

## THE 'I AM'S' OF JESUS

### Part 5

## I AM THE WAY

*Based on the book: "The Great I Am's of Jesus."*

*By Anthony Coniaris, Light and Life Publications*

There once was a person who was driving in a large city he had never been to before. The driver just couldn't get out of the city, was doing loops and was losing himself in dead-end streets. And so he pulled in to a service station to ask for directions. The attendant said to him *"Drive five blocks to the first red light, and turn right. Then, when you get to a fork in the road, bear left until you get to a corner store with a yellow front. Then you turn south on the next corner and go two kilometres until you get to Motorway 16. You turn left onto this road and follow this road until it leads you to the freeway."* The driver thanked the attendant, but he only got to the second turn, before he forgot which way to turn. This time the lost driver asked directions from another driver as he stopped at a red light. The other driver simply said, *"I know the way. In fact, I am going that way myself. I'll take you there. Just follow me."*

In a very real sense, this man **was the way** to the lost driver, exactly as Jesus Christ is the path for us. When one of his disciples, Thomas, once expressed concern that they did not know where they were going, Jesus answered with one his famous 'I Ams'. He said, **"I am the way - ΕΓΩ ΕΙΜΙ Η ΟΔΟΣ."** (John 14:6) **I am the path.** I am the road to your destination. Jesus does not merely give us directions and instructions on how to reach our destination in life. He takes us by the hand and leads us. We cannot lose our way - not if we place our hand in his and walk with him and let him lead us. He will lead us not into the dead end streets of confusion and pointlessness, but into the very presence of that which is the source and essence of life and existence.

During the Second World War, a native of Malaysia was helping a prisoner of war escape through the jungle to the coast. The two were stumbling through the virtually impenetrable jungle with no sign of human life and no track to follow.

The soldier, somewhat weary and scared, finally turned to the guide and asked, *“Are you sure this is the way?”* The native replied in broken English, *“There is no way... I am the way.”* When we have Christ God in our life, we may still be entangled in the jungle of life, but we are by no means lost.

The ancient Vikings carried crows in a cage on a platform on the masts of their ships. To this day, this platform is called the crow’s nest. When lost, these early mariners would release one of the birds and follow it as it flew towards the nearest land. The crow showed the way when all else failed.

In the melting-pot, syncretistic world we live in, we often hear, “all religions are the same.” “they are all different paths, same destination.” “we are all climbing the same mountain, just following different paths.” But our response to that is to ask the simple question, “But **do** all religions and ideologies and belief systems say the same thing?” “Have you studied all of them? Have you put them next to each other and compared? **Do** they actually say the same thing?” Yes, there is common ground, especially when it comes to morality, but there are vast differences in other areas of belief. If you look at a satellite map and zoom in on a mountain or a forest, yes, you will see many paths. But zoom in closer, and you will see that some paths go somewhere, other paths go somewhere else and some paths go nowhere. Not all paths lead to the same destination.

But, put aside religions. The same applies to other belief systems or ideologies which may not be religions by name, but are followed religiously by non-religious people. They may be a path in life, but they have an entirely different interest, an entirely different destination. Some of them are even good for humanity: education, science, political freedom, secularism. And we have all these things... but why are we still not happy? We are educated, but why do we still fail at relationships? We have freedom, but why do we still seek to dominate? We have a secular society, no need for religion, but why do we increasingly have more depression, more relationship breakdowns, more selfishness, more greed, more drugs, more alcohol, more gambling... why are we not fulfilled? Why are we not happy? What is missing?

Jesus Christ did not say “I am one of many ways.” He said “I am the Way - εγώ ειμί η οδός.” I am the path of life. The ancient Greeks taught that people should follow the middle path - την μεσαία οδό. We Greek Orthodox Christians teach that we should follow the trodden path - την πεπατημένη οδό. The tried and tested path. And that is the path of Christ, the path of self-less love.

There was once a case where a band of bank-robbers tried to bust their way into a safe. They pounded and drilled and peeled away layers of steel. And they finally got in. But instead of a fortune, inside they found only twenty-five dollars. They had wasted their time and ran off empty-handed. The next day, the bankers discovered the busted up safe. To their surprise, the little envelope they, the bankers, had always kept near the door of the safe containing the actual combination numbers... that envelope was still there!

And this is what God has done too. He has left the combination in plain sight. “I am the Way.” he said. Yet how many people multiply difficulties for themselves by looking for the combination to true life everywhere else, except in Christ?

Next week, we shall continue with part 6 of our series on the “I AMs of Jesus” and we shall be talking about “I am the Truth” - Εγώ ειμί η αλήθεια. You can catch up with the series on Twitter. Follow us @stgeorgerosebay.

*This is part 5 of a series of sermons on the I AMs of Jesus and which will run until Easter.*

*The series is available on Twitter @stgeorgerosebay*

*Sermon delivered by Fr Gerasimos Koutsouras*

*St George Church, Rose Bay, Australia*

*Sunday, 17th of March 2013*