

A decorative border in a light teal color frames the entire page. It features a grid of rectangular and diamond shapes. At the corners and midpoints of the sides are circular icons: a sunburst at the top center, a door at the top left, a cluster of grapes at the top right, a wavy line at the bottom left, a hand holding a heart at the bottom center, and an ear at the bottom right. The background is a dark teal color with small, light teal four-pointed stars scattered throughout.

I AM

an easter devotional

*six days of focus on the
Lord's character*

I AM

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introduction

the Lord introduces himself in this way in **exodus 3:13-14**:

¹³ then moyses 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?”

¹⁴ God said to moyses, “**I AM who I AM.**” and he said, “say this to the people of israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

then, in john’s gospel, Jesus makes 7 ‘I AM’ statements.
each of these powerful declarations emphasize aspects of his unfailing character.

this devotional is designed to be **a daily guide of preparation for easter** by journaling through the first 6 ‘I AM’ statements. on easter morning, we will gather to celebrate the 7th truth!

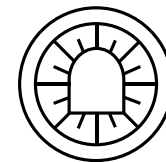
the coming days are designed to be simple enough for families, while challenging followers of Christ in all stages of their faith.

I AM: an easter devotional

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✧ I AM ✧ the bread of life

Jesus said to them, "i am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. —john 6:35

context: john 6:25-35

²⁵ when they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "rabbi, when did you come here?" ²⁶ Jesus answered them, "truly, truly, i say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. ²⁷ do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the son of man will give to you. for on him God the father has set his seal." ²⁸ then they said to him, "what must we do, to be doing the works of God?" ²⁹ Jesus answered them, "this is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." ³⁰ so they said to him, "then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? what work do you perform?" ³¹ our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'he gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³² Jesus then said to them, "truly, truly, i say to you, it was not moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ for the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." ³⁴ they said to him, "sir, give us this bread always." ³⁵ Jesus said to them, "**i am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.**"

truth:

*as the bread of life, Jesus is **everything** we need.*

something to consider:

there is a difference between needing something and the grace of simply having something. in other words, we don't really need a car, but it is a great grace to have one. we don't really need a vacation, a house, or even a friend...but, it is a gracious gift to be able to take a vacation, live in a home, or have a cherished friend.

ultimately, our true need is very simple: **we need a relationship with God.** without this relationship, we are forever lost and without hope. without this relationship, the debt of our sin remains on us! without this relationship, we have no purpose or freedom.

but through Christ, the bread of life, we have the one thing that we need:
a restored relationship with God!



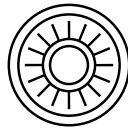
monday, april 3

think about the evidence of your life. what does the evidence reveal about your current "needs?" if you were to list out your top 5 biggest needs in order of how you prioritize, what would that list communicate?

if Jesus fully satisfies as the bread of life, then _____.
(complete this sentence with as many statements as possible)

prayer

*God, thank you for meeting my every need in your son Jesus.
help me be fully satisfied in you, while still hungering for more of you!
Lord, please reorder any pieces of my life that need a priority shift.
i need you Lord...you and you alone! amen.*



✧ I AM ✧
the light of the world

again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “i am the light of the world. whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” —john 8:12

context: john 8:12-14

¹² again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “i am the light of the world. whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” ¹³ so the pharisees said to him, “you are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true.” ¹⁴ Jesus answered, “even if i do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true, for i know where i came from and where i am going, but you do not know where i come from or where i am going.

truth:

as the light of the world, Jesus is the only source of eternal hope.

something to consider:

“whoever follows me will not walk in darkness.”

pause for a moment to celebrate the beauty of what Jesus is declaring!

trusting Jesus’ direction for our life comes with an overwhelming outcome and promise: **we will not walk in darkness.** in such a dark world, this is a tremendous truth.

john speaks of this again in **1 john 1:5-7:**

⁵ this is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. ⁶ if we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin.

