepared for you. "In My Father's house are many mansions, I am going to prepare a place for you."

6. For those who do not believe in Jesus Christ, there is death after death.

[John 11:25]

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;

When Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life," He was claiming to be the source of both.

There is no resurrection apart from Christ, and there is no eternal life apart from Christ.

Beyond that, Jesus was also making a statement concerning His divine nature.

He does more than give life; He is life, and therefore death has no ultimate power over Him.

- Jesus confers this spiritual life on those who believe in Him,
- so that they share His triumph over death Believers in Jesus Christ will experience resurrection because, having the life Jesus gives, it is impossible for death to defeat them

Jesus' statement that He is the resurrection and the life provides a godly perspective on several spiritual matters.

Martha believed that the resurrection is an event; Jesus showed her (and us) that the resurrection is a **Person**.

Martha's knowledge of eternal life was an abstract idea; Jesus proved that knowledge of eternal life is a **personal relationship**.

Martha thought victory over death was a future expectation; Jesus corrects her, showing that victory is a **present reality**.

I AM the way, the truth, and the life

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me

On the last night before His betrayal and death, Jesus was preparing His disciples for the days ahead.

For over three years, these men had been following Jesus and learning from His teaching and example. They had placed their hopes in Him as the Messiah, the promised deliverer, yet they still didn't understand how He was going to accomplish that deliverance.

After the Last Supper, Jesus began speaking about His departure, which led to questions from His disciples.

In John 13:33, Jesus said,

Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

This prompted Peter to ask where He was going. Peter and the others did not understand that Jesus was speaking of His death and ascension to heaven. Jesus' response was, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later." Peter was still misunderstanding and declared that he would follow Jesus anywhere and even lay down His life if necessary.

As Jesus patiently continued to teach His disciples, He began speaking more plainly about heaven, describing the place He was going to prepare for them.

[John 14 2-3]

2: In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And when I go, I will prepare a place for you, and come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also.

Then Jesus said, "You know the way to the place where I am going" (verse 4).

Speaking for the others, Thomas said

14:5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

It was in answer to this question that Jesus uttered one of the seven famous “I am” statements.

14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

“**I am**” is a very intense way of referring to oneself. It would be comparable to saying, “I myself, and only I, am.”

The way – Jesus used the **definite article** to distinguish Himself as “the only way.” A way is a path or route, and the disciples had expressed their confusion about where He was going and how they could follow.

As He had told them from the beginning, Jesus was again telling them (and us) “follow me.” There is no other path to heaven, no other way to the Father.

The truth – Again Jesus used the definite article to emphasize Himself as “the only truth.” Jesus, as the incarnate Word of God (John 1:1) is the source of all truth.

The life – Jesus had just been telling His disciples about His impending death, and now He was claiming to be the source of all life.

Jesus declared that He was going to lay down His life for His sheep, and then take it back again. He spoke of His authority over life and death as being granted to Him by the Father.

“I Am,” the only path to heaven, the only true measure of righteousness, and the source of both physical and spiritual life. He was staking His claim as the very God of Creation, the Lord who blessed Abraham, and the Holy One who inhabits eternity.

He did this so the disciples would be able to face the dark days ahead and carry on the mission of declaring the gospel to the world. Of course, we know from Scripture that they still didn’t understand, and it took several visits from their risen Lord to shake them out of their disbelief. Once they understood the truth of His words, they became changed people, and the world has never been the same.

John 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman..

Firstly the phrase husbandman. Means - a person who cultivates the land; a farmer.

Jesus said, “I am the True Vine” to closest friends gathered around Him. It was only a short time before Judas would betray Him; in fact, Judas had already left to do his infamous deed (John 13:30).

Jesus was preparing the eleven men left for His pending crucifixion, His resurrection, and His subsequent departure for heaven. He had just told them that He would be leaving them (John 14:2). Knowing how disturbed they would feel, He gave them this lovely metaphor of the True Vine as one of His encouragements.

Jesus wanted His friends, not only those eleven, but those of all time, to know that He was not going to desert them, even though they would no longer enjoy His physical presence.

His living energy—His spiritual reality—would continue to nourish and sustain them just as the roots and trunk of a grape vine produce the energy that nourishes and sustains its branches while they develop their fruit.

Jesus wanted us to know that, even though we cannot see Him, we are as closely connected to Him as the branches of a vine are connected to its stem.

Our desire to know and love Him and the energy to serve Him will keep flowing into and through us as long as we “abide” in Him

Jesus went on to remove any misunderstanding about what He meant

[John15:5]

I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. Cut off from the trunk, a branch is dead.

Just as a vine’s branches rely on being connected to the trunk from which they receive their energy to bear fruit, Jesus’ disciples depend on being connected to Him for their spiritual life and the ability to serve Him effectively.

The fruit we produce is that of the Holy Spirit

Galatians

5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

5:23 Meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.

Our source of life and spiritual fruit is not in ourselves; it is outside us, in Christ Jesus.

We can live, live rightly, and serve Him effectively only if we are rightly connected to Him in a faith/love relationship.

Then Jesus underscored His point even more strongly by saying, “Apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

This illustration of the vine and branches is no thoughtless generality or careless simile. It is absolute, stark reality.

No believer can achieve anything of spiritual value independently of Christ Jesus. He also reminds us that there are some who are “in” Him who bear no fruit. But these are not, as some would suppose, true branches that just happen to be fruitless.

All true branches bear fruit. Just as we know a healthy, living tree by the good fruit it produces, so do we recognize fruitless branches as having no connection to the True Vine.

This is why Jesus tells us, **“By their fruit you will know them”**

[Matthew 7:24-28]

7:24 And, again, beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing; but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

7:25 Ye shall know them by their fruits; for do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

7:26 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

7:27 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

7:28 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Those who do not produce good fruit are cut away and burned. The reference here is to apostates, those who profess to know Christ but whose relationship to Him is insincere.

He neither called them nor elected them nor saved them nor sustains them. Eventually, the fruitless branches are identified as not belonging to the Vine and are removed for the sake of truth and the benefit of the other branches.

So, we depend on Jesus for everything, starting with our very life—

No one can serve God effectively until he is connected with Jesus Christ by faith

Jesus is our only connection with the God who gave life and who produces in us a fruitful life of righteousness and service.

1. I AM Bread of life

- a. **a person must take it inside of themselves—**

it is not enough to have the understanding of the word we need to have direct knowledge of him by transforming ourselves into his outward image through our actions so that our inner self can mirror him also.

He is the bread that satisfies our deepest longings.

2. I AM Light of the world

- a. The Light is evident to others by the good deeds we do in faith and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

He is the light that shines on the path of righteousness.

3. I AM the door of the sheepfold.

- a. As followers of Christ, Jesus is both our Shepherd and the Door to the sheepfold who provides for all our needs.
b. Knowing as he does that the world is full of predators whose sole intent is to destroy us

He is the door into the people of God.

4. I AM the Good Shepherd

- a. **We depend on Jesus to guide us but this can only happen if we truly listen**

He is the good Shepherd who cares for the people of God.

5. I AM Resurrection and the life

- a. Jesus is the resurrection
b. It is now not a far off event

He is our hope of a resurrection.

6. I AM the way, the truth, and the life

- a. The only way.
b. The source of all truth.
c. The source of all life.

He is the only way to God.

7. I AM the true vine

- a. The root of all nourishment and support

He is the vine through which we experience the power of God.