

God of the Word. When, in his spiritual blindness, Pontius Pilate asked, "What is truth?" (*Jn. 18:38*), he failed to see the Christ who said, "I AM the Truth."

Of course, since the entire fabric of creation is Christ's skilled 'handiwork' (see *Jn. 1:10; Col. 1:16*), He knows all the secrets of the universe. Scientists and philosophers try to discover the truth He encoded in creation. However, while researchers seek to know the 'how' of the universe, Christ knows both the 'how' and the 'why'.

In the Gospel, the most important 'hows' and 'whys' are answered: why do we suffer and die? How can we find salvation? The Aristotles, Darwins and Einsteins of the human race grope after ultimate truth like blind men. While they teach truth mixed with error, Christ remains the source of all truth and salvation. Thus the Church of God must faithfully proclaim Christ who said, "I AM the Truth." Here is truth for all, the wise and the simple. Unlike the proud philosopher, the simple

saint knows enough if he or she knows Christ!

I AM THE LIFE

Without Christ we stray and wander in the darkness of ignorance - however many degrees we might have! Our state is also one of spiritual and eternal death. As Christ alone brings a new sense of direction and true knowledge, He also gives us eternal life. On the cross, He gave His life that we might live. By His sacrifice, He dealt with sin, the cause of all our problems. Those who trust in Him who rose victorious over death will live eternally (*Jn. 3:16*). We live because He is 'the Life'. The new spiritual life of faith will reach its eternal climax in the life of resurrection!

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THE ROAD MAP

*CHRIST THE ONLY WAY TO
GOD*

**I AM the way, the truth, and the
life (*Jn. 14:6*)**

Introduction

This is probably the most familiar and most quoted of the 'I AMs'. Its simple 'triple' form really provides three distinct 'I AMs', each one confirming the truth of all the previous ones, viz. Christ is the unique revelation of God, the incomparable 'God-man'. This is true because Jesus shares the Father's *nature* and *name*. He is included in the 'I AM' of the burning bush (*Exod. 3:14*). He embodies Jehovah's name as the Angel-guide of Israel (*Exod. 23:20-1; 1*

Cor. 10:9). Furthermore, this 'I AM' seems to give a simple summary of the Christian Faith. Each part says something basic about the Gospel, explaining why Christ is the only saviour of the world. He covers all our needs. It is therefore the perfect antidote to multi-faith madness. In view of His claims, the Lord Jesus is not merely one of several options for religious people. He is *the way, the truth and the life*, not a way, a truth, a life. Christ's emphasis is absolute and final. There really is no alternative. Therefore He concludes 'No one comes to the Father except through me'.

I AM THE WAY

Not only did Christ teach us the way of God (*Lk. 20:21*) and the way to God (*Lk. 15:18*). He Himself is the way. Having spoken of His forthcoming departure - following the resurrection - to prepare our heavenly home (*14:1-4*), His statement was made in response to Thomas's question, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, and how can we know the way?"

The Lord Jesus only answers the second part of Thomas's question, as if to say "All you need to know is that I am the one who gets you there, so trust me." In doctrinal terms, Christ is saying that He - as 'God-man' - is the only mediator between God and the human race (*1 Tim. 2:5*). He is the bridge between heaven and earth. Through his incarnation, Jesus our Immanuel ('God with us', *Matt. 1:23*) reconciles us to God.

Through Christ's humanity, the Father is able to reach down to us; through Christ's divinity we are able to reach up to the Father. It is as if, on the cross, Christ's outstretched arms were bringing us together. The chasm created by sin was bridged on the cross! In personal terms, Christ is our guide (through the Holy Spirit indwelling us). If the Bible may be likened to a map, Jesus becomes our personal guide. Even with a good map like the Scriptures, we are like sheep 'prone to wander'. Thus we need Christ our good shepherd to guide us. Being 'in Christ' (*2 Cor. 5:17*) is

surely 'the Way' to being 'in heaven'. Updating the picture of Noah's ark, our journey to heaven may be likened to a space flight. Aboard the 'space-shuttle *Immanuel*', we are safely launched on the way to our heavenly destination. Seated in Him we will eventually be seated in heaven (*Eph. 2:6*). Thus the call of the Gospel is "Come to Christ, climb aboard!"

I AM THE TRUTH

Proclaiming the Gospel is proclaiming the Truth. Purity of doctrine is therefore essential (*Jude 3*). However, Christianity is more than doctrine. It is a person. That person is Christ. Therefore He said, "I AM the Truth." He is truth incarnate, personal truth. If the Scriptures are the *written* Word of God, Christ is the *personal* Word of God (*Jn. 1:1, 14*). As Christ is the author of the written Word (*Col. 3:16*), the written Word points us to the living Word.

Thus as the Gospel of Christ leads us to the Christ of the Gospel, so the Word of God leads us to the