**“I Know I AM” – Week 1 (I AM)**

**September 16/17, 2017**

**Intro:** What’s up everybody?! Welcome to week 1 of our new series “I know I AM”. Over the next 5 weeks we are focusing on the attributes of God. Specifically the attributes: gracious, infinite, immanent, and transcendent. These are things that make God… God. Now, let’s make some moves and get into it

Names are a big deal. All names. Nicknames, the names your parents gave you, picking baby names, surnames… doesn’t matter what name it is, they are important. They identify us. Sometimes they define us, and if you have a really unfortunate name that’s rough… like if your parents’ favorite movie was The Goonies and they named you after their favorite character Chunk and now your friends make you do the truffle shuffle every time you come over to their house, that’s rough…

**(Leaders Note: Show picture or gif of Chunk doing the truffle shuffle.)**

Or what about your last name? Those didn’t even exist until sometime around 1300 AD. Then people over in the UK realized there were too many Geoffreys or Michaels or Elizabeths or Marys and they needed last names to identify each other. So people literally took on their profession or their town or some other random thing about them as a last name to identify themselves. So now there are people out there with the last name Green because their great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandpappy was wearing a green shirt on the day he had to pick his last name. In Asian cultures, last names are so important that they come first.

Maybe you have a nickname. Some like them, some don’t. Anyways, names are important. And tonight we need to understand 1 very specific name that everything in the world hinges upon. Watch your screens.

**(Leaders Note: Play “Prince of Egypt” video)**

**Scripture:** Exodus 3:13-15 says this: *“Then Moses said to God, If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me, what is his name? What shall I say to them? God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you.” God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.”*

So God reveals himself to Moses through a burning bush, and He begins to give Moses this incredible task of going back to Egypt, confronting Pharaoh, doing some public speaking, freeing the Jewish people from slavery, and leading them to the promised land, and Moses asks… “But, what’s your name?” Then God responds with what I could only imagine would be the most confusing answer ever. “I AM WHO I AM.” At first it sounds like your mom saying, “because I said so.” But this answer reveals so much about the character of God.

Like we said earlier we are tackling some of the attributes of God. The things that make Him God. These are things that make Him unique in comparison to anyone or anything that we might know, and they should change the way that we live. The first thing we need to understand is God’s name. All other attributes hinge upon knowing what God means when he calls himself “I AM”. Let’s start with one simple phrase…

**THP: God Is. Everyone say it… God Is.**

Now, we could follow that up with just about anything we wanted to. Each of us could come up with a few things that God is, but we aren’t describing God when we say that. When we say, “God Is”, we are literally claiming that God exists. Quick English lesson… the words “am” and “is” are forms of the word be. So, when God says his name is “I AM” he is saying that he exists, that he is the real deal, that he supersedes all things, that there is nothing in comparison. He makes clear that he is the real God, not one of the random gods or things that people in Egypt would have worshiped.

When we say ”God Is” or when we read the word “LORD” (put it on the screens) spelled out in all caps like this in scripture, which is in place of God’s name, we acknowledge that God is the creator of the universe and in control of everything whether we realize it or not.

**God’s name “I AM” implies that He is self-sufficient and self-existent. What I mean is that Everything That is Not God Depends Totally on God.** Think about this. There is nothing that has ever existed before God, because God’s existence does not have a beginning. And there is nothing that will exist after God, because God’s existence does not have an end. He is constant, and he is absolutely independent, so he needs nothing from anyone or anything to survive or to exist. Everything that is a part of creation exists entirely because he wanted it that way, the earth and everything on it, the sky, the waters, the sun, the stars, the moon, and the heavens. They all exist because God created them. They all came from him.

In comparison we look at ourselves… We need the water that he created, the animals that he created, the plants that he created, the sun that he created, the land that he created, the other people that he created, we need the heaven that he created, and we need him, because God is. He does and always will exist. We have a God that exists without need, because everything flows from him. He Is. When God tells Moses that his name is “I AM” he tells us that he is in everything, and that every other thing that exists flows from him. When we see that we should hear, “God Is.”

To complicate things for just a second, we actually believe that God Is, or that God exists in 3 forms. That there is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This is how God not only tells us that he is a personal God and that he exists outside of any time or space constraints, but he shows us and lets us experience his existence on a personal level.

Now stick with me here… we are going to simplify that last statement. **Jesus is I AM.**

In the New Testament, John 1:1-5 says,  *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”*

That passage says that at the very beginning before God created the heavens and the earth Jesus was already there. And just like God the Father, all things were made through him. That he was there for the creation of everything.  And that life is given through him.

Jesus makes 8 statements about himself in the book of John, and I believe that this is how he was trying to reveal himself to the Jewish people, and us, as the Son of God.

* John 6: I am the bread of life
* John 8 and 9: I am the light of the world
* John 8: before Abraham was, I am
* John 10: I am the door
* John 10: I am the good shepherd
* John 11: I am the resurrection and the life
* John 14: I am the way, the truth, and the life
* John 15: I am the true vine

He makes it clear that like God, his name is “I AM”. That God Is.

**Conclusion:** Names are important. So do you know I AM? Maybe you already know Jesus as your personal savior. If that is you, are you living like you know the Great I AM? Or maybe you have never taken a step to follow Jesus as your personal savior. And to you my question is, would you like to know I AM?

**(Leaders Note: Move into Gospel presentation)**

Prayer: If you are trusting in Jesus today you can express your newfound faith in Christ by simply repeating these words in your heart to God, ‘Dear God, (pause) thank you so much for sending your Son to die in my place for my sins. (pause) I believe Jesus died on the cross, was buried and rose again. (pause) I trust in him to forgive me of my sins. (pause) I receive this gift of eternal life through faith right now.  Help me to live in the power of your Holy Spirit, change me to be more like your son Jesus.  Amen.