

I Am...Jesus (An Advent Series)

Welcome to the I Am...Jesus Advent Devotional Challenge! I am so glad that you are here! I love this season, the time leading up to Christmas day! It is beautiful and exciting, but sometimes it can be distracting. Maybe it is an abundance of activities or maybe it is a reminder that you've lost someone close to you. Often, December becomes far less about Jesus and His birth than it is about these other distractions.

This Advent series is designed to help remind us to realign our focus a couple of times a week to Jesus, the Reason for the season! The birth of Jesus was prophesied for centuries before He arrived on earth. So, who was this Jesus? This year, we will study the identity of Jesus through His own statements: the I Am statements of Jesus.

If you haven't already, come on over and join me at [Facebook.com/devoinaction](https://www.facebook.com/devoinaction) or follow @DevolnAction on Instagram for discussion and sharing on each day's devotional and Bible art journaling. This is going to be fun!

Here's what you have in your printable ebook:

#1: Bread of Life - John 6:35 (Alternate scriptures: John 6:51, Deuteronomy 8:3, Leviticus 24:5-8, Matthew 26:26)

#2: Light of the World - John 8:12 (Alternate scriptures: John 1:4, 3:19, 9:5, 12:46, 1 John 2:8, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Psalm 27:1, Isaiah 60:19)

#3: Door (Gate) of the Sheep - John 10:7 (Alternate scriptures: Matthew 7:7, Isaiah 22:22, Revelation 3:7-8, Psalm 24:7)

#4: Good Shepherd - John 10:11 (Alternate scriptures: Psalm 23:11, Isaiah 40:11, Ezekiel 34:11,15, 1 Peter 2:25, Hebrews 13:20)

#5: Resurrection and the Life - John 11:25 (Alternate scriptures: John 1:4, Galatians 2:20, 1 John 5:11-12, Colossians 3:4)

#6: The Way, the Truth, and the Life - John 14:6 (Alternate scriptures: Psalm 139:23-24, Proverbs 10:29, Psalm 18:30, 2 Samuel 22:31, Isaiah 26:8)

#7: True Vine - John 15:1 (Alternate scriptures: Ephesians 4:13-15, 2 Peter 3:18, Isaiah 53:2, Isaiah 11:1)

#8: Merry Christmas! - Luke 2 (Alternate scriptures: Isaiah 7:14, Micah 5:2, Isaiah 9:6-7, Genesis 12:3, Matthew 1:22-23, Matthew 2:1, John 1:1)

Each day you will receive an email with a reminder of the devotional and link to a video of the Bible art journaling using the printable. Read the devotional, follow the action step, use the printable to do the Bible art journaling (if you want), and share on the Facebook group! We would love to see pics of your journaling or even just hear your thoughts about the scripture.

I hope you choose to join me this advent season!

Blessings,



Amanda

#1: Bread of Life - John 6:35 (Alternate scriptures: John 6:51, Deuteronomy 8:3, Leviticus 24:5-8, Matthew 26:26)

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"

Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

So they asked him, "What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

"Sir," they said, "always give us this bread."

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. John 6:25-35

I Am...Jesus #1: Bread of Life - John 6:35

This passage comes right after Jesus does a miracle and feeds thousands of people by blessing a miniscule amount of bread and fish, breaking it, and passing it out until everyone in the crowd had their fill. Jesus then goes up to the mountain to pray by Himself. The disciples hop in their boat and start heading across the sea. Jesus scares them like crazy when he comes walking across the water to join them in the boat. These guys are getting to see miracle after miracle!

The People Follow

The people follow Jesus around to the other side of the sea and when the boat comes ashore, Jesus sees the motive of their hearts. They have come to follow him because He satisfied their physical hunger. He provided for them without a high grocery bill. By staying and listening to Him, their needs were met. It was a completely natural reaction for these people who saw the miracle and were given free food to want to follow Jesus around.

However, Jesus calls them out on it. He says that they should not be seeking bread that spoils but bread that will endure to eternal life. What?!? The people are a little confused. They want to know what they have to do to be worthy of this bread.

Prove it...

Jesus debunks their thought that they have to do works in order to get this miraculous bread. He says that they have to believe. Instead of exercising faith, they ask Him to do a miracle so they can see that He is who He says He is. They want proof.

