

W188_The_Being_And_Nature_Of_God.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book. The covering title of the series is Christian Fundamentals, and we are now this evening, considering the being and nature of God. And this is the third study of this special series. It is our custom at these meetings to read a portion of scripture together. And those of you who are listening to this recording, if you care to join us, will you read with us the eighth chapter of the Gospel, according to John. We mustn't linger over this eighth chapter of John. We have a very big subject before us, but I feel I must mention one feature. You will know that a great many advise us to leave out the first part of John eight. The woman taken in adultery because in some manuscripts it has been omitted. But will you notice? That in the first section, which is supposed to be omitted. The question of stoning. Is brought very prominently forward. And will you get to the last verse of this chapter? Then they took up stones to stone him. That's one item. Then you come back. And in verse nine and they which heard it being convicted by their own conscience. And that self-same word awaits us in verse 46, Which of you convinceth me? I said. So it looks as though the very parallelism of the scripture is one of those indications that the passage must be retained. Otherwise, if you take it out, you have a lopsided structure and there is no reason for it.

[00:01:48] But we mustn't go any further, except he speaks of himself as a man. And they looked at him and said, Thou art not yet 50 years old and hast thou seen Abraham? When he didn't say, Of course I could never have seen Abraham. 2016. Abraham. Abraham's only just a few minutes ago. Before Abraham was. I am. What sort of man is this? Friend? Any ordinary man standing up in any ordinary congregation and saying such a thing would be put down as being a little bit screwy. Well, this was worse in their estimation, because to make such a claim again was demanding that they should recognize equality with God. And the only answer to that was stoning. It's a very solemn thought that the gospel, according to John, presents you with two alternatives in the presence of this Christ. You will either be tempted. To say he should be stoned for blasphemy. Or you'll be like the typical unbelieving Thomas. At last, you'll fall at his feet and give him the title that belongs to God only. There's no explanation offered as to why. But the facts are just there to warn us. Go gently, friends. With regard to this man who says before Abraham was. I am. We are dealing with this question of the nature and being of God. And I confess at the beginning that I know practically nothing about

God. Of course, that could be misunderstood, but I believe God in His essence is so entirely beyond the limitations of time and space that unless he is condescended to limit himself, we should never have heard him, never have known him, and it would have been utterly impossible for us ever to have approached him.

[00:03:56] That I would to say in the beginning, you've got a limitation. God is not in the beginning. Beginning of what? Has he got a calendar that he tells all fleets the time matter to him? And where is God? It's no good pointing up to the sky because tomorrow morning you'll be pointing in the opposite direction. Where do you mean? What about the poor Australians? Are they all out of it when they point upwards to the sky? See, time and space belong to us, but no time and no space can have any relationship to God as God. If I would make a concession when I'm hardly or hardly seen I can yet. But I may possibly, just as an argument, I may make a concession that there are two occasions when God does actually enter into the Bible, and that is in the first verse of Genesis and in one Corinthians 15, when it says then cometh the end when God shall be all in all. But between those two. The only God we know is a self limited God. You know, some people, they even talk as though they maybe know him, which is the word God in Genesis one is the name of God, but who went up and called him Elohim, who gave him a Hebrew name in the vast eternity before the world was.

[00:05:15] Was he called Eloheem or any other name? Don't you see? All these are labels to help us to come to some very limited conclusion of the nature and being of God. I feel it's a great temerity on my part even to speak on the subject, and it will be with great reservation that I. If we take either attitude. So they are both associated with events results. Now, those of you who have retained this little chart which was distributed at the early meeting, you will notice I've got rather a little. What is the deal with this? For a brief moment, because we're going to look to the third chapter of the Book of Exodus where God reveals his name as I am. We'll go to that in a moment. Now, I am spoken by that. Hardly conveys a meaning to us. Because it's not possible for any one of us to say I am. That's my name. We are we are creatures of time, past, present and future all the time. So this is a very crude illustration of a very vast problem. It doesn't settle it. It only perhaps gives us a start. You see, I've drawn a table. And on that table there's a book and there's a flask for water and there's a taxicab. See, left hand side of this table is a spider crawling.

