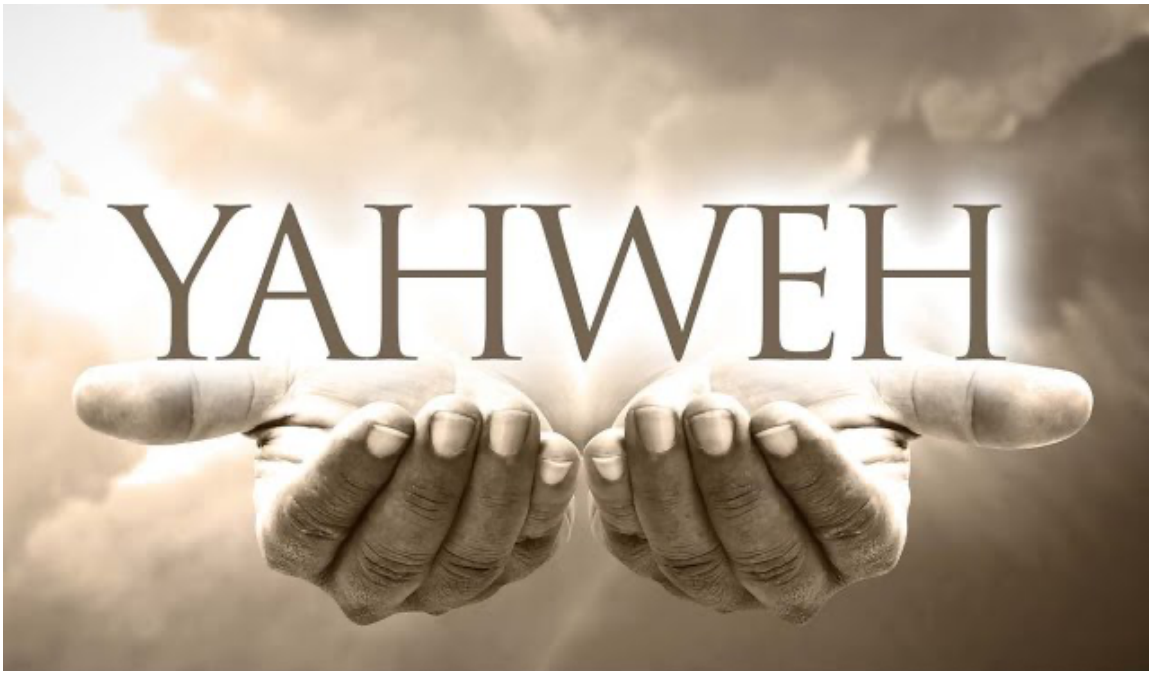




Jesus the Great “I AM”

(More Than Just a Name)

This is a six-week study aimed at helping participants more fully recognize that while what we know and recognize of God is wonderful, it is a microscopic fraction of the true fullness and greatness of God.

Ephesians 3:16-21

¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

By Bill Cullen, 2026

Introduction: *Jesus the Great “I AM” — More Than Just a Name*

At the heart of the Christian faith stands a God who desires to be known—yet who refuses to be reduced, contained, or domesticated by our definitions. Scripture reveals a God who introduces Himself not with a title, but with a verb. When Moses asks for God’s name, the Lord answers, “*I AM WHO I AM... Tell them ‘I AM’ has sent me to you*” (Ex. 3:14). “*God wants to be known and recognized by not simply a formal name, but by what He does.*”

This six-week journey is built around the truth: God reveals Himself through His actions, His character, and His saving work—not through a single label. Every name of God in Scripture—El Shaddai, El Roi, Yahweh Jireh, Yahweh Shalom, the Good Shepherd, the True Vine—is not a definition but a testimony. Each name arises from a moment when God stepped into human history and showed His people who He is.

“I can tell you about my experiences of and with God, but I can’t tell you exactly who God is because He keeps exploding my definitions.” This, my confession, is the guiding posture of this study. We come not to master information about God, but to be mastered by the God who reveals Himself. We come not to shrink God into our categories, but to let Him expand our imagination, deepen our trust, and reshape our lives.

What This Study Will Explore

Across six weeks, participants will encounter:

- The God who names Himself “I AM”—the One who is beyond definition yet intimately present.
- The El-names—descriptive titles arising from God’s covenant actions in Israel’s story.
- The Yahweh-names—moments when God’s people discovered His provision, healing, presence, and peace.
- Jesus’ “I AM” statements—the clearest declaration that the God of Exodus 3 stands before us in the person of Christ.
- Contrast the false “gods” of abundant life—Money, Sex, Power, and Fame—with the true Giver of life in a satirical skit.
- A life of trust and discipleship—the abundant life Jesus promises in John 10:10.

This study blends biblical exegesis, personal reflection, historical theology, and creative storytelling. It invites participants to move from information to transformation—from knowing *about* God to knowing God personally, relationally, and experientially.