Oddly, they have already had the miracle of being fed, but maybe they weren't really paying attention. They were focused on what they were getting rather than what Jesus was doing. They quote the Bible to Jesus (Who actually is the Word of God - go figure!) and tell Him that Moses gave their ancestors manna the whole time they were in the wilderness.

But Moses himself told the people that God gave them the manna and that they would need something more:

And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. Deuteronomy 8:3

Bread of Life

Jesus corrects them yet again - it is not Moses who provides bread from heaven, but God. God has provided Bread from heaven. Jesus says, "I am the Bread of Life."

Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." John 6:32

This statement had to remind them of several things in the Old Testament. Manna in the wilderness. Sacred bread in the tabernacle and then in the temple. The unleavened bread in the Passover. God has used bread as an illustration of His power and provision for His people over and over again. Yet, Jesus says that He is the best kind of bread that God has ever provided. He is the Bread that gives Life.

"You shall take fine flour and bake twelve loaves from it; two tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf. And you shall set them in two piles, six in a pile, on the table of pure gold before the LORD. And you shall put pure frankincense on each pile, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion as a food offering to the LORD. Every Sabbath day Aaron shall arrange it before the LORD regularly; it is from the people of Israel as a covenant forever." Leviticus 24:5-8

The covenant between God and His people is baked in bread and set before the Lord as an offering each week. They see that picture every Sabbath in the temple. Now, Jesus has come as the incarnation of this covenant - the Bread of Life! If they believe in Him, they will not be hungry or thirsty again. Their spiritual hunger and thirst will be satisfied. Eternal life is ours when we believe in the Bread of Life.

The Best Bread

Do you have special bread type things that your family always eats at Christmas time? We always have cinnamon rolls on Christmas morning. For lunch or dinner, we always have what we call baby-butt rolls.

We take two frozen rolls and place them in each muffin tin cup. They expand and rise until they look like cute little baby bums. Yum! So good! However, this advent season, let's make sure we are more focused on the Bread of Life than the bread on the table.

Action Step:

This season, as we break bread with friends family, let's take time to remember that the delicious holiday food that goes into our stomachs is not the focus. The Bread of Life that satisfies our spirits is the reason for Christmas gatherings and celebrations. As we sit by ourselves, spending time in God's Word and creating in His presence, we are partaking of this miraculous bread from heaven, God's gift to us.

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." John 6:51

Come gather together on social media! Head on over to the Facebook page @DevoinAction (<https://www.facebook.com/devoinaction>) and introduce yourself to us! Share your thoughts about today's devotional or post a pic of your journaling under **#1: Bread of Life - John 6:35** or post on Instagram and tag me @devoinaction!

THEN, comment on someone else's post to encourage and build them up in the Lord! Let's not just share our art but also the heart of what God is speaking to us with one another.

Prayer:

Dear God, Help us remember to feed our souls during this season, not just our physical bodies. Christmas goodies are wonderful, but we are far more grateful for the Bread of Life. We believe in Jesus! Thank You for sending Him to us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Don't miss out on all the freebies!

For access to the free printables to use in Bible art journaling, click here:
<https://www.devotioninaction.com/resourcelibrary/>

Your email from me has the password for access!

If you are not receiving emails from me, find out how to get free access [HERE!](#)

#2: Light of the World - John 8:12 (Alternate scriptures: John 1:4, 3:19, 9:5, 12:46, 1 John 2:8, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Psalm 27:1, Isaiah 60:19)

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12

I Am...Jesus #2: Light of the World - John 8:12

I find the timing of this "I am" statement of Jesus very interesting. It comes right after the story of the adulterous woman. The scribes and pharisees drag her to Jesus and want Him to stone her because she was caught in adultery. Jesus does something curious. He bends down and writes something on the ground. Then, he stands up and says, "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." At this, the accusers all leave.

Light Shines in Darkness

Jesus looks at the woman and asks her where her accusers are. Who is accusing her? The woman replies that no one is condemning her.

And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more." John 8:11

The very next verse is when Jesus declares:

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Set free from darkness

People who follow Jesus don't have to stay in the darkness - trapped in sin. They can go and sin no more *because* He is the Light of the World. The ability to change their lives does not reside within themselves but in the Light that shines on them as they follow Jesus.

