

Gunston Bible Church
Pastor Dave
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I am the bread of life

Blessed Broken Given

Good morning Gunston, this morning we're going to start a new series built around the seven I am statements by Jesus. We are going to try to explore these seven "I Am" statements of Jesus and see how these statements will shed more light on the person of Jesus and why he **IMPACTS** our lives.

Here is just a sample of what we are going to get into during the next seven sermons:

- ✓ I am the **bread of life**: Tells us that Jesus is the one who **spiritually** sustains us.
- ✓ I am the **light of the world**: We learn that through him we gain spiritual understanding and **wisdom** for living.
- ✓ I am the **gate**: Explains that he has given us free and **unlimited access** to his kingdom.
- ✓ I am the **Good Shephard**: Shows how he did this by paying our **entrance fee** with his life.
- ✓ I am the **Resurrection and the life**: We learn that whether we die or are taken out when he returns that we are guaranteed our **eternal life** with God.
- ✓ I am the **way the truth and the life**: Explains that he is the **only one** who can do this for us
- ✓ I am the **Vine**: Reveals that for the balance of our lives here on earth the things we do in his strength, out of gratitude for what he has done for us, are the **only things** that matter.

Let us get started by looking at the two words are "**I Am**".

God said those two words to Moses in the burning bush episode.

During that time Israel was in bondage in Egypt.

God spoke to Moses from a burning bush.

God told Moses that he was the man to lead the Israelites out of their bondage in Egypt.

And when Moses requested that God give him a name to tell the Israelites who had sent him we read in...

Exodus 3:14-15 *"God said to Moses, **"I AM WHO I AM.** This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you. This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation."*

Now, fast forward to the New Testament. In John 8, Jesus was having a not-so friendly conversation with certain Jews.

John 8:52-59, *"At this they exclaimed, now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that whoever obeys your word will never taste death. ⁵³ Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are? ⁵⁴ Jesus replied, if I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. ⁵⁵ Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and obey his word. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad. ⁵⁷ You are not yet fifty years old, they said to him, and you have seen Abraham! ⁵⁸ Very truly I tell you, Jesus answered, before Abraham was born, **I am!** ⁵⁹ At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds."*

Why a violent reaction? Because to their mind, Jesus committed blasphemy. Jesus said “**I Am**” and they knew that that was God’s name.

In effect, they knew that Jesus was claiming to be God but to them Jesus was just a mere man. And what is the punishment for blasphemy? Death by stoning.

The Book of John reveals some more of the divine nature of Jesus and how through his I Am statements he can lead you out of bondage from sin and death just like he led his people out of bondage from Egypt thousands of years ago.

This morning we’re going to look at the first “**I Am**” statement of Jesus that John mentions – **I am the Bread of Life**.

Everywhere you go in the world, there is some version of bread.

- ✓ The French have baguettes and croissants
- ✓ Latin countries have tortillas
- ✓ Indians have naan
- ✓ Chinese cultures have doughy buns
- ✓ And Americans have sliced white bread.

It is the building block of a meal, a staple in every diet. It was this way in the world of the Bible.

Bread was a common, ordinary meal.

It is the very commonness of bread that makes it the perfect metaphor for our lives.

John 6:35 says, *“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.”*

Luke records three stories in his gospel about Jesus taking bread in His hands, **blessing** it, **breaking** it, and **giving** it.

Bread is also used as a symbol,

- ✓ Bread from Heaven as a sign of Gods provisions.
- ✓ Jesus fed the multitudes with loaves of Bread
- ✓ Jesus referred to himself as the Bread of Life
- ✓ The night he was to be handed over to be crucified he took bread **blessed** it **broke** it and **gave** it as a picture of his body giving it for the life of the world.

Luke 9:10-12, ¹⁰ *On their return the apostles told him all that they had done. And he took them and withdrew apart to a town called Bethsaida.* ¹¹ *When the crowds learned it, they followed him, and he welcomed them and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing.* ¹² *Now the day began to wear away, and the twelve came and said to him, “Send the crowd away to go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and get provisions, for we are here in a desolate place.”*

We observe several things here.

First of all, the needs of the people are overwhelming.

Secondly, resources are in short supply.

The impulse to send the people away is not entirely uncompassionate; it is also practical.

If we're honest, this is how we feel when we see the needs of our friends, family, and neighbors. It all just seems too much.

Turn on the news, and we're bombarded by more tragedies and hardships. Scroll through Facebook, and you see the difficult doctor's diagnoses or unexpected losses that people you know are dealing with.

Your own life is no walk in the park, so sometimes just like the disciples we would like to say, Send them away...

But Jesus wouldn't let them—or us—off the hook.

Luke 9:13-17

¹³ But he said to them, “You give them something to eat.” They said, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people.”¹⁴ For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, “Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each.”¹⁵ And they did so, and had them all sit down. ¹⁶ And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a **blessing** over them. Then he **broke** the loaves and **gave** them to the disciples to set before the crowd. ¹⁷ And they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over was picked up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

Those three actions changed the whole story.

A “**desolate place**” became a place of **abundance**.

A **desert** became a **banquet**.

A story that began with “**not enough**” ended with there being **more than enough**.

This is what happens when Jesus takes something that we think is just ordinary—bread!—and blesses it, breaks it, and gives it.

I think those three words can change the story for you.

Jesus took bread, blessed it by giving thanks to the Father, broke it, and gave it.

