

Meet the I AM
Rick Zamen
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Today we're reading from Exodus chapter 3:1-15.

Intro:

So who was that person? And what was that day that when you met them, everything about your life changed? Who was that person that you met, and everything in your life from that point forward was different. For me, I can still recall grabbing Erin Dressle's bag as we climb together with another 40 other students to get onto a bus to head to Los Angeles International Airport, we were preparing to fly them to Israel, where I got to walk and hike with 39 other students, but one in particular, this Erin Dressel, who she was cute, she loves Jesus. And so I walk next to her a lot. And I can still recall meeting her, she's now my bride, and she is now Erin Zaman. And she is such a treasure and blessing to me, my best friend. But my life changed in that parking lot in 2001, as we prepared as college students to head off to Israel. So who was that person? Your spouse is probably the one that you've met, if you're married, and then it's totally changed your life. But maybe it was some job connection you made, you know you were working with someone and perhaps they move to another company. And then they recommended you for some position. Or maybe you bumped into some bigwig in your field at some national conference. And that connection, just vaulted your career to new places. Or at the very least, if you are in Christ this morning, if you are a Christian, surely, who is that person that you met, that shared Christ with you? Who spoke to you of a Christ who loves sinners and came for them? At that moment, indeed, your life was forever changed, really your soul, namely, because you met God. And he changes things in us when we get to know him. Like we will again in this text from Exodus chapter three. That is, I opened with meeting my spouse, my wife. But you know this, your spouse is always with you, such that we can easily take them for granted, it's easy to lose appreciation for all they mean to you. And if that's true about our spouse, or husband or wife, is that not true many times over with God. For not only is he always with us, but he's invisible. He never texts us. He never posts to our Facebook feed. He never stops by for a visit, that is in person. And all that he says to us is written down in an unchanging book. It's easy to take God for granted to lose sight of how great he is and how glorious he is. It can be out of sight out of mind, he is invisible. After all, we can lose sight of how satisfying he is. And more than this, it's so easy to forget how desperately you need him.

So let's make reintroductions. Let's reintroduce ourselves to God. This morning, we're going to be reintroduced to God, we're going to learn his name, we're going to see His glory, we're going to rediscover what he's like. We're going to rediscover and underscore all that he means to us. And in the first place, above all, as you meet the I am the great Lord, you're going to see that he is fully sufficient. He's full of grace, which means he can make up for all of your lack and failing. So the word for us this morning is we turn to Exodus 3:1-15. God's full sufficiency in himself, his full sufficiency and who he is, that he needs nothing. He's always existed, fully satisfied. So because that's who he is, he can then make up for all of your inaccurate inadequacies and insecurities to the full. And if he can do that if he's fully sufficient, even though we are not that means we can step forward and faithful obedience to whatever he has called us to do. Because it's not about us. It's not about our capabilities and our abilities. It's about him being the fully sufficient one. So step forward and faithful obedience to his calling on your life not because you are sufficient, but because he. Not because you are able, but only because he is. We're gonna see that first as we consider this, we're gonna see a holy God, call a fallen man.

1. A Holy God calls a fallen man (verses 1-5)

So immediately here, as we look at this text, we start to uncover more about this God. And as we do so we recognize this great tension that exists if we are going to have a relationship with God. Namely, is that as he invites us into a relationship with Him. He's holy, and you're not. And that's a big problem. Well, let's pick it up here in verse one of chapter three, and we find this humble shepherd named Moses. And really better said, if I wasn't so articulate a humbled shepherd. Verse one, now Moses was keeping the flock of his father in law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. Now just a brief comment here, to take on a shepherd's role, especially for Moses **was very humbling**. If you can think back to the early chapters of Exodus, he was basically the prince of Egypt. He was the son of Pharaoh's daughter adopted in. Could he have been the next pharaoh in line? But of course, he had to flee. And now he's a shepherd, lost in the wilderness. But as a shepherd, in particular, we know as well from the book of Genesis, that shepherds were despised by the Egyptians. They hated this work. This kind of work with the animals was dirty, it was beneath them. They didn't do this. And so you have now one who was once the prince of Egypt, so to speak, and now he's a humbled, dirty Shepherd, wandering, lost in the wilderness. Before the world, and maybe even before himself, you might say, Moses was someone of no significance. And so again, verse one, Moses, what is he doing, he's being faithful to shepherd in the opportunity he has, he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness, and came to Horeb. And then we are here, the mountain of God. You know, the

