

The Wednesday Word, April 19, 2017: I Am He!

“I said therefore unto you that you shall die in your sins: for if you believe not that I AM (he), you shall die in your sins.” John 8:24

Jesus is the great ‘I Am,’ the mighty God of Scripture..... (Exodus 3:14; John 1:1-7; John 6:33-35; John 8:12; John 8:58; John 10:7-9; John 10:14-15; John 10:30).

Nevertheless, many misguided people say He was merely a good teacher. Consider, however, what the Master taught in John 8:24. There, He makes a most outrageous claim...one that is hardly the mild assertion of a modest and temperate instructor of righteousness. He declares,

“I said therefore unto you that you shall die in your sins: for if you believe not that I AM (he), you shall die in your sins.”

This is scarcely the contention of a good teacher who although a good man, was not God. Christ was claiming, in this verse, that unless we believe that He is the eternal, self-existent one, we will perish.

It should be noted that the word ‘he’ in verse 24 is in italics thereby showing that it does not appear in the original. Rather, the translators supply it. In this verse, therefore, Jesus makes a direct claim to deity! So, was this man Jesus mad or was He actually telling the truth?

By saying "Unless you believe that ‘I am’" Jesus asserts that we must believe that He is the mighty God; We must believe that He is the eternal deity. We must believe that He is the promised Messiah. We must believe that He is the faithful covenant God.

“I am”---what a claim! It is a shocking declaration if it is honest and equally outrageous if it is not! If it is not true, it is a scurrilous affair for any mere man to make such an alarming and blasphemous assertion. Off with His Head!

If it is true, however, Jesus is claiming that there is no salvation outside of believing that He is Yahweh, the eternally self-existent One (Isaiah 43:10). Christ is teaching that belief in His true identity is not an option. “If you reject my identity, you shall die in your sins” is His solemn, twice-repeated warning.

So you say you are a Christian, yet you reject Christ as God? You then must assume Christ to be confused for, He whom you call your Saviour says He does not save those who reject Him as God.

He says you will die in your sins if you reject His deity.

You will die as a wretch without a mediator.

You will bear responsibility for your sins before the judgment seat.

Neither a super-angel nor a God-inspired man can deliver you. Indeed, no one can deliver you from the coming wrath except He who is fully God and man! Reject Christ's deity, and you will perish.

William Romaine is judicious on this point of Christ's Deity. He writes:

“Let no person think that this is a speculative point. It is not an indifferent thing whether you receive it or not, but your eternal state depends upon it, you must receive it, or perish forever; for whosoever disbelieves it shall be damned. This may sound very harsh to the ears of free and candid inquirers, but I really cannot soften it. ... The Almighty has threatened to inflict it (damnation) upon the deniers of Christ's divinity and let men make ever so light of it, He will infallibly inflict it; and, therefore, I must again admonish you, that whoever does not believe Jesus Christ to be self-existent, ... shall be damned.”

William Romaine: The Self-Existence of Jesus Christ:

And that's the Gospel Truth!