[00:07:08] And when he gets to the top of the table. Hades is all know you're entirely wrong. The book is First and the Flask in the Middle is second, and the catchy case is third. But then the one who's sitting looking at the table very much bigger than either ant or spider or worse is You're both wrong because they're all in front of me. There's not a first, second or third. Do you see? It's very, very crude, isn't it? We approach it like a spider or an ant, and we have to go from one event to another. But God is sitting so far back that he doesn't have to wait for time and space to accomplish events. We are told. Known unto God are all things from the beginning. How he knows we do not know. We shall be God himself if we did. But that is the reason why he speaks of himself in this peculiar way. I am well now will turn after that little illustration to the book of Exodus, where this revelation is made to Moses. You remember that Moses has seen an extraordinary sight in the desert. The time has come for God to give him his new commission. He has spent as many years in the desert looking after sheep as he had spent at the court of Pharaoh. Oh, what a discipline he had to go through. And apparently the time is right. And he saw a burning bush and he drew near and he heard a voice telling him to take off his shoes for the place where he stood was holy ground.

[00:08:46] And then he received his commission to go to Pharaoh and demand the release of Israel. And so it verse 13, it says, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers has sent me unto you. And they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? He said, That's a legitimate request, especially as you've been surrounded by gods. And they've all got their names and they've passed right down to this present time in Egypt. What shall I call him? What name shall I say? And God said unto Moses, I am that I am. And he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you. That's a baffling sort of statement, isn't it? It's explaining something which is inexplicable. It's giving a title which you say, Well, Lord, can you tell me a bit more what it means? I can imagine that's what happened. God told him the title, but he said, No, I'll expand it. I'll explain it a little bit more. And God said, Moreover, this is in addition, you see, moreover, unto Moses, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel. It's no good going to them and saying I am because thou look as puzzled as you were.

[00:10:07] Moses, say unto the children of Israel, the Lord God of your fathers. The God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you. This is my name forever. And this is my memorial unto all generations. And here you have the

introduction into the book of Exodus of the name Jehovah. Whenever you see in the authorized version, the word lord spelled out in large capital letters, that's an indication to you that the name Jehovah, this sacred name of God, has been used. The expansion of the name says, This is my name now. Our version says forever. And so we are apt to lean to the translation, which has been suggested by more than one. And they put all through the Bible, the eternal. Well, now it's a very fine thought to think of God as eternal, but it's just the opposite meaning of the word Jehovah. First of all, the word here forever is the word age. And if you don't believe that it's parallel by the word generations and the duplication of teaching in the Scripture is often a way to discover its meaning. It repeats itself, you see, using another word it's no good putting the generations as it equivalent to eternity. You wouldn't be able to read This is my name for eternity and this is my memorial unto all generations. So this is my this is my name for the age. This name is here for a purpose.

[00:11:50] It's the name of God limiting himself to become the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. What a limitation for God. You know, when we read in the Scriptures, he's the God of the whole earth. They think, Oh, what a great God he must be, but the God of the whole earth. They tell me, the astronomer, that if an angel was sent from glory to discover his earth and wasn't told just exactly where to look, he might search for an eternity to find it and wouldn't see it. The God of the whole earth is a limitation for the God that we believe. We cannot begin to think. Solomon was struck with that, he said. But will God dwell in a temple made by hands? Why the heavens and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee. So let's have a little idea, friends, that the moment we read the Bible, we are reading of a self limited God and the name Jehovah is particularly associated with time, with the ages. And you'll discover when we look at it a stage further that instead of a name remaining forever, it's most glorious blessedness is that it gradually uses itself up and is finished. Now that comes as a shock to some people, the same as it might have been a shock even to John himself when he was in the Heavenly Jerusalem because he had known a wonderful temple. John himself had entered into a wonderful temple that was built at Jerusalem.