Mount Horeb has a more famous name, it's Mount Sinai. This is the place where God appears and meets with Israel, in Exodus 19, and then so forth, as it follows. This is the mountain where God appears on Earth and meets his people. And yet, Moses had no idea about this. This wasn't why he was near Mount Horeb. None of this was known yet to Moses. So he's wandering around, quite unknowingly, at least that's the impression here. The point is, he's not looking for God. But God comes calling looking for him. And he's calling him. Verse two, "And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, and yet it was not consumed". So Moses has to get closer, he has to figure out what is this, because this doesn't happen, fires maybe in the wilderness, are not too odd. Because, when you think wilderness here, just to be clear, we're talking about a desert wilderness. This isn't like the wilderness of Virginia, or West Virginia. This is the wilderness of the desert. So you might have shrubs, and these things might burn. But this thing as it burns, doesn't get burned up. It's like it has an energy source that's unending.

This is strange, and so as he comes closer to figure out what this is, he though in no way could prepare for how extraordinary, how marvelous, and how great this site would be, as he approaches this bush. Such that as he gets closer, verse four, God calls his name. When the Lord saw that, he turned aside, God called out to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses", and he said, "Here I am". He hears his own name coming out of the bush. I don't know what you would do, but he freezes in his tracks and that's the right move. Because apparently getting any closer was quite dangerous. Look at verse five. Then God said, "Do not come near. Take your sandals off your feet for the place on which you are standing is holy ground". Whoa, what have you walked into? This is perilous. This is the first time in the Bible we encounter something called holy ground. Now, what does holy mean? Especially here? It's such a religious word, isn't it? We might use it all the time we sing it. But in the most basic sense something, that is holy means that it's separate. It's set apart. It's distinct, and that way it's special. It's not ordinary. It's not common. I've heard it well illustrated. You can talk about what might be holy in everyday life, you know, taking the spiritual element out of it for a second for illustration. What's holy in my home, so to speak, are the fine china dishes, those are quite holy. We received those when we were married as generous gifts from friends and family. But they're not in the normal cupboard where all of our dishes are, where are they? They're set apart. They're put in the China hutch, and they sit in our China hutch, basically undisturbed all the time. beautiful, pristine, pricy and very far away from our kids fingers, most of the time. These special plates only see the light of the kitchen and the kitchen table on the most special occasions. Or when we have the Williams family over for dinner. They're just too special those plates to be used for anything else. I'm not