Bread in the hands of Jesus is blessed, broken, and given. And so it is for you. Your life, as common and ordinary as bread, in Jesus's hands becomes something more.

1. In his hands, your life becomes **blessed**.

When we are physically hungry our stomachs growl.

But if we will open our ears to the sounds of the world around us I believe we will hear the growling of people's souls.

The people of Jesus' day experienced this spiritual hunger.

At the beginning of this chapter, Jesus had fed the crowd of 5,000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fish. And now they have come to Jesus wanting more food –their physical hunger was only temporarily satisfied. And Jesus told them in

John 6:27 *"Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you..."*

Jesus knew that although these people had a real need for physical nourishment, their need for spiritual nourishment was even **greater**.

Isn't that evident in the world today?

Can you hear the cries of people who are living their lives without Christ?

Can you hear their souls crying out for something to eat?

Can you see the moral degradation of our world and see that it directly corresponds to the need for spiritual fulfillment?

It might seem like too simplistic of an answer--but I believe it is because they have a **spiritual void** in their lives.

There is a God sized hole in their lives that only God can fill.

Getting back to the topic this blessedness is not about accumulating or achieving more things it is about filling that hole in your life and by having your **true identity** recovered and your true calling revealed.

It is all about getting a new name.

Once you were a sinner; now you are a saint.

2. In his hands, your life becomes broken.

People are crying out to the world for help to fill the spiritual void in their lives, again dealing with that God sized hole that only he can fill.

But the advice the world has to give only makes the void grow larger we will deal with that in a few moments.

There are several different kinds of brokenness, there is a brokenness that comes from our frailty—our finiteness, our limitations.

There is a brokenness that comes from our own failure—our sin, our participation in the spread of wickedness.

There is a brokenness that is the pain of living in a fallen world—our suffering and pain.

All these kinds of brokenness can be placed in Jesus's hands.

Psalm 147:3, *“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”*

When you place the brokenness of your failure, frailty, and suffering in Jesus's hands, you become open to the grace of God.

This brokenness is not about wallowing in your sin or fixating on how miserable you are. To be broken is to allow the grace of God to humble you, to lead you into vulnerability with others, and to transform your heart. Brokenness becomes openness in the hands of Jesus.

When it is not given to Jesus it can never satisfy or fulfill your desire, it cannot sustain you.

Secular agencies and governments have been somewhat successful in feeding hungry people during times of natural disaster or crisis different agencies are quick to come to the rescue.

However, when it comes to spiritual hunger secular agencies and individuals have done more harm than good.

Those outside of Christ seem to believe that all human problems can be solved through psychology and psychiatric treatments.

In today's world psychology doesn't try to fix problems as much as it tries to give approval to them.

Up until just a few years ago Psychiatric journals looked down upon homosexuality, treating it as a sexual disorder now it is considered acceptable behavior.

Have the facts changed?

Have there been studies that have changed their minds?

Has some evidence come to light they didn't have before?

No, the facts about homosexuality have remained the same.

However, in our world it has become politically incorrect to point a finger and say that behavior is wrong." And **psychology** now points its finger and says, that behavior is acceptable as long as it's acceptable to you."

It seems that our world is not trying to help people fill their **spiritual void** as much as it is trying to fulfill their need for **self-acceptance**. And that goes totally against the teaching of the scriptures.

Our world is so caught up in the psychological realm that we find we are beginning to accept concepts that are totally foreign to the Bible.

Examples:

- ✓ **Human nature** is basically good, the Bible says it is **inherently evil**.
- ✓ People have the **answers** to their problems inside them--the Bible says we can find the **answers** to our problems through Jesus and His Word.
- ✓ The key to **understanding** and correcting a person's attitudes and actions lies somewhere in his past--the Bible teaches that **understanding** will come when our past is forgiven.
- ✓ An Individual's problems are the result of what **someone else** has done to them--the Bible says our problems are a result of **what we** have done to ourselves.
- ✓ Human problems can be purely **psychological in nature**, unrelated to any spiritual condition--the Word of God shows us that almost all of our problems are **spiritual in nature**.
- ✓ Deep-seated problems can be solved only by **professional counselors** using therapy--the Bible teaches that the Word of God and the **Holy Spirit** is what we truly need to counsel us.

Ok now we have talked about the bread (ourselves) being blessed and being broken and now finally being...

3. In his hands, your life becomes **given**.

Martin Luther once said, *“I have tried to keep things in my hands and lost them all, but what I have given into God's hands I still possess.”*

Saintes we need to realize that we are not here for ourselves, it is much more than that, life with Jesus is deeply personal but never meant to be a secret or private.

The openness that comes from being broken is meant to lead you outward to share the Good news with others who are also broken.

There is a hunger in the world around us, a deep groan for something more.

When your life becomes blessed and broken in Jesus's hands, He gives you out for the life of the world.

You become the way others find the **Bread of Life**.

But to be that way, you must first experience the blessing and embrace the **brokenness**—only then will you be consecrated to bring change in powerful ways.

1 Peter 1:3, *“Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to His great mercy, He has **given** us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”*

Jesus is trying to tell you, me, all of us here today, *“Don't hold back--take all of me, allow me to work in your life.”*

How do you partake of Jesus?

There are three simple steps. As simple as ABC.

Admit that you're a sinner who needs forgiveness.

Believe in your heart that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose from the dead to give you eternal life.

Confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior of your life.

Jesus is the Bread of Life. And the good news is, this bread will never run out--It will last forever.

He is enough for you today and forever.