Jesus invites us to come and follow him. **study the source of this invitation!** he is not an unfaithful teacher, an unloving tyrant, or a demanding dictator...no... he is the light of the world! this kind of hope is the bright beacon we need, both now and forevermore.

how does Christ being light affect your daily life?

what are some examples of when trusting Christ was challenging, but he led you faithfully out of darkness?

are there any areas of your life right now that you are tempted to submit to the darkness? what needs to happen to turn from that temptation and instead follow the light of Christ?

prayer

*God, thank you for saving me from the dark pit of my sin!
help me trust your leadership, your word, and the Holy Spirit.
Lord, please reveal any areas of darkness that are grabbing my attention...
and in your kindness, guide me to repentance!
i need your light, Lord. give me hope in you today. amen.*



✧ I AM ✧ the door

*i am the door. if anyone enters by me, he will be saved
and will go in and out and find pasture. —john 10:9*

context: john 10:7-10

⁷ so Jesus again said to them, “truly, truly, i say to you, i am the door of the sheep. ⁸ all who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ **i am the door. if anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.** ¹⁰ the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. i came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

truth:

as the door, Jesus is the way to encounter abundant life.

something to consider:

we have a decision to make: is Jesus telling the truth or is he a liar?

we make this determination about hundreds of things a day: advertisements, text messages, a diagnosis, gossip that is shared, motivational “nuggets” that come across our eyes, and on and on. we decide: is it true?

what is a recent example of something you’ve had to determine if it is true or not?

according to research, our ears hear an average of 20-30 thousand words in a 24-hour period. this is an overwhelming amount of information to constantly be filtering through: is it true or not? **our need for a singular source of faithful information is clear...**and God has been gracious to give it to us. this gift has not come in the form of a trustworthy news source, a smooth-talking leader, or christian radio...**the gift is his word!** it is living, active, and profitable!

let’s examine it:

in john 10:7-10, Jesus makes several bold proclamations. what are they?

why are these statements not popular in our culture even though they are so packed with truth?

Jesus says that he came to give abundant life. what are some specific ways you’ve experienced this kind of life through Christ?

if someone asks you “what is abundant life through Christ,” how would you answer?

Jesus says, “if anyone enters by me, he will be saved.”
not by serving all day.
not by obeying the laws of the land.
not by being a good person.
not by church attendance.
not by being around other christians.
though some of those things might be evidences of being transformed,
we are saved by grace alone through faith in Christ alone.
he alone saves us!

prayer

*God, thank you for inviting the sick through the door!
o God, thank you for coming to save the hurting, lost, and confused.
Lord, use my life to point to your ability to save.
break my heart for those who have turned their back on you.
open the eyes of the blind and those with a hard heart!
save, God, like never before. amen.*



✧ I AM ✧ the good shepherd

i am the good shepherd. the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
—john 10:11

context: john 10:11-15

¹¹ i am the good shepherd. the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

¹² he who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³ he flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴ i am the good shepherd. i know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵ just as the father knows me and i know the father; and i lay down my life for the sheep.

truth:

as the good shepherd, Jesus willingly lays down his life.

something to consider:

on the eve of good friday, let's ask the Lord for something specific:
God, please make me a worshiper today as i reflect on your sacrifice.

worship is a response to God's initiation.

God is _____, and we respond with reverence, awe, and adoration.

what if these 'I AM' statements became an immediate cause for worship?

what if the gravity of Jesus being a shepherd like no other brought you to your knees in humility and praise?

what if our worship was no longer hindered by our fears of being seen as radical in our love of God?

david says it this way in the 23rd psalm: "the Lord is my shepherd."
what a declaration! he is my shepherd...my leader...my king...and my delight!

is he your shepherd?

if so, rejoice and worship!

if not, turn to him now, and he is faithful to save.

remember this: the good shepherd died for sinners!

⁶ for while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

⁷ for one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. —romans 5:6-8

what stirs your heart to worship as you consider the truth in romans 5?

aside from his sacrifice, what makes Jesus a good shepherd?

Jesus says, "and my own know me." what about his character have you recently been reminded of that causes you to worship?

prayer

so far we've looked at:

I AM the bread of life.

I AM the light of the world.

I AM the door.