gonna go home and go heat up a hot dog or leftover pizza on my fine china. I'm not gonna go to the China Hutch for that. I have ordinary dishes, or honestly paper plates for these kinds of things. In that way, you might say those dishes are holy, they're set apart. Well, to take it back to the spiritual world. This ground now is holy, it's set apart. It's special. It's not for ordinary use. It's not for common interaction. This is a place that now says no trespassing. Danger. Why? Because God is there. We see in verse two, it begins and mentions, the angel of the Lord appears in this burning bush. But from then throughout this text, we don't hear about the angel of the Lord, which merely just as God's Messenger or can be. But in this case, this messenger from God, he is God. He comes with God's authority, hence for whatever else he speaks in this text, it's the Lord speaking. God is here. And now the ground is holy, it's sanctified. It's dangerous for anything common or ordinary to come near it. It's the very presence of God within himself sanctifying the ground, and Moses has just walked into it. Moses is a sinner, think unholy, unfit and imperfect. This is a dangerous move to get near the holy and different and sanctified God. To touch the ground of His Holiness. Because anything that gets near him has to be extraordinary, different and special like he is. So we have to turn for a moment, can you come near to God? Can you draw near to Him in prayer even? Can you call out upon him and to his name? Well, I will tell you don't dare try it get without Christ's work covering you. Don't get near with the blood of Christ covering over all your sins. But back to Exodus, for Moses, there's no sacrifice he can make right now. So what can he do? God tells him, take your shoes off. This is to show at least in the immediacy of this some respect. Something that Moses can do to change to show that this is different. This is holy ground. And besides that, what else can Moses do? Don't dare come a step closer. Keep your distance. And yet, even with all of that, does it not astound us. God still calls him, still invites him in. As fallen and as unholy as Moses is? Because again, it's not as if God turned on the light of the burning bush in the wilderness. And he was trying to get some other shepherd's attention. And Moses saw it first and came close and God's like, oh no, I got the wrong guy. This isn't how it worked. God knew the whole time, he was orchestrating every bit to draw Moses in. So get this, God knew Moses, well before Moses ever met God. That means God knew Moses' sins. He knew of Moses' pride. He knew of Moses' tendency to fear men and tendency to run from responsibility. He knew of Moses' murder of the Egyptian and yet the Holy God calls a fallen man anyway. Do you understand where this leads? He always works this way. God calls fallen stumbling sinners to turn to Him to find mercy with him and then to follow him. Despite all of his horrendous sins, think of the apostle Paul, he directly opposed Christ. He persecuted the church. He's out murdering Christians, and yet he's forgiven and then more than that enlisted into ministry. And why, to show what? He tells us in 1 Timothy 1:15. What does the Apostle Paul's salvation tell us,

this, “The saying is trustworthy, he says, “Deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of which I am the foremost” And more than that, he adds this: in verse 16 of 1 Timothy 1. “But I receive mercy for this reason.” Why would God show mercy to a guy like Paul, who's killing people in the church? For this reason, “That in me”, Paul says, “As the foremost, Christ might display His perfect patience, as an example to those who were to believe in Him for eternal life”. My life is to be a trophy, that God can forgive anybody. Because if you can forgive me, he can forgive you whatever sins you've done. That's what Moses' life is telling you this morning. And whatever your sins and your failures, Christ is saying, draw near to Me, you who are burdened and heavy laden and I will give you rest, but you got to come. If Paul the persecutor can be forgiven. If Moses the murderer can be forgiven. If David the murderer and adulterer can be forgiven and still used of God, even. This is about obeying this call. Can he not use me? Oh, he can. Next we see this.

2. A faithful God conscripts, a failed man (verses 6-10)

A faithful God, conscripts, calls into ministry a failed man, verses 6 -10. So now, God's called Moses close, and he's having this dialogue with Moses. And we get to see here another way God's full sufficiency makes up for this time, his failures. He still calls him into service, because he's a faithful God who can make up for them. And where this begins, or where God re-strengthens Moses in this in us is to underscore his long memory, his great faithfulness, his faithfulness to His promises. Look at this, then in Exodus 3:6-8. And God said, “I'm the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God”. Smart move, now we read verse seven.

“Then the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of the land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, Amorites, the parasite that have rights and the Jebusites.’

But go back to the beginning there in verse six, “I'm the God of your father”. He tells Moses, I'm the God you always heard about. I'm God, as you grew up, that your parents were always telling you about.

