

The Power of "I Am"

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- [0 : 00] Let us bow our heads in prayer. Our gracious Father in heaven, once more you have brought us to your house in the evening of your day.
- And we bless the eternal God for what we have already sung out of your word. We thank you, Heavenly Father, that your mercy is built forever.
- Oh, gracious God, how we praise thee for that. We do praise thee, gracious God, for your steadfast love.
- Having set your eye upon your people in a past eternity, you loved them to the very end.
- We thank you for that constant, continual, unwavering love. We bless thee for everlasting love.
- [1 : 19] We thank you, Heavenly Father, that you take the initiative regarding salvation. That you make the first move.
- that if we love you, the sole reason is because you first loved us.
- Blessed be your name. O gracious God, we thank you that eternity will be spent praising your name for your mercy, for your grace, for your faithfulness.
- We thank you that you have laid the burden, the responsibility, as it were, for salvation.
- As we have just been singing, you have laid it upon your chosen one. I, with my chosen one, have made a covenant graciously.
- [2 : 25] We thank you, Eternal God, that one was found that was totally dependable. When the human race blew their opportunity of being right with God, when they lost the opportunity of glory, we thank you that you laid and found a chosen one that was utterly reliable, who would be faithful unto death, even the death of the cross.
- May we see him tonight. May it please you to reveal him to us tonight. We pray for your Holy Spirit who is present amongst us tonight.
- We pray that you would grant that he would work this saving faith in our souls. We do not possess it by nature.
- So, gracious Father, bestow it upon us. Give it to us. Work it in us, we pray thee. May none of us grieve, quench, or resist your Holy Spirit.
- We do pray your blessing and your favour upon us, eternal one, once more. We pray, Heavenly Father, that you would bless your church.
- [4 : 03] We pray, Lord, that you would graciously encourage your servants in a dark and cloudy day. We pray that you would inspire them, that you would lead them, that you would bless them, strengthen them, we pray thee.
- May it please thee to raise up young, vital, vibrant men to proclaim the everlasting gospel.
- Oh, Heavenly Father, for your own name's sake, we pray. Call and prepare, men, to preach, to proclaim the gospel, to persuade sinners that Christ has to be embraced, has to be followed, has to be loved, has to be persevered in.

Graciously grant it. Holy God, we pray thee. Bless every faithful congregation, we pray thee. And we thank you again for so many faithful congregations in this part, in this island.

We bless the eternal God. But, O Lord, accept the Lord to build a house. The builders lose their pain. Accept the Lord the city keep.

[5 : 35] The watchmen watch in vain. Heavenly Father, be pleased to look down from heaven and bless every preacher of the gospel.

To bless all who preach against sin and who preach Christ crucified as the only remedy. Lay liberally to their hand, we pray thee.

So bless and prosper your church, gracious God. Bless every endeavor, we pray thee. And bless handmaidens to the gospel, also we pray thee.

We think of Bible translators. We pray for Bible societies. We pray for Bible distributors.

Those who give out the scriptures in the traffic lanes of life. We thank you for them and pray that they prosper and be blessed.

[6 : 37] We pray for organizations like the Christian Institute. We pray for Christian seminaries. We pray for Christian care homes and ask your blessing on each and every one eternal God.

We pray, O Lord, that you would raise up in the political realm those who would fear your name.

Those that would follow your word. We pray for those that would repair the breaches done in your kingdom. O heavenly Father, come down.

We pray thee. We ask, gracious God, that you would convert leaders, convert them in our royal family.

We pray thee. We have a new king. We have a new prime minister. We pray, Lord, that you'd speak to them, that you would influence them, that you'd impress them, that you would convict them, that you'd change them, regenerate them.

[7 : 47] We would pray also for their counselors, for their advisors, for their policy makers, for judges, and all who have responsible positions. Heavenly Father, look down from heaven.

We pray thee. We pray for the nations of the world, that no tragedy, that no warfare, that no calamity, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes.

