

CRAVE

PREFACE

What do you crave?

Ice cream? A clean house? Popularity or status? Contentment? A new car? The latest technology?

At different times in life you have probably had cravings, maybe for a food item, but perhaps for something much bigger or harder to obtain. Yet, there are cravings that come from an even deeper place; these are the innermost longings and aches of our souls. The craving for more out of life, for trustworthy leadership, for deeper understanding of God, for safety and protection. The craving for soul satisfaction, for joy, and for inclusion and access. The Gospel of John records seven I AM statements Jesus made about Himself. Each one addresses one of these soul cravings and reveals that Jesus is the answer, the ultimate fulfillment we crave.

In these I AM statements, Jesus is drawing a clear connection to His deity. The Greek words used by Jesus connect to the name God revealed to Moses at the burning bush, "I AM who I AM" (**Exodus 3:14**).¹ He is both the God of the Old Testament and the New Testament. Throughout the lessons you will see Jesus draw on themes presented in the Old Testament as He reveals truth about Himself.

When Jesus says He is I AM, He is saying He is the model for being. His statements emphasize His life-giving character, whether it's life here on earth or eternal life with Him. **Acts 17:25, 28** says, ... *He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. ... For in him we live and move and have our being.*²

¹ In the Greek language when someone wanted to say "I am" they would typically use the word *eimi*. However, in all seven of Jesus' I AM statements He added another word, *egō*, a personal Greek pronoun. By saying *egō eimi*, Jesus was literally saying "I, I am." In the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, when God revealed His full name to Moses in the burning bush, the words *egō eimi* were used. By using this same phrasing, Jesus was making a reference to the sacred name God used in Exodus and was thereby claiming His deity. Sproul, R. C. *Meeting Jesus: The "I Am" Sayings of Jesus*. The Banner of Truth Trust, 2019. 3

² NIV

Each of Jesus' I AM statements give us a unique picture of Jesus. Together they offer a more complete understanding of who He is and how He satisfies every need, longing, ache and craving, in every aspect of life.

As you encounter Jesus in each statement, may you be deeply satisfied by what He is offering you.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

The Four W's:

You can decide, both individually and as a group, how you want to use each of the four sections in these lessons. You can choose to use all of them or you can focus in on a specific one or two for a given week. Prayerfully ask Holy Spirit to help guide you as you utilize this study.



Welcome: This section will introduce you to the topic of the lesson and help you enter into the theme of the lesson by answering an opening question. It can be used both personally and as an ice-breaker during your group time.



Word: This section will help you engage with the biblical text through questions to answer and discuss with your group.



Worship: After you have looked at God's Word, this section will guide you into a time of worship. While traditionally worship involves singing, the expanded understanding of worship in this study also includes spending time showing love, adoration and praise to God in various ways. These lessons will provide a time for meaningful worship both personally and as a group.



Witness: Believers are called to reflect Christ in the world. This section will help you engage with how to be a witness from week to week, reflecting Christ to people who don't know Him and/or building up the faith of those who do know Christ.

Conversation Prompts:

Sometimes starting spiritual conversations can seem overwhelming or even scary. Each week, at the end of the lesson, there will be a handful of conversation prompts that you could prayerfully consider using as you have everyday conversations with people throughout the week. They are intended to be simple and accessible questions that can help lead you into a spiritual conversation.

Sermon Notes Page:

The lessons in this study follow along with the "Crave" sermon series at Salem Alliance Church. At the end of each lesson there is a blank page to write sermon notes if you so choose. This allows you to further engage with the Scripture and topic.

Summary Page:

At the end of the guide you will find a page with space to write a take-away from each lesson. Hopefully adding to that page will help keep what Holy Spirit is teaching you fresh in your mind as you continue your journey with Him from week to week. This page works best if you write your take-away right after you do each lesson.