"I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness." John 12:46

Clinging to the darkness

However, most people won't choose to follow and walk in the light. As people, our tendency is to love the dark even while we know the light is better.

And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. John 3:19

Clinging to the darkness, we stay in our works of evil, but we don't have to. Jesus came to bring us life. Eternal life. Abundant life.

In him was life, and the life was the light of men. John 1:4

The words of the prophet

This announcement from Jesus that He is the Light of the World surely brought to mind the words of Isaiah.

*The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?*

*The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1*

*The sun shall be no more
your light by day,
nor for brightness shall the moon
give you light;
but the LORD will be your everlasting light,
and your God will be your glory. Isaiah 60:19*

Everlasting Light

The coming Lord would be the everlasting Light. The Messiah will shine brighter than the sun and the moon. The prophet had said so centuries before. Then, along comes Jesus...claiming His rightful place as the Light of the World. People had to make choice: either believe and follow the Light or cling to the darkness and push Him away.

The True Light

We have the same choice today. The true Light is shining. He is the reason we do not have to fear. He is our Light, our Salvation, our Stronghold. He shines in our hearts.

At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. 1 John 2:8

Shine in our hearts

Like the woman got literally in the act of her sin, we can turn away from the darkness, go and sin no more.

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6

God sent His Son to shine the Light of the World into our hearts. This Christmas, as the light shine on our homes and trees and garland, remember the Light of the World that shines in our hearts.

Action Step:

There are lights everywhere in this season. White lights. Colored lights. Candles. LED's. Light bulbs. Beautiful twinkling lights. Our family likes to drive around and look at Christmas lights together. It is one of our favorite traditions.

This season, as we admire the lights on homes and businesses, I pray we all keep Jesus, the Light of the World as the focus of our lives.

Head on over to Facebook @DevoinAction (<https://www.facebook.com/devoinaction>) and share your thoughts about today's devotional or post a pic of your journaling under **#2: Light of the World - John 8:12** or post on Instagram and tag me @devoinaction!

THEN, encourage at least one other person today!

Prayer:

Dear God, Thank you for the Light that sets us free from darkness if we will believe. Help me to keep my focus on the true Light this year. In Jesus' name, amen.

Don't miss out on all the freebies!

If you are not receiving emails from me, find out how to get free access [HERE!](#)

#3: Door (Gate) of the Sheep - John 10:7 (Alternate scriptures: Matthew 7:7, Isaiah 22:22, Revelation 3:7-8, Psalm 24:7)

So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. John 10:7-10

I Am...Jesus #3: Door (Gate) of the Sheep - John 10:7

When I was growing up, I heard this scripture, but I never understood it. Recently, it became very special to me. I saw a video by a pastor that travels to Israel often and studies Jewish culture and history to understand the context that the people around Jesus would have understood as they heard His words and watched His actions.

One Opening

I finally understood this scripture when this pastor explained it. The area where the sheep were kept was blocked off by rock walls or natural barriers. One opening was left. The shepherd would sit in the opening, literally becoming the door of the sheep. No danger got in to harm the flock because the shepherd was in the opening to protect them. The sheep are kept safe and in community with one another because the shepherd guards them.

Jesus said, "I am the door of the sheep."

The Door

He is the way we get into the family of God. He is our door into eternal life. He is the door that is our guard and provision.

And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. Isaiah 22:22

Again, we see Jesus declaring Himself to be something that would have resonated with the people of His time because they understood the job of a shepherd and because they were familiar with the words of the prophet Isaiah.

No one is able to shut

Understanding the lens through which the first century Jews would have viewed the actions and words of Jesus can provide depth and clarity in our comprehension of who Jesus truly is. He told us Himself. He is the door that no one can shut.

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: 'The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.

"I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.'" Revelation 3:7-8

Seek and Knock

Jesus is the door. When we believe and knock at the door, He opens to us. He lets us in and we become a part of the flock.

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.” Matthew 7:7-8

When we seek Him, He does not hide from us. We will be found by Him. We knock and the Door will be opened.

Reminders

During December, there are often gatherings and parties and dinners. I mean, I typically avoid them if at all possible given my admitted introvert tendencies, but sometimes it is not possible. As we knock on doors to gain entrance to the homes of family and friends and office Christmas parties and church events, may it bring to mind the Door of the Sheep.