Oh, Lord, we pray, and floods, Lord God, remember them. May it turn leaders to realize they are not really controlling things.

God in heaven is doing as he pleases, not merely in heaven, but as he pleases on earth. We ask, oh, Lord, that international leaders would realize that there is a God in heaven who is speaking loudly, but we are extremely deaf.

Oh, heavenly Father, we pray thee, open ears, open eyes, open understandings, turn feet to follow in your commandments.

[9 : 05] We pray, gracious Father, that you would need, you would remember the children of need, those who are seriously ill. We pray that you bless again, we pray, bless medication, treatment, therapies, surgeries, where available.

We pray, Lord, for those that are tempted and tried. We pray again, Father, that you would remember those who are going through testing, trying times.

Meet with them, Lord, assure them there is a God in heaven who calls himself the hearer and the answerer of prayer.

We pray, Lord, for our young people growing up in such an age of license, growing up when taxpayers' expense are paying for them to trifle and experiment with what your word forbids.

Preserve them and encourage parents who bring their children up in your fear. Encourage them and assure them and show them it is not a vain thing to call on your name.

[10 : 25] They do not in vain bring their children up in your fear. Come down, gracious God, we pray and speak.

And now, Lord, we ask as we turn to your word, singing it, reading it, trying to understand it, come down mightily, we pray.

If there are any careless, Christless, rebellious souls here, meet with them, speak to them, challenge them, convict them.

If there are any discouraged, graciously encourage them. If there are any walking in darkness and do not know where to go or what to do, looking for guidance, enlighten them, speak to them through your word.

Lord, we pray for any weak of the flock that may be here. Strengthen them, Lord, you strengthen them. We pray for hungry souls.

[11 : 37] Are there any hungry souls here? Lord, you feed them. Do not leave it to us. You feed the hungry soul.

Are there any wandering sheep? Heavenly Father, restore, return, recover.

Gracious Father, keep us all, each and every one without exception. And now, Lord, remember what we've forgotten to pray for.

Keep us in your love. Keep us in your fear. Wash all our sins away. For we pray only and all in Christ's name and for Christ's sake alone.

Amen. We'll continue to praise God by singing from Psalm 89. In the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 89, we sing verses marked 5 to 8.

[12 : 45] The praises of thy wonders, Lord, the heavens shall express, and in the congregation of saints, thy faithfulness.

Down to verse 8. O thou that art the Lord of hosts, what Lord in mightiness is like to thee, who compassed round art with thy faithfulness?

Psalm 89, verses 5amine payments." Psalm 89, what?

THIS OR empresa commodity starts by manifesting in the authority of life.

It is zone righteousness It shall pass every note.

[13 : 54] For heaven in heaven with the Lord and the Lord shall come here with the power among the saints of the Lord and the hour it will and the of the sins and shall come here and the of the of the of the of the the the the the the the the the

When my dear Jesus His Son Dew in with a mast from the Hood's■ Tonight on earth.

Now we'll turn in our Bibles to the Gospel of John, chapter 18.

The Gospel of John, chapter 18. And we'll read the first 18 verses. When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron, where was a garden into the which he entered and his disciples.

And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place, for Jesus oft times resorted thither with his disciples.

[17 : 00] Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

They answered, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye?

And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he.

[18 : 08] If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way. That the saying might be fulfilled, which he speak.

Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and smote the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear.

The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath.

The cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound him.

And led him away to Annas first. For he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

[19 : 27] And Simon Peter followed Jesus and so did another disciple. That disciple was known unto the high priest and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple which was known unto the high priest.

And spake unto her that kept the door and brought in Peter. Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?

He saith, I am not. And the servants and officers stood there who had made a fire of coals.

For it was cold. And they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself.

[20 : 32] May God bless to us the very reading of his own word. We'll sing once more to God's praise out of Psalm 89 in the Scottish Psalter.

This time we sing verses marked 13 to 16. Psalm 89 verses 13 to 16.