The Aim of This Journey

St. Paul prays that believers would “*grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ... and be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God*” (Eph. 3:18–19). Yet he also acknowledges that this love “*surpasses knowledge.*” This study lives in that tension: God is knowable, yet never fully known; personal, yet never small; near, yet never tame.

By exploring the names of God and the identity of Jesus, participants will learn to:

- Recognize God’s character through His actions
- Trust Him more deeply in daily life
- Discern false promises of “abundant life”
- Experience the peace, presence, and leadership of the Good Shepherd
- Grow in confidence that the God who *was* faithful still *is* faithful

Ultimately, this study invites each person to encounter the living God who says, “*I AM...*”—and to discover that He is immeasurably more than we ask or imagine.

WEEK 1 — “Who Is God? The God Who Says ‘I AM’”

Scripture: Exodus 3:1–15; Ephesians 3:17–19

“God wants to be known...by what He does.”

When God calls Moses to lead His people, Moses questions God. He asks God who he should tell the Israelites has called him and is sending him to lead the Israelite people. God responds to Moses in Exodus 3:14, where God tells Moses to tell them, “I AM WHO I AM...has sent me to you.”

The Hebrew word for I AM is אֶהְיֶה Yahweh. By so identifying Himself, God, in essence, was telling Moses and the Israelites that He (God) is undefinable. God is telling the Israelites that He is more than they could ever imagine. “I AM...” “I AM this, and this, and this, etc.”

I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex. 3:6,15,16)

I AM the God who brought you up out of Egypt, up out of bondage. (Ex. 20:2)

God wants to be known and recognized by not simply a formal name, but by what He does.

When I was growing up (Jr. High, High School, even college), if someone asked me who God is, I would tell them. I would tell them because I thought I knew God. Anymore, if someone asked me who God is, I tell them, “I can tell you about my experiences of and with God, but I can’t tell you exactly who God is because He keeps exploding my definitions and any boundaries my definition would impose upon Him.” God basically says, “I AM more than that.”

While I can no longer define God, through my experiences of Him, I am more sure of Him than ever. I cannot define God, but I can tell you about Him and my experience. While God is an objective truth and reality, describing God rather than defining God makes God very personal. – Bill Cullen

St. Paul in Ephesians 3:17-19 writes, “I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” He prays that people might know God and His love while at the same time acknowledging it is beyond knowing.

Paul Tillich, in his book Dynamics of Faith, writes that, in a sense, to even call God “God” is idolatry. What he means is that God is more than anything we can or do imagine when we use the word “God”. For Tillich, God isn’t another “being” among “beings.” For Tillich, that would make God finite with boundaries. For Tillich, God is “being” itself. Sighting passages like Exodus 3:14 and Acts 17:28, Tillich talks of God being the “Ground of all being” and of being “Being-itself.” (Tillich is not suggesting calling God “God” is a sin. He is suggesting that we need to be aware that God is more than we envision by the name.)

Discussion Prompts

1. What would you tell someone who asked you, “Who is God?”
2. When Moses asks for God’s name, God answers, “I AM WHO I AM.”
 - What does this reveal about God’s nature?
 - Why might God choose a *verb* rather than a *noun*?
3. Bill writes, “He keeps exploding my definitions.”
 - Has God ever “exploded” a definition or assumption you held about Him?
4. Paul prays that we would “know this love that surpasses knowledge.”
 - How do you personally experience a God who is both knowable and beyond knowing?
5. What are your thoughts and feelings about God wanting to be known more by His actions than by an actual name?
 - Why do you think God prefers to be known by His actions rather than a fixed label?
6. What boxes are people tempted to try to put God into? Has God exploded any boxes you have tried to put Him into? Explain.
7. What is one area of your life where you need to let God be bigger than your current understanding?



WEEK 2 — “The God Who Acts: The El-Names”

Scripture: Genesis 16, 17, 21; Isaiah 9:6

“These names arise from God’s actions in Israel’s story.”

The Relational and Descriptive Names (El + Attribute)

These names arise from God’s actions in Israel’s story. They are descriptive rather than definitive.

El Shaddai — *God Almighty*

Reveals: Power, sufficiency, protection.

Context: God’s covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:1).

El Elyon — *God Most High*

Reveals: Sovereignty over nations and spiritual powers.

Context: Melchizedek blesses Abram (Gen 14:18–20).

El Olam — *Everlasting God*

Reveals: God’s eternal nature and unchanging purposes.

Context: Abraham at Beersheba (Gen 21:33).

El Roi — *The God Who Sees Me*

Reveals: God’s compassion and attention to the vulnerable.

Context: Hagar in the wilderness (Gen 16:13).

El Gibbor — *Mighty God*

Reveals: Warrior strength, divine power.

Context: Messianic prophecy (Isa 9:6).