Action Step:

Picture a door you will walk through this season. Now, I want you to imagine that instead of that door, Jesus is there, filling the doorway. His presence gives access. His presence guards from danger. His presence means provision inside. Let's thank Him for being our Door!

Come on over to the Facebook group @DevoInAction (<https://www.facebook.com/devoinaction>) and share your thoughts about today's devotional or post a pic of your journaling under **#3: Door (Gate) of the Sheep** - John 10:7 or post on Instagram and tag me @devoinaction! What do you see God doing in your life?

Prayer:

Dear God, Thank you for establishing Jesus as the Door of the Sheep. We, as sheep, are very grateful for His presence in that entryway. This season, remind us whenever we see a door, that Jesus IS our Door. In Jesus' name, amen.

Don't miss out on all the freebies!

If you don't have access yet to the Resource Library, find out how to get free access [HERE!](#)

#4: Good Shepherd - John 10:11 (Alternate scriptures: Psalm 23:1, Isaiah 40:11, Ezekiel 34:11,15, 1 Peter 2:25, Hebrews 13:20)

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 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. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. John 10-15

I Am...Jesus #4: Good Shepherd - John 10:11

The last post about Jesus being the Door of the sheep flows right into this one about Him being the Good Shepherd. Part of being the Good Shepherd is sitting in that opening, being the Door, but it is not the only aspect of being the Good Shepherd.

Who the shepherd is

Shepherding is not a career option with which most of us are super familiar. The best shepherd owns a flock of sheep. He is not just hired to take care of them. They are his sheep. Because they are his, he is invested in their welfare.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. Psalm 23:1

What the shepherd does

The shepherd guides his sheep to provision, leading them to a pasture so they have what they need. The shepherd knows each one of his sheep. He has memorized their characteristics, personalities, and scars. He can see at an instant if one is missing. He speaks to them and they know his voice, trusting him to direct them and care for them. The shepherd sees danger coming for his sheep and places himself between the danger and the sheep, even to the point of laying down his life for them.

I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice. Ezekiel 34:15-16

The Good Shepherd Foretold

The prophet Isaiah even told how Jesus would be our Shepherd in Isaiah 40 centuries before the Messiah would be born on earth.

*He will tend his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms;
he will carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead those that are with young. Isaiah 40:11*

That verse shows how much Jesus cares for those who are vulnerable. You don't have to be strong and perfect to be loved by the Good Shepherd. He cares for those who are inexperienced and at risk. He carries us in His arms.

Tender yet fierce

That picture of a gentle and kind Shepherd contrasts sharply with the Shepherd who raises up to His full height of power between the sheep and the snarling, snapping wolves.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 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. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. John 10-15

Strength steps into danger and guards those who are at risk. Power is making a choice to lay down your own life that others might live. Jesus is the example of someone who is both fiercely powerful and yet tender and caring.

He goes after the lost sheep

We, as sheep, sometimes stray away from the herd. We go off alone, stepping out of the protection and care of the shepherd. The good shepherd comes after those who have strayed away. His shepherd's staff is not a weapon of punishment but a tool that demonstrates love. He can use it to pull us back to Himself and direct us in safe paths.

For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1 Peter 2:25

Action Step:

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21

Let's thank God today for sending the Good Shepherd who does all of these things we have read. Let's ask Him to equip us so that we can do His will. He is ready and waiting to protect, care for, provide for, equip and even retrieve us when we stray. Spend some time with the Good Shepherd.

Check in at the Facebook group @DevoInAction (<https://www.facebook.com/devoinaction>) and share your thoughts about today's devotional or post a pic of your journaling under **#4: Good Shepherd - John 10:11** or post on Instagram and tag me @devoinaction!

Prayer:

Dear God, We are so grateful that You sent Jesus, our Good Shepherd. We submit to Your rod and staff which guides us back to You when we stray. Thank you for Your protection and provision for us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Don't miss out on all the freebies!

For access to the free printables to use in Bible art journaling, click here:

<https://www.devotioninaction.com/resourcelibrary/>

If you don't have access yet to the Resource Library, find out how to get free access [HERE!](#)