Thou hast an arm that's full of power. Thy hand is great in might. And thy right hand exceedingly exalted is in height.

Down to verse 16. They in thy name shall all the day rejoice exceedingly. And in thy righteousness shall the exalted be on high.

Psalm 89 verses 13 to 16. To God's praise. The vast of arm that's full of power.

[21 : 43] The vast of arm that's full of power. Thy power will stick in might. And thy right hand exceedingly.

And thy right hand exceedingly. And thy right hand exceedingly. In the earth's full of power. And it is the night.

The vast of power. Justice and justice. Justice and justice. Justice and justice. Of thy throne. I'll give the deadly place.

Oh, may this earthquakes... ? Thank you.

Then brightness on thy face so dear that the hope shall go.

[23 : 23] Then thy name shall all the glory rejoice at seeing thee.

How did thy right just yet shine?

The hope in your name. Let's turn in our Bibles to the passage of God's Word which we read in the Gospel of John chapter 18.

And let us just read again verses 8 to 11. The Gospel of John chapter 18 verses 8 to 11.

Jesus answered, The servant's name was Malchus.

[25 : 21] Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath. The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

These words in verse 11. The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

At one level, at one level, they are a stinging rebuke from the Saviour to Simon Peter.

Christ, the Saviour to pay for Simon Peter's sins.

And everyone who will be in heaven's sins. And here is Simon Peter trying to stop him going to the place called Calvary.

[26 : 26] Where there will be atonement once forever for all the sins of all who will be in heaven. At another level, of course, these words are one of the most reassuring words to exercised Christians.

The cup which my Father has given me. In the Bible, the term the cup stands for a person's lot.

A person's portion in life. It stands for the providence that someone has to go through.

But in the context of the gospel and in the context of redemption, the term cup usually refers to a cup of wrath.

We read of the cup of the fierceness of his wrath. We read of the cup of fury. We read of the cup of trembling.

[27 : 43] And we read of the cup of astonishment. And yet, on the other hand, in the context of the gospel and redemption, there's the cup of salvation.

Psalms 116, verse 13. We often sing it at communion times. I love salvation. Take the cup.

And here is Christ saying to Peter, the cup. The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

Why is Christ so determined to drink this cup? There are several answers we can give to that.

But I suppose the simplest one is simply this. Christ was absolutely determined to drink this cup of wrath so that we, Christians, could drink the cup of salvation.

[28 : 56] The cup of wrath which he drank is the cup of salvation which we must drink if we are going to have our sins forgiven.

That's a simple answer. He's determined to do this because he loves his people and he'll drink the cup.

But in another way we can see he was determined to drink this cup because he knew it was his Father's will that he should drink it. And he knew it was his Father's cup.

It was his Father's hands that were round the cup. In the last analysis, giving it to him to drink. So what else can the perfect Son do but drink the cup his Father's giving to him?

Well, we can also answer the question by saying was this not the whole purpose of him becoming human?

[30 : 11] You see, someone must pay for sin. Someone must die and atone for sin. And the only equivalent for the punishment of an innumerable number of sins of an innumerable number of people the only equivalent of all that was the death of the second person of the Godhead.

But God can't die. So how can it happen? Well, that's why Christ is called the wisdom of God.

The wisdom of God worked out a plan. How the God, the second person of the Godhead, the Godhead that can't die, how he could atone for the sins of an innumerable number of people.

If the second person becomes a human being, then his death, because it's the death, albeit a human death, it's the death of the second person of the Godhead.

That was the whole purpose of Christ coming into the world. The whole purpose of the incarnation. The whole reason why Christ was born so that he could die.

[31 : 47] It's astonishing. He's born so that he could die. If we look even behind it all, the reason of his determination to drink this cup, it was because of the love which he had for those he was suffering for.

I don't know how many times he must have said to himself, who are these people I'm going through all this agony for?

Who are they? They must be lovely people. They must be worth it. And not one of them is worth it.

