



Welcome to Our Spring Life Group Session! Let's jump in ...

Just before going to the cross, the book of John records a powerful prayer by Jesus for his Church ... you and I. This is what he prayed.

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world ... Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You(John 17:6,7)

Think about what Jesus is saying, to "manifest" something is to demonstrate, to show evidence of, or provide proof. What was Jesus manifesting. The name of God. This is huge! Everything that Jesus did revealed more of the character and nature of God to us.

All of the Old Testament names of God were authenticated through the life, ministry, and miracles of Jesus. The God Who Provides (Jehovah Jireh) fed the 5,000, the God Who Heals (Jehovah Rapha) restored those whom he touched, the God Who is Righteous (Jehovah Tsidkenu) provoked repentance, and the God Who is Peace (Jehovah Shalom) initiated reconciliation with people. Jesus, "Emmanuel" (God with Us) had come as promised beyond any shadow of doubt and had begun the restoration of all things.

And then Jesus said this,

"O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." (John 17:25-26)

Jesus proclaims to His Father that he had given these men a revelation of God's name and a promise to continue to reveal His name to them, resulting in the capacity to contain the very love of God ... even Christ Himself. As Paul writes in Colossians,

"To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27)

Though this revelation would fill them with the fullness of God, absolutely transforming them, it wasn't just for them. There was more. Jesus prayed this prayer just before he went to the cross and ascended to the Father, leaving his earthly ministry in the hands of his disciples. Jesus revealed this to them, so they could walk in the fullness of God revealing His Name to humanity. These lowly fishermen and tax collectors "turned the world upside down" because the

God in them, whom they now knew intimately and who made them partakers of His Divine nature, did super abundantly more through them than they could ever ask or imagine. (Ephesians 3)

What does this mean for us?

... as Jesus revealed God's Name to us, we (The Church) reveal God's Name to the world.

The study of God's name is more than increasing our intellectual understanding of what God is like and what His "Job Description" is. Jesus has called his Church to reveal His power, His character, His priorities, His purposes and how He will relate to us. God conceals His true identity from those who are merely curious, but he has promised to disclose himself to those who diligently seek him with their whole heart.

Just as Isaiah was transformed after beholding God in His Glory, our purpose for this Life Group semester is to get greater insight into His heart so that we would be inspired and empowered to cry with Isaiah, "Here I am. Send me!" There is a world out there (and for that matter a Church!) that desperately needs to see the reality of the God who loves them like He loves Jesus; the God who invites them into His Kingdom to participate in the ongoing process of reconciliation and the restoration of all things, as well as joining Him in the battle against the forces of darkness and destruction. We can be changed as we behold His Glory, the Glory of His Name.

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." (2 Cor 4:7)

Each week we will be focusing on a different Old Testament name of God. Each session will have the following outline.

- I. Define an Old Testament name of God
- II. Show how Jesus demonstrated/embodyed the Name of God
- III. How can we reflect the Name of God to the world around us
- IV. Prayer
- V. Discussion Questions

Please be diligent to spend some time reading and answering the questions before your meeting so you can jump right into the conversation.

Discussion Questions:

Why are names important? Do you know the meaning of your name? (if not look it up and share with the group)

Read John Chapter 17. A few of the core themes are glory, authority, and unity. How are these related to the revelation of the Name of God?

God is almighty, infinite, beyond comprehension ... how are we able to reveal His name to the world?

We just came out of the Fast and Encounter. Share with others what God did in you over this past month.