[00:13:24] And when he came to the heavenly Jerusalem and he described the gates. Why the gates? Each one of them a single pearl and the street like crystal gold. And you might have said, Oh, but wait till I get to the temple and describe that. But you know what he said? I saw no temple. The glory of the heavenly Jerusalem is. And he didn't

want a temple. I believe me. Priesthood and Leviticus. Ceremonies and sacrifices that only for the time and their glory is that they accomplish their work and they never needed. You see, you don't need priests and altars when you're a family. Reconciled. Absolutely. With your father. That's all finished. Now the name Jehovah is God's name as the redeeming factor. Because he has other names that they may know him is rather the God of creation. The name Jehovah is the God of redemption. Now, you might remember the way in which Psalm 19 splits itself into two. The heavens declare the glory of God. It speaks about creation. And then presently it says The law of the Lord is perfect. The testimony of the Lord is he when it's dealing with man. It's the word God in Genesis one. And the what? Adam is here. It's the Lord God. Same person. Or you read such a statement as this. In the time of the flood and the animals, they all went into the ark as God commanded. And the Lord shut him in. Same God always over and over again.

[00:15:06] Mentioned like that. I think, for brevity's sake, I'll stop speaking to you for a minute and read an extract from the writings of Dr. Duncan Weir on this very meaning of the word Jehovah. He says the Hebrew may say thee may know him. That is to say, the true God in opposition to all false gods. But he never says Thee. Jehovah, for Jehovah is the name of the true God only. He says again and again. My God. But never my Jehovah. So when he says, My God, he means Jehovah. Jehovah is my God. You see, that's its special meaning. He speaks of the God of Israel, but he never, never. Jehovah of Israel. For there is no other Jehovah. He speaks of the living God, but never the living Jehovah, for he cannot conceive of Jehovah as other than living. Jehovah is eminently the God of redemption. Under the Old Covenant, the God of Israel, the correlative of Elohim is man. God in nature. Jehovah is God in grace. Elohim is the God of Providence. Jehovah the God of promise and prophecy. Thus saith Jehovah are the words with which the Prophet always introduces his message. He never says, thus saith Elohim. Now they are the words of this man who has written on the subject, but he has put his finger on the fact that we've got to remember that this title of God has a distinctive meaning. We do well to keep it in our mind.

[00:16:50] If any of you would like to see that again, you'll find it in the little book that we have entitled I'd Better read that as I forgot what I've written. The form of sound words. But I'm not advertising our literature. Well, now there's no strictly, no strictly verb to be in the Hebrew language. They speak the verb to be, but it's never written. What is written

is the verb to be cut. And so when we face this word, Jehovah, a word of four letters. If we were very, very intimately acquainted with the Hebrew language, which I am not. You would immediately perceive that it was a composition of different parts of the verb to become. As though it said this I will become whatever it is necessary for thee to become in order to bring this purpose to its glorious God. And He who is called the Lord all through the New Testament, the Lord is ultimately going to be acknowledged by every knee bowing and every tongue confessing that He is Jehovah Lord. And then that sir, who was brought the purpose to its issue. Based upon his great sacrificial work. When all enemies are under his feet and the last enemy destroyed is death, then that son voluntarily submits. To the father. Not to the father may be. All in all, it doesn't say that. It says we're back at the beginning. Now that God, God. Baby, all in all. And now we're on the fringe of eternity and no more said.

[00:18:37] So don't ask me about it, will you? But I don't know. All I can do is to tell you what comes within the limits of the beginning and the end. But after that, we wait. I trust. We're now in the New Testament, especially in the Book of Revelation. We have a hint that this name is paraphrased. In the Book of Revelation Chapter one, we read in verse four these words. John to the seven churches which are in Asia. Grace be unto you. And peace from him. Which is. And which was and which is to come. And from the seven spirits which are before his throne and from Jesus Christ. The faithful witness. So you have the one who is called. The one who is called him, which is and was and is to come. And one is the seven spirits and one is Jesus Christ. Now shut the book and you'd only half get the truth. If you look at the eighth verse. I am Alpha and Omega. The beginning and the ending, saith the Lord. Which is. And which was and which is to come the Almighty. Who is speaking now. What if you don't know you were fired at the last chapter? It's the Savior himself who says I am the first and the last. I am Alpha and Omega. Would you say Did you mean to tell me that this savior takes the very title that belongs to God Himself, but he doesn't take it? It belongs to Him? Could you say? How could.