Worms of the dust, that's what they are. But, as we noted when we looked at chapter 13, having begun to love them, he loved them to the end.

And here he is determined to drink the cup when the people he was drinking it for were trying to stop him. That everlasting love.

[33 : 07] I think I would have mentioned when speaking on that. Someone said, at the sound of the crunching of the forbidden fruit in the garden, from that moment, Christ began to come into the world and lay down his life.

with the sound of the crunching of the apple or whatever fruit it was. if you're a Christian, whatever you're going through, whatever providence is confusing you spiritually, if you're a Christian, never question Christ's love.

having loved them, having loved them, he loved them to the end. When he realized the agony he was to go through, he carried on loving them.

When he saw what worms of the dust they were like, he carried on loving them. And here he is, here's the demonstration, the cup which the Father has given me, will I not drink it?

He also knew, of course, that by him drinking the cup was the only way the devil could be conquered.

[34 : 36] Satan needs to be conquered. Or at least, his purposes on earth need to be conquered.

As we mentioned this morning, his design to have human beings in hell with him, that's conquered, that's defeated, that's overcome. Satan still lives.

Christ conquered Satan at the cross, but Satan's still active. Satan's still alive. Satan can still do much harm and damage.

But he's conquered. His plan of getting the whole human race in hell with him, that's conquered, that's beaten, that's all over.

It's passed, it's not going to happen. Some are going to be in glory. See and be among that some. Christ drinking the cup, Christ drinking the cup, delivered Christians, I trust you and me, from the power of darkness, and translating us into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

[35 : 55] Now, I really want to concentrate on verse 8 now. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he.

If therefore you seek me, let these go their way. There's three words there. a word of sanction, a word of submission, and a word of salvation.

And they all come from the mouth of the Saviour. A word of sanction. I have told you that I am he.

Is that the third or fourth time he mentions it? They've asked it before, you see, and they keep on asking it. I have told you that I am he. A commentator writing about these verses has headed the chapter the day they arrested God.

But who is arresting who? In the last analysis, is it not Christ who's arresting the soldiers who came to arrest them?

[37 : 23] I am he. In the original, two monosyllables. I am. With two monosyllables, Christ has put the soldiers on their backs.

Verse 6. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground. They say there was up to 600 soldiers.

I can't tell you if that's right or not. But they say there was a huge lot and they've got a special name for the band of soldiers. on their backs. Two monosyllables from the Son of God and are on their backs.

A word of sanction. A word of warning. The words, he said, I am he, are exactly the same words used for Jehovah God that God used to speak to Moses at the burning bush.

Isn't it amazing? There's these hundreds of soldiers lying on their backs on the earth with just two syllables that God Christ mentions.

[38 : 42] They're lying on their backs and he asks them again, whom seek you? They say on their backs, Jesus of Nazareth and they're on their backs powerless and they still want him.

What do we learn from that? What lessons there are there? Number one, the problem with unbelievers is not lack of evidence.

They're lying on their backs. It's not evidence that's the problem, lack of evidence that Jesus is the Son of God. It's hardness of heart.

There they are, powerless, but they're still angry, they're still one in Christ. solemn, isn't it? Lesson two, fear, calamity, reverses in providence, adversity, turns no one to God without the Holy Spirit.

Remember the Savior in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Remember what he said at the end. If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

[40 : 11] My friend, if someone rose from the dead, it might turn you out of your wits, God but it would not drive you out of your sins.

It needs a power of God. Fear, calamity, on its own, turns no one to God.

It needs the blessing of God. So whatever difficulty you might be going through, ask God for his Holy Spirit to bless it.

It's the Spirit's work alone that can turn us, change us, renew us. Put it another way or another lesson, identifying Christ even as the Son of God, that is not enough.

We need to worship the Son of God. Judas Iscariot identified him. He was the one in the Garden of Eden and said I'll point him out to you.

[41 : 26] I'll kiss him. He identified him. But you need to worship him. You need to love him.