I AM the good shepherd.

take some moments to sit in each of these truths again.
pray through each of them...thanking the Lord for the beauty of his character!



✧ I AM ✧ the way, the truth, & the life

Jesus said to him, "i am the way, and the truth, and the life. no one comes to the father except through me." —john 14:6

context: john 14:1-6

¹ "let not your hearts be troubled. believe in God; believe also in me. ² in my father's house are many rooms. if it were not so, would i have told you that i go to prepare a place for you? ³ and if i go and prepare a place for you, i will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. ⁴ and you know the way to where i am going." ⁵ thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. how can we know the way?" ⁶ **Jesus said to him, "i am the way, and the truth, and the life. no one comes to the father except through me."**

truth:

as the way, the truth, & the life, Jesus is how we have access to the father.

something to consider:

as Jesus was dying an excruciating death on the cross, a life-altering scene takes place:

³⁷ and Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁸ and the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. ³⁹ and when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "truly this man was the son of God!" —**mark 15:37-39**

this curtain was not some ordinary household drape. the veil was likely 30-60 feet high, 30 feet wide, and 4 inches thick. this curtain separated the innermost part of the temple (the holy of holies) from the rest of the temple. only the high priest was allowed to enter this sacred space where God's presence resided, and he only entered once a year.

as the way, the truth, & the life dies, the cloth that separates the common person from the presence of God is torn! through Christ, now anyone can have access to the father! **Jesus is indeed the only way.**

celebrate this truth:

¹⁹ therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. —**hebrews 10:19-22**

now that we have access to God, what are some implications of this reality?
list as many as you can.

what is a recent victory you have experienced in spending time with the Lord?

though the curtain is now torn, is there anything that is currently preventing you from enjoying intimacy with God? (sit in this question...don't move too fast.)

prayer

*God, thank you for making a way to yourself through your son!
please give us a renewed sense of confidence to approach your throne.
o Lord, increase my desire...my hunger...my longing to be in your presence.
i need you Lord. you and you alone! amen.*



✧ I AM ✧
the true vine

i am the true vine, and my father is the vinedresser. —john 15:1

context: john 15:1-6

¹i am the true vine, and my father is the vinedresser. ²every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³already you are clean because of the word that i have spoken to you. ⁴abide in me, and i in you. as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵i am the vine; you are the branches. whoever abides in me and i in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶if anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

truth:

as the true vine, Jesus is the source of life and fruitfulness.

something to consider:

Jesus says, “apart from me you can do nothing.”
o to believe this truth!

to live in light of this belief is to _____. (example: seek and enjoy time with him)

as we prepare to celebrate the resurrection tomorrow, what would it look like to abide today?

to abide in him, it requires intentionality. he has provided the access...
he has lavished us in love...so, what will we do with this opportunity?

here are just a few ideas on making today the most worshipful saturday before easter you’ve ever experienced.

- 1. with the I AM statements in mind...with his character as a praise prompt... go on a prayer walk. in the midst of his creation, spend the walk thanking him for who he is! he is so worthy of our praise!
- 2. put together a worship playlist of six or seven songs. find a place where you can cry out with no fear of being seen or heard. if you need a few suggestions:

by kari jobe:
first love, embers, obsession

by jeremy riddle:
we crown you, reigning, all hail king Jesus
- 3. set aside an hour to patiently walk through **luke 22-23**. these chapters will take you through the journey to the cross. journal through it...asking yourself: **what does this text reveal about the character of God?**
- 4. take some time to reflect on what the Lord has done in your heart this week as we’ve walked through these I AM statements:
 - I AM the bread of life.
 - I AM the light of the world.
 - I AM the door.
 - I AM the good shepherd.
 - I AM the way, the truth, & the life.
 - I AM the true vine.

prayer

*God, thank you for being faithful!
thank you for being the sure and steady anchor for my soul.
as we prepare to celebrate the resurrection of your son,
please soften our hearts today. build an anticipation in us...a yearning!
help us believe today that apart from you we can do nothing.
guide us to abide in you and you alone! amen.*

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



loving him
& loving his.