Your father taught you about me. And that's why he wouldn't throw you in the river, like all of the boys were called to have been by Pharaoh. Your dad and your mom, they told you about these promises that were made to our forefathers, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. These promises to give you a land for God's people. And so, now it is after 400 years of long waiting, God is saying, I've seen my people suffering. I've heard their cries. I am ready to act on my promises. But there's a catch Moses. What is that? Well, let's see verse nine. "And now behold, the cry of the people of Israel", God says, "Has come to me. And I've seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them." God's telling this you can almost imagine Moses retorting. Oh, I know it's terrible. It's horrible. I've been trying to forget about it these past 40 years wandering the wilderness. It just pains my heart. I don't even want to think about it. And I'm so glad you're finally going to do something about it, it's about time by the way. But then, the Lord says this to Moses, verse 10. "Come I will send you to Pharaoh. That you may bring my people, the children of Israel, Israel out of Egypt." Whoa, whoa, wait a minute timeout. I love the whole idea, the whole plan about saving your people. But why do you get me involved in this? Because namely, as we have seen earlier in Exodus, Moses already tried this. That's why he murdered the Egyptian. He already tried to work a redemption to bring God's people out of Egypt. And it went horrible. Pharaoh was out to kill him, he ran away. God, why are you giving me this ministry? I tried this already. And it went horribly. That is what accounts for Moses' reticence to hearing this? Well, in one half, I would say it's an honest assessment of his abilities. He knows he can't go up against the strongest army in the known world at this time, and have any success in trying to liberate this people. But most of all, he's been there, and he failed big time. He was 40 years old when he killed the Egyptian and ran away, and now he's 80. He's 40 years past his prime. I couldn't do it then, I know I can't do it now God. Why are you calling me into this now? And yet, despite his failures, God calls him anyway. Because as Moses will soon intimately discover, this isn't about you, Moses. It's not about what you can do. It's about God. It's about what he can do, isn't it? His strength? He's not so weak that he can't even work through your failures from before? Is he that weak of strength? That he couldn't work through the failures of say, Moses, or David, or think, Peter, or Rick, or Tom or whoever? Of course he can. He's the Almighty God, and more than this, here's the point, he's promised to do it. God's purposes will not be derailed, because his people, even his chosen instruments have failed him from time to time. So often, like here with Moses, you know what God does? He even leverages those failures in his servants, to be all the more effective and useful for His Kingdom purposes. So for you, have you sidelined yourself for ministry, or helping in the church of speaking of Christ, because you tried it and you failed? You tried to share the gospel with somebody, and they just got really offended. You tried to lead someone in a Bible study and it just went bad.

They got upset. They ended up more confused than when it started. You've been there? Oh, I've been there. Yeah, you tried to leave family devotions, and things just flopped. Kids were all over the place. Things were boring. You even thought it was boring. Or maybe you tried public teaching, and you'd like bombed again. It went bad. The first time I ever taught, I was a senior in high school. I taught our youth group, which was a large group at the time. I had been a Christian for about a year. My youth pastor came up excitedly and said afterward, "Dude", he was a surfer from Southern California. "Dude, I think you have the gift of unclarity". What do you say? Or maybe you're trying to host some people in your home? Like some kind of fellowship and it just didn't go well, for whatever reason. And you just feel like a failure. You're like this, why bother? Someone else can do that stuff. I'm not gifted for that. Whatever I touch, I have the anti-Midas touch and ministry. It just goes horrible. You know, it's better to just stay in the fringes and kind of keep away. Let others get involved, because it'll go better. But this word from Exodus 3 is, no, that's not the right response. Why, because that's not a faith filled response in your God? Because it's not about you. Actually, how many times will he use our own failures to bring out greater successes and why? He often does this. Why? Because then he gets the glory for it. You see, he was behind all of it. He gets the credit. Because get this like Moses, if God has pursued you. If he's called you to himself. If he has called you into a relationship with Himself the Holy One and he's called you into ministry. Maybe not full time pastoral ministry or vocational ministry. But every Christian is called to the work of ministry. Ephesians 4 talks about the equipping of the saints. That's us, all of us. In Christ, for the work of ministry, what is that building up the body? You're all called, you're all enlisted. And he's equipped you for this. That means every failure in this room is being called and equipped by God for that ministry. And before you give me more objections about why it's okay for you to be on the sidelines, you need to think about this. What has God promised? Who is the God who made the promise? Is he not faithful? Will he not build his church? Can he not use failures, too? Indeed, could it not be that your weakness and failure is that very place for His grace to come in, and his power to make you fruitful and faithful for him? So trust him, take one step this next week out of the sidelines, and into the church field, so to speak. To encourage your brothers and sisters and build them up in the faith.

3. We see here a present God gives courage to a feeble man (verses 11-12)

We saw him as a fallen sinner. We saw him fail as he attempted and not been successful. But now we see his very weakness in verses 11 and 12. But God is present. Again, God reveals his

plan to Moses to be the one who's going to lead God's people out of Egypt. But Moses rebuts. No thanks, God, I'm not able to do what you ask of me. Look at Exodus 3:11.