[00:20:18] Oh, don't ask me how it's possible for these things to be distributed like that. I'm only telling you that you must be watchful because, you see, one person can fix his attention on verse four and prove one thing another to fix his attention on verse eight and prove the opposite. Well, we don't want to divide ourselves up into two camps, do we? We want both, even though taking the both creates a certain amount of problem.

Now, will you look at the next occurrence of this title? 11 and 17. You see in this this way of John puts it is practically giving you the name Jehovah, the God of all time, past, present and future. Who was and is and is to come now in Chapter 1117. We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty. And did you notice that he was called the Almighty in verse eight? And do you know that magnificent statement that comes in this book of the revelation, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth? That's Christ. That's not the invisible God being spoken about. Christ is the Lord God. Omnipotent Reigns. His kingdom is come. His coronation is there. And so we have here in this verse 617. We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art and wast and art to come. Because there was taken to thee thy great power and has reigned. Now if you follow the the edited text.

[00:21:51] We discover that there's every reason to believe that the last part of this title is omitted. And what it actually reads is we give thee thanks, o Lord God Almighty, which art and wast. But what did they say and art to come? Well, because the the name has a meaning. If he's there already. Why do you say an art to come? I said the name was gradually fulfilled and so is used up. Blessed be God. Thank God somebody has written this in the explanation of the name of Jehovah. He who ever was He who ever is and he who ever is to come. And everybody says, Oh, magnificent. But that means to say that will never be fulfilled. Instead of saying ever is to come say, Thank God. There came a time when they stopped and said He who was and is and he is come. The time has come for him to sit upon the throne and the name Jehovah is now beginning to be completely fulfilled. Well, now you remember this element of time is used in the Epistle to the Hebrews concerning Christ. In the 13th chapter. You must get all these passages before you, although you may know them from memory. We read these words. Verse seven. Remember them which have the rule over you. Who have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose faith follow considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday. And today.

[00:23:36] And forever or until the age. Here's the explanation again to the meaning of Jehovah. He was and is and is to come. And then if you remember, this is Batman Sing the first chapter that makes it even more emphatic. He's the same. Chapter one, verse ten. And our Lord in the beginning hath laid the foundation of the earth. Wouldn't you think that anybody who read that would say, Well, that must be God? And they've got chapter and verse, if you look at chapter three. Verse four. For every house is builded by some man. But he that built all things is God. So. And is there a lord in the beginning

has laid the foundation of the earth. And the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish. But they are. And they shall wax old as doth a garment. And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up and they shall be changed. But thou art the same. Thy years shall not fail. It begins on that note. Thou art the same. And in the 13th chapter it says. Thou art the same. These are challenging thoughts. We'll have to devote an evening to the question of creation and its relationship to God who limited himself. But here's a hint already. But we have other things to say, and I think we must watch our time. When you think of the word I am, I as I say, there's something almost inexplicable about it. So we're going to look at the gospel according to John, and we shall be looking at John for the rest of the study, I think.

[00:25:30] So we'll come to this statement that our Lord made and look at it a little bit closely. I suggest you keep Chapter eight with you. And I'm going to quote from the first verses of John's Gospel. In the first chapter, you keep the eighth chapter so that we can turn back to it. You'll notice in the beginning was and the word was twice over, the same was in the beginning. The same was. Now it changes. All things came into being. That word made is not the ordinary word to make. It's the word that gives generation Genesis to come into being. All things came into being, and without him was not one thing that came into being that did come into being. That's not good English, of course, but that's stressing the fact that there is put over against one another in the Greek language, the word to be and the word to become. Of God. It says He is of all things else. They become they come into being. They have a commencement. They have an end, but not God. Well, now those words are used in John the eighth chapter, verse 58. Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you before Abraham came into being. I am. You see in our version was and am are both parts of the same verb.

