

July 9, 2023

“I AM” – Jesus / week 1 - “I AM he”

Franchesca Renderos, 22, was working as a waitress on an ordinary Wednesday night in Houston when she was stunned by grace.

At one of her tables sat Doug Brown, a mortgage broker trying to attract the business of six real estate agents. When Franchesca came up to the table, Doug asked, "What would be the most special tip you could have? A pair of shoes, a purse?" She responded, "No, I need a car."

Doug looked around his table at the six female real estate agents and said, "If you will give me your business, I will give this girl a car." The six agreed, so he turned to Franchesca and said, "Okay, you get a car."

She said, "Sure. What do you want to drink?"

She didn't believe it until an hour later when a brand new silver Mitsubishi Lancer pulled up, and Doug Brown gave her the keys . Franchesca could hardly contain herself. *"Is this happening? What do I say? What do I do?"* Doug Brown gave her the words: "You say, 'These keys are mine.'"

Source: Houston Waitress Gets Tip of Lifetime: New Car, TheNewOrleansChannel.com (1-20-04)

Today I want to tell you about how a PERFECT STRANGER gave a far bigger gift to a woman who needed far more than a car.

Today we begin a series about some very specific claims Jesus made about himself that began with his unusual use of the phrase, “I AM”. We will be looking at these from the Gospel of John.

John 4:6–9 (NIV) Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. 7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” 8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) 9 The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

Today is about how this woman moved from STRANGER DANGER to believing this PERFECT STRANGER was who he claimed to be. This doesn’t come till the very end of their conversation.

Jesus first step was to disarm the internal STRANGER DANGER alarm going off inside of her. How did he do it? It did not bother HIM to ask HER for a drink. THIS WAS VERY UNUSUAL IN THEIR CULTURE. She was a Samaritan, and she was a woman.

- No *Jewish* man in her day would have asked her for help like this even if they were thirsty... and Jesus did not appear to be that thirsty! Hot yes, tired yes, thirsty yes, but THAT thirsty, No!
- Nevertheless, she was disarmed, and it started a conversation, something Jewish traditions would have frowned upon.

John 4:10 (NIV) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

Jesus knows who he is. Jesus knows what he came to do, and Jesus knows what he came to give....

He came to give it to her. He came to give it to us. What did he just say?

If you come to know him, and learn about what he is willing to give, you will ask him for it.

I. Jesus invites us to **ASK** for the **GIFT** of **GOD**

So, what is this gift he is talking about?

- It's more than "getting to heaven" by forgiveness.
- It's the gift that keeps on giving.
- **In John chapter 3** the "gift of God" is God's own Son resulting in eternal life for "whoever" comes to know and believe in him. (John 3:16).
- **In this chapter, John 4**, Jesus claims to be able to give a gift, and he COMPARES IT to WATER that we can ask for THAT he is willing to give, a drink that will *become within us a spring of water welling up to eternal life*.
- **Later in John chapter 7**, Jesus explains that the living water is the Holy Spirit.
- None of this is KNOWN yet to the Samaritan woman

II. If we **KNEW ...**, we would **ASK**

John 4:10 (NIV) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

This is true for everyone! Unless we know Jesus, we won't ask for the gift he came to bring.

This is logical and this is clear: Only if you get to know him and trust him will you want his gift or ask for it.

Of course the Samaritan woman still has no idea **who Jesus** is or **what he is talking about**.

John 4:11–14 (NIV) "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?" ¹³ Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the

water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

Jesus is making a comparison with the water he asked her and something FAR BETTER. He is speaking metaphorically, as he often does. He is also comparing types of thirsts! Jesus knows how people often drink from a **worldly well** that **promises to satisfy but doesn't**.

In his book *The Screwtape Letters*, C.S. Lewis calls this “*an ever-increasing craving for an ever-diminishing pleasure*”

When drinking from any worldly well, there is a clever deception and trap built in. **It's like drinking the devil's Kool-Aid.** It tastes good but it includes a clever deception manipulating pleasure sensors God has created, and twisting them out of bounds in some way to take us further from God and God's design for us.

