

What's in a Name?

John 17:6-10, 25-26

On this final Sunday of Advent, our launching point is Jesus' profound statement in His prayer to His Father only hours before the cross, "I have manifested Your name to the men You gave Me out of the world." Jesus also refers to His Father's name in verses 11 and 12, and again as He concludes His prayer, "and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:6, 26). With these words of Jesus before us, the question I want to address today and again next week is simply, "What's in a name?" more specifically, "What's in the Name of God?" The names of God given in Scripture always refer to His character, His attributes, and to the perfection of His essence as the one true God.

1. JESUS' COMPELLING WORDS AS HE APPROACHED THE FINAL DAYS OF HIS INCARNATION (John 17:1-5)

- He declares that the hour for which He came into the world had arrived (17:1; John 12:26-27).
- He identifies believers as those whom His Father had given to Him. (17:2,6,9,24; Ephesians 1:3-7)
- Jesus describes eternal life as "knowing You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." (17:3)
- Jesus affirms that all aspects of the completed work of His Incarnation had brought glory to His Father. (17:4-5)
- Jesus summarizes His ministry as "manifesting Your name to the men you gave Me out of the world."

2. GOD'S NAME IS TO ALWAYS BE PREEMINENT IN THE LIVES OF HIS PEOPLE. (Exod. 20:7; Matt. 6:9; Prov. 18:10; Psalm 8:1; 20:7; 29:1; 30:4; 33:21; 34:3; 52:9; 66:1; 69:30; 72:17-19; 75:1; 79:7; 86:9; 100:4-5; 106:47; 111:10; 113:3; 115:1; 124:8; 135:1-3; 138:2; 145:1-2; I Samuel 12:22; Isaiah 48:11; Daniel 2:20; 9:19; Malachi 3:16)

3. THE ONE TRUE GOD PROGRESSIVELY REVEALED HIMSELF, OFTEN THROUGH HIS NAMES.

- Elohim – the holy, almighty God (Genesis 1; Luke 1:49)
- Yahweh – the self-existent, relational, covenant God who redeems (Exodus 3:14; 33: 12-16; 34:6-7)
- Adonai – the sovereign Lord over all (I Sam. 24:8; 26:17)
- Jehovah-Jirah, the faithful God who provides (Gen. 22:14)
- Jehovah-Rapha, the compassionate God who heals (Exodus 15:26; Psalm 103:3)
- Jehovah-Nissi, the conquering God who is our banner (Exodus 17:15)
- Jehovah-Shalom, the comforting God who is our peace (Judges 6:24; Hebrews 13:20)
- Jehovah-Shama, the gracious God, our righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6; 33:15-16; II Corinthians 5:21)

4. GOD PERFECTLY REVEALED HIMSELF THROUGH HIS SON AS THE LIVING WORD.

- Emmanuel - the compelling name of His Incarnation (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:22-23)