[00:27:03] I am. He was. But it isn't true. It would have been robbed. One says Abraham came into being. He was one of the things that were made. But now Jesus Christ as I am. And that's breaking all rules of grammar. If anybody else could say that in limits, he said before Abraham was. I was. Let it be a tremendous thing to say, wouldn't it? A man not 50 years old, standing up before people and saying before Abraham was. I was. He didn't say that. He said before Abraham came into being. I am. But what are we going to do about it? We can't alter the scriptures. It's so written. There's not the slightest possibility that a mistake. But it only revealing something which is almost beyond the limitations of human language to express. But it shows you the wonder of this person

who is standing there. Now, you do know, don't you? In the Old Testament, there are what are called the Jehovah titles. The Jehovah titles. That is to say God as associated with the word Jehovah. A certain number of different attributes and will be come to the Gospel of John. You'll find he's done much the same. So I want to be sure that we give these a consideration. I don't think I'll turn you to the passages. I'll give them to you. It makes such a commotion turning from passage to passage when I'm only dealing with a word that I think you'll. You'll know them and I'll remind you of them.

[00:28:43] And if you like to take a note of them, so much the better. Genesis 22 gives us the first Jehovah title and it is first in the right sense. Did I say that redemption or creation was intimately associated with Jehovah Redemption, the God of redemption? Well, on the mountain where that transaction took place and exposed something of the heart of God, when the heavens stay the hand of Abraham and said, Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thine only son from me. I've told you before that in Romans eight, that same word is repeated when it says he who spared not his own son. Same word used of God as used of Abraham. There. We have a Jehovah title. Ibm said In this place the Lord will provide. Jehovah Gyra In this place on this mountain, the Lord will provide. Now, where was that place? One of the mountains of Moriah. Where was the place called? Moriah. The place where Jerusalem was built. And our savior was crucified on a hill just outside the walls of Jerusalem. Do you believe it got so near to it and then missed its place? Isn't it absolutely certain that the very selfsame evidence that Abraham took his son and he said in the mount of the Lord, it shall be seen, the Lord will provide in the mount of the Lord. It was seen when this greater son of Abraham was actually offered and not.

[00:30:28] Spared Jehovah Jaya. So you see, these Jehovah titles are taking the word Jehovah and saying, You see what it means. It means the one that provides the sacrifice without which salvation is impossible. Then in Exodus 15. 26. We have. Jehovah Ropica. I am the Lord that healeth thee. And you will remember that the healing was particularly associated with His ministry to Israel. His miracles from the beginning to the end were mainly miracles of healing the body, and he was fulfilling a passage referred to him in Isaiah 53. He bare not only our sins, said Isaiah, but our sicknesses. So there we have the Lord, our healer. Then in jet age, Exodus 17, we have the coming of Amalek, who laid his hand, as it were, in revolt on the throne of God. And God said he would have war with Amalek forever because of his attitude. Amalek is

rather a figure of the attack of the flesh, but that is using it as a symbol. And there we have a Jehovah title, Jehovah Nissi the Lord, our banner. Under that banner we go out and you remember in that occasion Moses went on a mountain and when Moses hands were lifted up, Joshua succeeded and with his hands sunk, the enemy succeeded. What? Our savior needs no one to support him on either side in his intercession for us. But it's a lovely thought that on that mountain two men stood beside him. They arranged stones for Moses to sit on, and one stood one side and one the other and supported his hands until the battle was won.

[00:32:23] It's a little word for us with regard to our opportunity for intercession, one for another. And then we have rather a long word Jehovah Addition one Our Kadish is the word holy. And this is I am the Lord that sanctify thee. So we now have in the law of Moses for Jehovah titles. We had the Lord who provides a sacrifice. We have the Lord who heals. We have the Lord who triumphs, and we have the Lord that sanctifies. These are all expansions of what Jehovah intends us to understand concerning the outworking of His name. And then we have another one in Jeremiah 23 that Jehovah said, Can you, the Lord our righteousness. I always remember in the days of my relative ignorance because I'm not quite so ignorant as I was, but I know there's a tremendous lot yet going to a meeting and they saying Jehovah Sid can you and I didn't know in the least what they were talking about. But I found out, Of course, that's the best thing, isn't it? And this is the Lord our righteousness. That's what Christ is. We stand not in the righteousness that belongs to God. God's own personal righteousness? No. We stand in a righteousness wrought out for us by the Son of God and imputed to us by faith. Jehovah said canoe. And then the last and lovely one.