John 4:15 (NIV) The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

Jesus gives an odd reply.

John 4:16 (NIV) He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.

Why did he change the subject? He could clinch the deal here. Jesus knows that she's not yet ready. He needs to raise her FAITH.

John 4:17–18 (NIV) “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

There must have been an awkward PAUSE as soon as he said it. After the pause, she attempts recovery with this statement.

John 4:19 (NIV) “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet.

I used to think, “*Duh!, You think?*” But now I believe she is quite insightful. I'd be wondering if this was some kind of trick. But She is getting to know more about this PERFECT STRANGER.

Nevertheless, she feels more exposed and ashamed, wishing she could hide. So, what does she do? She changes the subject.

John 4:20 (NIV) ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

Later, she changes the subject again.

John 4:25 (NIV) The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

It was her attempt to shut the conversation down. It didn't work that way.

John 4:26 (NIV) Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.”

THERE'S our title today: “I Am He”. He who? This is undeniably clear– I am the Messiah!

She is ready to believe him but WHY?

BECAUSE of what else she has come to KNOW about him:

- He spoke to her like no man ever did.
- He was KIND.
- He treated her with RESPECT.
- He really cared about her, as if she was someone that mattered!
- AND HE already KNEW everything about her!! He already knew her shame!
- **THIS is important:** He knew her sinfulness before he offered to give her living water. He was inviting her to ask for a gift he was willing to give anyway!
- IT's the gift that can help her and every sinner who comes to know him enough to ask for what he is willing to give.

THEN—just when she wants to continue the conversation—Jesus' disciples show up. They appear to be surprised that Jesus was talking to her. So, she left. **She left so quickly she left her water jar!**

But she left CHANGED! One encounter with Jesus had changed her!

The woman who had avoided people, went and began talking everywhere to the townspeople about the PERFECT STRANGER.

John 4:29 (NIV) “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?”

I. Jesus invites us to ASK for the GIFT of GOD

II. If we KNEW (HIM), we would ASK

III. If we asked, Jesus would GIVE

If you are not enjoying this living water that comes from Jesus ...

- Either You don't really know the giver...
- Or you haven't asked for the gift...
- Or you stopped drinking what he has given, in favor of something else.

Sin is what you do when your heart is not satisfied with God.

John Piper, *Future Grace* (1995) p.9

Jesus goes out of his way to reach sinners like you and me!!

**If you knew who Jesus is and the gift he gives...
you would ask him for it!!!**

Christians listen to me, this is not exclusively an evangelistic message: If you continue to drink the Devil's Kool-Aid, Jesus will feel like a stranger to you rather than like someone you know intimately. Why? You are treating him as a stranger.

If you continue to drink the Devil's Kool-Aid, it's like you are a bystander listening to Jesus tell her, *whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst*, AND you interrupt him saying, *"Don't listen to him. His living water doesn't really satisfy. You will be thirsty again."*

You are believing a lie and treating Jesus like a total stranger. WHEN HAVE BEEN DECEIVED, AND WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN DECEIVED YOU DON'T KNOW IT. Turn to the one you can trust! Everything he said is true, and the truth will set you free. He truly satisfies your thirst... with no hangover, no side effects, no regrets.

Here are your keys to your brand new life? (*dangle keys*) Do you want them?

Talk It Over

I Am-Jesus
"I Am He"

SMALL TALK

1. Have you ever had a significant encounter with a stranger that impacted your life in some way?

VIEWPOINT

2. **READ John 4:1-26** In baseball, 3 strikes and you are out. What strikes did this woman have against her? What was unusual about the way Jesus treated her?
3. What does Jesus say about the gift he can give? (4:10; 13-14) What is this gift? (Consider John 7:37-39)
4. What "worship wars" existed between Jews and Samaritans? What worship wars exist in churches today? How does Jesus' answer help? (4:21-24)
5. What did Jesus reveal about himself, and how did he reveal it?

GETTING PERSONAL

6. What difference does it make for us today what Jesus revealed about himself and what he gives to those who know him and ask?
7. How satisfied are you with the "living water"? Is there any reason you might be dehydrated?