Remember the devil said we know who you are. But it needs to affect our hearts. it needs to affect our lives to know that Jesus is the Son of God and indeed to know he's the only saviour.

It needs to draw us to him. It needs to make us want him and love him and stick with him. A word of sanction.

I've told you. I've told you already. I am he. Secondly in verse eight a word of submission.

If therefore you seek me. He's speaking to the soldiers albeit they're on their backs. Here he is helpless soldiers.

[42 : 35] He submits himself to the soldiers. He's going with them. But you see Christ realises they're but mere agents.

They're just the agents. In the last analysis you see no one took Jesus. Jesus surrendered himself to them.

How you read two or three times in the scriptures that Jesus escaped out of their hands. Why? Because his hour had not come.

But you see we read this morning verse in chapter 17 Father the hour has come. This is now the hour.

This is why I came into the world. The hour has come and he doesn't run away from the soldiers. He doesn't hide and escape because the hour has come.

[43 : 37] He submits himself to these helpless hopeless soldiers. Some lying on their backs if not all on their backs. He surrenders to them.

And he said to the three disciples that were he asked Peter, James and John remember in the garden he asked them to come with them and support them with prayer.

And what do they do? They fall asleep. and he used to waken them up and say right come on let's go and meet them. No one took his life from them.

He laid it down. The hour has come I'm surrendering myself. I'm submitting myself to the soldiers. But this word of submission is not just submission to the soldiers.

It's he was submitting himself to the covenant he made with his father. We mentioned in the morning how many times Christ said those whom thou has given me.

[44 : 47] He's doing all this in exchange for those whom thou has given me. He made a covenant with his father in a past eternity.

The father said here's all your children. They're yours. But here is the terms. They're yours.

If you go to the cross, if you're willing to become a human being, if you're willing to go through the agonies of Calvary, go through it for them.

That's the covenant. Are you willing? Are you willing to be the substitute? Do you love them that much that you'll go to Calvary for them?

Well, here it is. He gave himself up to the covenant that he made with his father. He said he agreed he would lay down his life for them.

[45 : 50] So that's what he's doing. The cup of wrath is a cup, is a covenant he agreed with his father. And there's a third element.

He didn't just submit himself to the soldiers, he didn't just submit himself to the covenant made with his father, but he was submitting himself to the cup of wrath and the justice of God.

We tend to think that hell is just a wee bit OTT for our sins, don't we?

That's because we think so little of God. You see, damage is measured by not what you do, but what you do it to. For example, you can get a nail and go along to a 2004 Austin mini full of rust and put a scrape along the side of the door.

Well, it's not going to devalue it very much, is it? But that same nail, go into a showroom and get a Rolls Royce silver cloud at 300,000 pounds and put that same nail and put it the same length of scrape on the side door.

[47 : 23] And how many thousand does that cost to replace it? It's not measured by what you do, it's measured by what you do to the object you're suffering. And we think little of sin because we think little of God.

He's facing the wrath and the justice of God. God is just. He's not unfair. And all Christ had to suffer wasn't unfair.

It was sad, it was horrific, but it's what justice required. And Christ gave himself up to whatever God's justice demanded as the equivalent of all the sins of all that will be in heaven, the punishment due to them.

He submitted himself. If therefore you seek me, here I am. Take me. I'm offering myself. But let's go on most importantly to the word of salvation.

go. If I have told you I'm the one, I am he, I am God, if therefore you seek me, let these go their way.

[48 : 54] You want me, here I am. I surrender myself to you. If you're taking me, if I'm surrendering myself to you, let these my disciples go.

That is the gospel in a nutshell. If you take me, these people go free. Do you understand that?

Are you here unsaved, unforgiven? Do you understand? Christ has done it all. He's taken the punishment. And either he dies or you die.

I've probably mentioned before about the foreign man that came to the session wanting to go to the Lord's table and he broke poor, poor English and they could not understand what he was saying till at the end he said, listen, listen, he die, me no die.

He die, me no die. friend, Christ died. You don't need to die. Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.