“But Moses said to God, Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”

Now in light of some of the things we're saying, in self righteousness, I just want to go, rebuke Moses, for his lack of faith. Especially as you see here, he just throws up objection and excuse after excuse. In verse 13, he goes on and says, I don't even know your name properly. In Exodus 4:1 he says, well, they're not going to believe me. And then Exodus 4:10, Moses says O my Lord, I'm not eloquent. I'm slow of speech and of tongue. And then, in 4:13 Moses is just so blunt, he just says, send somebody else. Begging God. And at that point, if I'm God, I'm going to look at Moses and say, I find your lack of faith disturbing. And God says as much, look at Exodus 4:14. “Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses”, for his constant objections and shirking of this responsibility. Moses, how could you be of so little faith? I mean, even in this picture of the burning bush, which was astounding and was a miracle. You saw it with your own eyes, this unquenchable flame, he's given you now his promise. Isn't that enough.

But he's weak. There is faithlessness here in the sense of a weakness of faith, but he's weak physically, he's very feeble. And our God is a realist. As in, he's realistic about Moses abilities and weaknesses. That is, I think the Lord would agree with Moses on almost all these accounts. You know, you're right, Moses, you can't do this.

But this wasn't a mistake on God's part, as he called Moses. God knew from the beginning again, how feeble even Moses would be.

But again, Moses abilities, his resourcefulness, those were never the answer to this challenge. They were never what the answer was about how this could possibly happen. Who am I to go and set this people free? Moses, you can almost say with me, it's not about you.

Verse 12, “But he said, I will be with you.” That's his answer. I can't do it, but I will be with you.

And so you see, it's the presence of God that makes all the difference. Or really, it does change everything. Because it's not about you. It's about me, God says, with you. So from there many times in Scripture, what does God do? He dispels he casts on her fears by giving us his

presence. I'm scared god. I'm with you. Not as in I agree, but I'm by your side. And we know the new covenant I am in you. It's that presence of God that drives away our fear, that drives away our trepidation. And that precious truth is so summarized well by Isaiah, you know that verse 41:10. Fear not, the Lord says. Why? For I'm with you, Be not dismayed, for I am your God, and I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Praise God. So you see them though, as he promises his presence to be beside us to cast out all fear, his presence with us is not a stagnant or lifeless presence. That is, he's not merely at your side to comfort you, though he does this. No, more like what we see with Moses here or with Joshua. And then, after the next set of stories in the Bible. God gives you his presence to equip you for work. And let me just give you one New Testament example. You know it really well, I'm sure. But it's in the Great Commission, Matthew 28. So as Jesus concludes his earthly ministry, and it's about to get up to the Father's right hand in heaven. He gives what we call the Great Commission. You know it well, it's this rather audacious mission, that the Lord Christ gives His Church. And this mission, go make disciples of all nations It's global. It's international. It's multilingual. It's multi ethnic. It's multi-generational. To then go and make disciples, followers of Christ, from every nation, people and language from all the peoples of the earth of all time. That is weird to go among them and preach Christ, to bring them to embrace King Jesus as their Savior and Lord. That is a task far too big for any one of us, any particular church or couple of churches. But what was the awesome assurance that King Jesus gives at the end of that commission? And behold, I am with you, always, to the very end of the age. This is why you can do this, because it's not about you. It's about him with you. Yeah, you can't do it. But can King Jesus do it? That's the determinative issue. Fear flees, as he gives the assurance of his presence. And so then by faith, we are called like Joshua to be strong and courageous, to step forward in faithfulness. Not because we got this, but because he does, and he's with us. That's the only place where confidence can lie. So what has he called you to do? Do you feel adequate for it?

Do you say, who am I Jesus? Who am I to go speak to my boss about you? Who am I to interrupt my neighbor and go speak to them about Christ? Who am I to take the initiative to have that gospel conversation with my son? Who am I to lead ladies in prayer and scripture study? Who am I to try and organize some brothers for a service or ministry team? Who am I? Who am I? And you want to then say, it's not about you. It's about who's with you. And the presence of God is a game changer. So he's with you. Remember this and by remembering it, put that sin to death, and obey in faith, walk forward in your call forth.