[00:33:54] Jehovah Rohi, the Lord, my shepherd. And then reaches John's Gospel, doesn't it? We get in the 10th chapter of John's Gospel that he claims that for himself. I am the good shepherd who you say is a good shepherd. But wasn't he a good shepherd in Psalm 23? He says, I am the good Shepherd. Well, now what I want to suggest is this. That in this gospel, according to John. John is embedded that statement in the eighth chapter where the words are left just blank like that. I am. And if we are honest, we don't quite know what to do with it, do we? But if we were really wonderfully, fully taught, we'd say, you know, anyone who can say I am like that? Well, he owns all things he possesses all things. He has all power, he has all wisdom. That's everything. But God knows our frailty. So he breaks it down for us. I don't know whether you've ever

been given a blank check. Well, I send a blank check sometimes to a friend, but I trusted him. You know, I wouldn't send it to everybody because Mr. Wharton, he helps me out in one of the most horrible moments of my life, trying to make out what I've got to pay to the income tax man. But he does it all for me. I neither wreck it up nor bother. Whatever he says goes. You see. So I send him the whole caboodle and I put a check in and I leave him to fill in the amount and he sends it off.

[00:35:27] And that's the way I live. See? Well, I believe God says, Look, I'll give you a blank check. I am. Now fill it in. And whatever you ask for, according to his will, you'll find that covers it. Now, that's what he's done in John's gospel. He doesn't merely say, Can't you rest in him who is called the I Am? So it's a difficult thing to lord to know what to do with it when he says, Well, write down this, John ten. I am the good Shepherd and I lay down my life for the sheep. See, fill it in like that. If you feel a need of a leader and a savior or remember in the 10th, in the sixth chapter where we get the first of them, the most elementary thing we need, both in spiritual and in physical things, is bread. See. Of course we boast and think we we are so high and mighty we'd never be sort of degraded enough to allow ourselves to. But the scripture says all says if a man gets down there. Solomon says, Give me neither poverty nor riches. He says, because if I am poor, I may steal for bread. What was the first temptation even put before our savior himself? Bread. What was the temptation in the wilderness with Israel? Bread. What was the temptation in the Garden of Eden? Something to eat? So, yes, I now say this is here's a blank check.

[00:36:56] I am. The bread of Life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. I am the bread of life. Or again, he says in the eighth chapter and the ninth chapter of this John's Gospel Twice. The eighth chapter, verse 12. We've looked at it, of course. Read it. Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. And again, in the ninth chapter, verse five. As long as I'm in the world, I am the light of the world. And he was now dealing with a man born blind lust bread shepherd. I've gone out of order, of course, but in the 10th chapter he says something else about himself. In the 10th chapter, verse seven and verse nine, I am the door. Well, in what way was he a doer? Well, of course, we learn a lot by knowing the circumstances when any word of the Bible is pronounced. And I've never kept sheep. But I do know this, that in the Palestine Sheepfolds. There's a sort of embracing wall, but there's no actual door on

hinges with a lock and a catch. And I do remember the visitor in the earlier days than this when Palestine was still more primitive. And the man was speaking to the shepherd and he said, You put your sheep in there.

[00:38:36] He says, But where's the door? Do you know it's recorded? That man, without quoting scripture, said to him, I am the door. He slept there in that opening, and no enemy, no robber could get to those sheep apart over his body. That's what our savior said. Because you look when he told them about the sheep and the door. I said I didn't understand. Verse six, This parable spake Jesus unto them, but they understood not. Why didn't they understand? Surely you say if they if there was anything, they would understand. It's about sheep. Yes, but you see, they want you to know why he was talking about sheep. He said, Verily, verily, I say unto you he that is not by the door into the sheepfold, but without some other way. The same is a thief and a robber. What we said, we know that. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. Yes, we know that. So why are you telling us this? Oh, I said, I see. You are always said yes. You are the shepherd. You are the door. Oh, and he said it all over again to them. And then they said at the end of this now he said. Now we You speak plainly. No longer do you speak to us in parables. Well, we come to another statement. We mustn't stop too long because our time is running out. In the 11th chapter of this same gospel.