[50 : 19] It's what the Bible says and the Bible's infallible. It's the whole doctrine of substitution. if therefore you seek me and they sought him and they took him and they did their wish to him, therefore go free, go free.

if therefore you seek me, let these go their way.

Who are the these? Well, as we've mentioned already, as we mentioned this morning, as the whole of chapter 17 says, the men whom thou gavest me out of the world, that is the these.

That's who the these are, the men which God, the men and the women, the boys and the girls, whom God the Father gave to God the Son on agreement that he would pay for their sins at Calvary's cross.

But then we rightly ask about who are these. Who are those whom the Father has given? How do we know them? Well, in the parallel passage, we've been looking through the whole of John, but there's another three chapters going through the same things from slightly different angles.

[52 : 03] And we are told in Luke's Gospel, chapter 22, verse 28, Jesus said to the disciples in that last private discourse with them before they died, he said, you are those who have continued with me in my temptations and trials.

He said to them, you have been loyal to me, you've stuck with me through all my trials and temptations. That's the same people that he said, if you take me, let these go their way.

Well, are you among them? Are you sticking with Jesus? Are you going to stick with them?

Faith in Christ does not make a person sinless so that he never sins again. But faith in Christ makes them persevere with Christ and in Christ.

Are you among them? Are you among them? Do you love Christ? Do you love Christ?
That's a mark.

[53 : 35] You cannot have faith in Christ without having love in Christ. And if you have love for Christ, your faith must be in him. But the evidence of that is, if you love me, keep my commandments.

Are you persevering with Christ? Are you sticking with him? Hebrews 11.1, faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen.

And you read Hebrews chapter 11. By faith Abraham did this. By faith Noah did that.

By faith Moses did this. And so on and so on. And what you learn is this. Faith is not for dodging problems. Just read Hebrews 11.

Faith is for enduring problems. Going through problems. Saying look I don't know why God allows this to happen to me.

[54 : 41] I don't know what God is saying to me. But I still love him. I'm still sticking with God. I'm still going to follow his son. I still love him for going to the cross for me.

That's faith. those who have continued with him in his trials. Are you still with Christ?

Are you still for Christ? Do you still love Christ? No one, no one perishes who trusts in him.

Even though you can't understand, even though you don't know, although you're in the most awful confusion, salvation. No one perishes who depends on Christ for salvation.

Last word, if Christ is so determined, was so determined to take the cup of wrath, will you not take the cup of salvation?

[55 : 46] If you're here tonight, if you're listening to me tonight, and you're not a Christian, if Christ was so determined to take the cup of wrath, will you not take freely the cup of salvation?

May God, the Holy Spirit, make his word effectual to every one of us. Let's bow our heads in prayer.

Father in heaven, be pleased to take the things of Christ and make them ours tonight here in your house.

Show us your Son in all his love, in all his beauty, in all his power, in all his integrity. Bind us all up in the bundle of life, for we pray only in Christ's name, for Christ's sake.

Amen. We'll conclude our service by singing once more from Psalm 89 in the Scottish Psalter.

[57 : 06] Psalm 89, verse 18. Four verses to verse 22. Psalm 89, verse 18. For God is our defense, and he to us the safety bring.

The Holy One of Israel is our Almighty King. We go down to verse 21. With whom my hand shall establish be, mine arm shall make him strong.

On him the foe shall not exact, nor son of mischief wrong. Psalm 89, verses 18 to 22. 22.

22.mat The Holy One of Israel, the Holy One of Israel, the Son of the King, and vision to thy Holy One, thou set thy hand upon a strong one laid, and all that both can draw your little love above,

I will the chosen one, in given light of angel high, I'll set what I have to be, and with my glory, O my King, I knew my Lord, O my King, I knew my Lord, and to see, O my King, I'll establish me, my arm shall be strong,

[60 : 23] All in the foe shall not exact, On Him, though shall not exact, Nor am I, amistia, roar.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and forevermore.

Amen.