4. **We have a sufficient God who Commission's a flawed man, (verses 13 & 15)**

This seems rather audacious. It shows the weakness I think of Moses, even as God promises his very presence and confirmations of it to come. Moses, he still objects. I ain't going. So he says, when I get there, and I'm going to speak to my people, I don't even know what to tell them.

Verse 13, "Then Moses said to God, if I come to the people of Israel and say to them, the God of your fathers has sent me to you, and then they asked me, What is his name?" Well, what am I going to tell them?

Here's the Lord's reply. Verse 14, God said to Moses, "I am who I am. So go and say this to the people of Israel, I am has sent me to you." That's what you need to tell them. Who is this God? What's his name? What is he like most fundamentally? But you can call him be I am who I am. The I am has sent me. And truly, this is what sets our God apart from all creation, or from any other so-called God, He is the im. And at first, this is helpful to think about until you start to really think about it. Then you realize what does it mean you are the I am who I am. It becomes more mysterious, the more incomprehensible, you seem to ponder it. Namely, because as the I Am, he is three things we are not and I must be so brief. But each one of these blows our mind.

As the I Am, who is the I Am, he is first eternal. He had no beginning, he has no end. He always is, whatever the plan is for all of history, it involves him, and he's in control of it.

Second, he is independent, he is self-existent life, all of life exists in and of him. We look at creation, and we marvel because he made it. It came from him, that's where the life is from. We're always looking to explain things. Well, how'd you get here? How did you become like this? Well, God is that first unmoved mover, the ultimate answer. So when you look at creation, and you marvel at your Creator, and then you say, where did that come? Well, God made it and then the clever child comes behind you and says, what? Well, then who made God? It's a fair question. Because everything in our world came from someplace and had to have a beginning and a start. Whether it's the construction project, you seem to see all over Chesterfield. That house or roadway. Where does that come from? Well, somebody made it. Or the new puppy. Or is the little brother in the room next door, where did they come from? They all come from someplace, but not God. There never was a time when he was not. He just is. He always has been the I Am. He's always present in that way. He had no beginning. He has no ending. He didn't start. He won't stop. He is. He's always been there and always will be there without end,

amen. This also means that he is self-sufficient. As the I Am, who is the I Am, he must be fully self sufficient. He's not dependent on anything. He never needs anything. He needs nothing, which also means he doesn't need you. He really doesn't. He doesn't need your praise. He's not missing it. He doesn't need your money. He doesn't need your prayers. Doesn't need your powers. He doesn't need your voice to get things accomplished. He's not dependent on you in the least. Actually, he perfectly exists apart from all of it in and of himself. He needs no one. And So Rick, why are you telling me this? To underscore what you need him more than you know. And in a short way, if we could summarize this idea, God that he is the I Am. It's all captured by his personal name, his special name. And that's the name of God, Yahweh, or the Lord. Look at Exodus 3:15.

“God also said to Moses. Say this to the people of Israel, the LORD”. And you'll notice at least in the ESV that I'm teaching from the Lord is in call caps like most English translations. Because that stands for in the Hebrew, what's behind it God's name. Yahweh, that's God's personal name. Understand this, to talk about God, that's a class of being, like you are human. But you have a personal name like Matt for example. God has a personal name, it's Yahweh, or maybe Jehovah.

This is the name that he is known by. And that the name is in a way consolidated with the I I am who I am. So back to verse 15. God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel, the Lord Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob has sent me to you. This is my Name forever.” And that's something to be remembered throughout all generations. This is his name. This is the shorthand way to say he is the I Am the **EC Yeah**, in the Hebrew. The Yaweh. The self existent one. The Eternal One. The fully sufficient one. Notice as you keep and compare verses 14 and 15. Notice how the one who sends them is interchangeable. In verse 14, we read this at the end of the verse, “Tell them I am has sent me to you”. And then verse 15, he says, “Yahweh the Lord has sent me to you. Yahweh is the shorthand way to say he is the I Am. And so, what unfolds throughout the book of Exodus is the I am introducing himself to the world. This book explores what happens all the way through Deuteronomy, and in the Advent. We'll talk about that in a moment. All of it explores what happens when your way the I AM comes down to fellowship with His people. And if you think about the book of Exodus, what happens after this. You see that your way is of unmatched power, unchallenged wisdom, unfailing loving kindness, that is to be unfathomable. He's come down to show Israel. To show Egypt. To show all the world what he's like. That he's saving I Am. But of course, this is not the only time Yahweh has done this. And this is what we study in the

