



*BASIC
CHRISTIANITY*

BIBLE  *STUDY*

JOHN STOTT

WITH DALE LARSEN AND SANDY LARSEN

6 STUDIES FOR INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS



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⁵⁸“Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!”⁵⁹At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

1. Jesus had a unique claim to special intimacy with God. What examples of his claim do you find in this passage?
2. Why do you think Jesus could say, “Whoever obeys my word will never see death”?
3. How does this claim about power over death show Jesus’ understanding of his own equality with God?

The person “who accepts Jesus has entered into a relationship with God which neither time nor eternity can sever.”*

4. To claim that he existed before Abraham, Jesus could have said, “Before Abraham was born, I *was*.” Instead he said, “I *am*.” To understand the effect of those words on the Jewish

religious leaders, look at how God answered Moses' question about God's name: "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'" (Exodus 3:14). In that light, what does Jesus' use of the present tense say about who he claimed to be?

5. Imagine yourself today hearing a person say the things Jesus said in this passage. What conclusions could you draw about that person? (Think of several alternate conclusions.)

6. What further evidence would you look for in order to evaluate the person's claims?

Jesus "is not simply a courier of revelation like Moses. He *is* revelation."[†]

7. If everything Jesus said here is true, what difference does it make—to the world at large?

To you personally?

 **RESPOND** 

- * If you are not sure you believe what Jesus said about himself, commit yourself to further investigation.

- * If what you have read today has raised some new ideas, trust God to clarify what he wants you to know.

 **PRAY** 

Ask God to show you what to think of Jesus Christ.

*William Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), 38.

†G. M. Burge, “I Am’ Sayings,” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 356 (emphasis added).

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