

The Vincennes Voice

“...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight...” (Matt. 3:3)

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THE “I AM’S” OF APOSTLE PAUL

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Frequently, the apostle Paul would employ the phrase “I am.” He wrote “But by the grace of God I am what I am” (I Cor. 15:10). What was Paul, and can we say the same? Can you say the same?

1) “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise” (Rom. 1:14). Paul felt the load of needing to share the Gospel to all who would listen. In fact, Paul uttered “woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel” (I Cor. 9:16)! We, too, should feel the weight of needing to distribute the good news of God’s Word to all!

2) “I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also” (Rom. 1:15). Paul was prepared to “Preach the word” (II Tim. 4:2). He realized this activity was “foolishness” to those who are lost, but was the “power of God” to those who believed (I Cor. 1:18). We need to involve ourselves in

the diligent study of God’s Word (II Tim. 2:15) in order to be ready to preach. Souls depend upon it (I Tim. 4:16).

3) “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16). When holding the Bible, we possess the most powerful words on Earth. It is this word which is “able to save your souls” (Jam. 1:21). Of them we shall not be ashamed. Remember, Paul was often rejected as was the Lord (Mk. 12:10). We will be too, but be not “weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9).

4) “I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (I Cor. 9:22). Taking interest in others and exhibiting the love owed to them (Rom. 13:8) will go a long way in showing them

we care. The aim of this care and concern is for “the profit of many, that they may be saved” (I Cor. 10:33). It has been said, “No one cares how much you know until they know much you care.” Some food for thought!

5) “I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God” (I Cor. 15:9). This statement well-illustrates the humbleness of Paul. Later, Paul described himself as “less than the least of all saints” (Eph. 3:8). There is no room in God’s kingdom for the prideful (Jam. 4:6).

6) “I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation” (II Cor. 7:4). For some, it is hard to understand statements such as this one. But Paul understood “tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope” (Rom. 5:3-4). The same can be true of us as well. *(continued)*

THE “I AM’S” OF APOSTLE PAUL *continued*

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7) “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). Paul’s life as a Christian was in full devotion to Jesus. He went “unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach” (Heb. 13:13). He was “ready to be offered” for Him, and was (II Tim. 4:6). Others need to see Christ in our life, and in our death. Do they? Will they?

8) “I am an ambassador in bonds” (Eph. 6:20). An ambassador is a representative. In this case, Paul, even while in prison, was representing Jesus. Paul reminded the Corinthians “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ” (II Cor. 5:20). If we intend to represent the Lord, then we must preach His gospel (Rom. 15:19), promote His body (Rom. 7:4), respect His church (Rom. 16:16) and seek His glory (II Cor. 8:23).

9) “I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” (Php. 1:23). Paul wanted to go home, to his Head, to the One who called to him on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-9). Yet, he realized remaining on earth would present him with many more opportunities to bring others to the Lord. With these words of Paul we are encouraged to not chain ourselves to this world (I Jn. 2:15), but yet remain “ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (I Pet. 3:15).

10) “I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need” (Php. 4:12). Paul had “learned” to be content in whatever state he found himself, be it a lot or little (Php. 4:11). In writing to Timothy he said, “But godliness with contentment is great gain” (I Tim. 6:6). Paul’s recipe for success was simple, “Be holy and be happy!”

11) “I am chief” (I Tim. 1:15). Paul admitted to being “a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious” (I Tim. 1:13). He realized he was as all other men who “have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). This is why Paul, as should we be, was ever thankful “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (I Tim. 1:15). “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Cor. 15:57).

12) “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand” (II Tim. 4:6). Paul was fully aware his physical life was nearing an end, and he was set to give his life. Earlier Paul had written “Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all” (Php. 2:17). Something much better beyond this world awaits the faithful (Psa. 16:11). May we live in such a way to see it!

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY
Bible Study – 10:00 am
Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY
Bible Study – 7:00 pm