Advent. For it was the word that came down and took on flesh, and dwelt among us. And it says in John one we beheld his glory. And he taught us in his ministry, and by his word. He taught us this, even as we read, so this is now I flipped over to John chapter eight. You can just listen closely. But here's what Jesus taught us. He's speaking and He says, "This truly, truly, Jesus says, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death". And at this, the Jewish leaders bristled or maybe better said, raged at him, they retorted and said, This is John 8:52. Now, the juice said to him, now we know Jesus, you have a demon. Abraham died, as did the prophets, and yet you say if anyone keeps your word, he will never taste death. Are you greater than her father Abraham who died and the prophets who died? Who do you make yourself out to be Jesus? You're better than Abraham? You can beat death? Who do you think you are? Here's Jesus' response: a couple of verses later, he has the cheek to say this. John 8:56. Oh, you mentioned Abraham, you know, your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see mind day, and he saw it, and he was glad. And right, then their brains went poof.

What? John 8:57 So the Jews said to him, you're not yet 50 years old, and you've seen Abraham. Again, you're not even 50. And Abraham was walking on the earth. I don't know, some 2000 years before that. How does that work? And he saw your day? You knew Abraham? That'd be like one of us going oh, yeah, I remember Abraham Lincoln, such a great guy. Oh Washington, he was pretty alright. Charlemagne? Yeah, he had some faults, but maybe some good things too. Alexander the Great that guy could really get after it. I mean, you'd say that guy's a loon because he's talking this way. Why? Because those guys have been dead and gone for hundreds, if not 1000s of years. And this guy, he hardly looks, not even 40? And how could you have known Abraham? Well he couldn't have? Unless something was different about Jesus. Notice his response to the question. You've seen Abraham and Abraham knows you? John 8:58, Jesus said to them, "Truly truly I say to you, Before Abraham was, I am." And he doesn't just mean I existed before Abraham. I am the I Am. I Am the angel, the messenger that appears in the burning bush, who is God himself? I am God. And I've come down from heaven to show you what God is like because I am him. So before Abraham was, I am and always have been. Oh, the force and audacity of those words, right? They are sheer blasphemy if they're not true. And again, the Jewish leaders didn't miss what Jesus was saying. Because it says next that they picked up stones to throw at Jesus. But what fools they are. Trying to throw stones at the I AM. Thinking they can pelt stones and kill the one upon whom all breath and life depend. That's foolish unbelief. Jesus himself is God. He's Yahweh. He's the all powerful self existence I AM, and you get it. Now, that's precisely why he can say, I can give you eternal life. Because he is life in and of himself. Is he greater than Abraham who died in the

prophets? Oh, you bet he is. He's life in and of himself. He's the eternal I AM. Death cannot contain him. It tried, it couldn't hold him or stop him. Sin, even the debt of hell that you had earned, he's the I Am and can stop it all. So to that, then we may have fallen, we are. We may be rebels, we are. We have failed God many, many times. We are feeble. We are weak. We are unable to help. We are so flawed. We are so inadequate to be in a relationship with him. Let alone to be called to any task or ministry. But the I AM came for us. And he is sufficient to save us because he has all sufficiency. But brothers and sisters, he is also sufficient to equip you for the work he's called you. He has come to forever be remembered as the fully sufficient savior. So may our lives testify to that. We are not able. We are not perfect, but we are flawed and fallen. That's why we come to this table. But we have a greater Savior, the risen and victorious Jesus Christ, the I AM. Let's praise him.