[00:40:09] The blank check again. Oh, what a what a way to fill this in. Crazy having that check given to you with the words, I am on it and never having read this story. And then standing at the grave of a loved one. They buried tomb sealed. And this one here is called the I am approaches. In those very words, I am. Is life eternal? But he has to say, sir. Now. What does he say? They're the most marvelous, majestic words that any mortal man could ever hear from the lips of a man standing in a grave in a graveyard. I am saying I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me though he were dead. Yet shall he live. And whosoever is living and believing in me, that is to say, when the time comes shall never die. Believest thou this? And isn't it wonderful? In this same chapter. The smallest verse in the Bible is almost unbelievable. Verse 35. Jesus wept. Would you believe that anyone who could stand in a graveyard and say, I am the resurrection and the life would weep? That's because we don't know the heart and nature of God. This one is demonstrating to us as little bit of the being and nature of God. And he's not like a sphinx with stony eyes staring out into eternity that no one can

move. He's not the sort of heaven of brass that over Khayyam speaks and says, you might as well hold your breath for prayer.

[00:42:03] Makes no odds to him. The moving finger writes and having writ moves on and all thy piety nor prayers. Shall not call it back or cancel half a line. That's what one man said. But this book says the God of risen life stooped to the human misery of Mary and Martha and wept. That's the God that's in the Bible, friends. A God that's walked in human shape. A God that has suffered as we can only imagine. A God that is not without sympathy before his passed this path. The only God we could appreciate is one who is in measure expressed to us with some human terms. Not a god afar off, but a God intimately near. And then, of course, there are two others. In the 14th chapter, speaking now to his own, he said to them. In verse six. I am the way, the truth and the life no man cometh unto the Father but by me. You see, love has to be very severe. He didn't hide the fact that there was only one way to the father. It was most necessary. He should say so. And it's necessary for us to say so. It doesn't matter because a person says, Well, as far as I can see, as long as I am kind to others and pay 20 shillings in the pound, is he. That's not the way back to God. Friends. No, no, no man cometh unto the father but by me.

[00:43:45] And then when he says I'm the way, the truth and the life, of course that's a fine text to give to the preacher who says, Now, firstly, my dear friends, he's the way and secondly, he's the truth. And thirdly, he's the life. Well, that's all true, but that isn't what it says here. What it says here is this I am the true and living way, and you'll get the same figure in Hebrews ten where it says we draw near by a new and living way. In one it says a new and living way. Another, It says a true and living way. True in contrast to all the shadows and types that have gone before her. And then the last he says in the 15th chapter, verse one, I am the true Vine. My father is the husband. Verse five I am the true vine. Ye are the branches. And there he is, emphasizing not salvation, but the things that accompany salvation. That is the production of fruit. But what I've attempted to do is to show you that the I am of Exodus is divided up into small portions for us. And we are not limited to these 7 or 8 statements in more than one passage. It says Now, in this eighth chapter we read in the 24th verse. These words. Therefore, I say unto you, you shall die in your sins. For if ye believe not that I am he, but you notice the word.

[00:45:19] He is in italics. Just the same words if you believe. Not that I am. There's nobody else can save you. I am the bread. I am the sheep. I am the shepherd. If you believe not that I am, where will you go? No man cometh unto the father but by me. And again. In the 28th verse. Then said Jesus unto them. When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am. No word he there. I am. Just left like that. And so I think we do well to ponder this fact that God, for the purpose of creation and for the purpose of redemption as purposely and willingly limited himself to time and space, for our sakes. And even though we cannot prove all things and penetrate all things, there comes a moment when we say, I can't withhold it any longer. This book says you cannot honor the father if you withhold honor from the Son. So let us remember that it is the only possible contact we can have with God as God is the mediation of Christ. And if you ask the question as we do, what is God like? God has only one answer. God is Christ like. And if that doesn't suffice us, I don't think anything will. So may the Lord give us grace as we pursue these studies to get at least some idea of the wonderful grace of God manifested in the person of our Savior.