Discussion Prompts

1. Which El-name (El Shaddai, El Elyon, El Olam, El Roi, El Gibbor) resonates most with you right now? Why?
2. Each name reveals something God *did* for someone.
 - Which story (Hagar, Abraham, Melchizedek, Isaiah’s prophecy) speaks most deeply to you?
3. How does knowing God as “The God Who Sees Me” (El Roi) challenge or comfort you? (See Ps. 139:1-18)
4. Where in your life do you need God to be “Everlasting,” “Almighty,” or “Mighty”?
5. How do these names help you trust God more personally rather than abstractly?



WEEK 3 — “The God Who Provides, Heals, Leads, and Is Present: The Yahweh-Names”

Scripture: Genesis 22; Exodus 15 & 17; Judges 6; Psalm 23; Jeremiah 23; Ezekiel 48

“These arise from specific moments of deliverance, provision, or revelation.”

The Yahweh-Compound Names (YHWH + Attribute)

These arise from specific moments of deliverance, provision, or revelation, and are again descriptive rather than definitive.

Yahweh-Jireh — *The LORD Will Provide*

Reveals: Provision, substitution, sacrificial mercy.

Context: Abraham and Isaac (Gen 22:14).

Yahweh-Rapha — *The LORD Who Heals*

Reveals: Healing of body, soul, and community.

Context: After the bitter waters at Marah (Exod 15:26).

Yahweh-Nissi — *The LORD Is My Banner*

Reveals: Victory, protection, God as the rallying point.

Context: Battle with Amalek (Exod 17:15).

Yahweh-Shalom — *The LORD Is Peace*

Reveals: Wholeness, well-being, God’s calming presence.

Context: Gideon’s altar (Judg 6:24).

Yahweh-Rohi — *The LORD Is My Shepherd*

Reveals: Guidance, care, protection.

Context: Psalm 23.

Yahweh-Tsidkenu — *The LORD Our Righteousness*

Reveals: God as the source of righteousness and justice.

Context: Messianic promise (Jer 23:6).

Yahweh-Shammah — *The LORD Is There*

Reveals: God’s abiding presence with His people.

Context: Vision of the restored Jerusalem (Ezek 48:35).

Yahweh-Sabaoth — *The LORD of Hosts / Armies*

Reveals: Commander of heavenly armies; cosmic authority.

Context: Used over 250 times, especially in prophets.

Titles That Reveal God’s Character

These are not “names” in the strict sense but reveal aspects of God’s nature; again, they are descriptive.

Adonai — *Lord, Master*

Reveals: Authority, leadership, ownership.

HaKadosh — *The Holy One*

Reveals: God’s purity, uniqueness, and moral perfection.

WEEK 4 — “Jesus the Great I AM”

Scripture: John 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15

*“I am the bread... the light... the gate... the good shepherd...
the resurrection & life... the way, the truth, the life... the true vine.”*

In the Gospel of John, we have Jesus’ seven famous “I AM” statements. (In Greek ἐγὼ egō = I and εἰμι eimi = am)

John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, “*I am the bread of life*. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.”

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “*I am the light of the world*. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

John 10:7 Therefore Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, *I am the gate* for the sheep.”

John 10:11 “*I am the good shepherd*. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, “*I am the resurrection and the life*. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;”

John 14:6 Jesus answered, “*I am the way and the truth and the life*. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 15:1 “*I am the true vine*, and my Father is the gardener.”

Discussion Prompts

1. Which of Jesus’ “I AM” statements is most meaningful to you at this time? Why?
2. How does each statement meet a deep human need (hunger, direction, safety, life, truth, connection)?
3. Jesus says, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” (See Jn. 10:1-18)
 - How does this shape your understanding of His leadership?
4. Which “I AM” statement challenges you the most? ...comforts and/or assures you the most
5. How do these statements connect Jesus directly to the God of Exodus 3?



WEEK 5 — “To Tell the Truth: The False Givers of Abundant Life”

Scripture: John 10:10; Romans 5 & 8; Philippians 4:7

*“The abundant life I promise is to fill your life with so many things...” (Money)
and “My greatest act of love...was when I gave My Son Jesus to die for you.” (Yahweh)*

To Tell the Truth

A skit patterned after the old Game Show “To Tell the Truth.”

Host:	The Host	#4:	Contestant #4 Yahweh
#1:	Contestant #1 Money	P-1:	Panelist 1
#2:	Contestant #2 Sex	P-2:	Panelist 2
#3:	Contestant #3 Power & Fame	P-3:	Panelist 3

H Today, we are pleased to be able to host the new and improved “To Tell the Truth Show” featuring contestants **MONEY**, **SEX**, **POWER & FAME**, and **YAHWEH**: Giver of Abundant Life.

Our contestants for today all claim to be “The Giver of Abundant Life.” Contestant #1, please identify yourself.

#1 Trust me. My name is **MONEY**, Giver of Abundant Life.

H Contestant #2, please identify yourself.

#2 Trust me. My name is **SEX**, Giver of Abundant Life.

H Contestant #3, please identify yourself.

#3 Trust me. My name is **POWER and FAME**, Giver of Abundant Life.

H Contestant #4, please identify yourself.

#4 Trust me. My name is **YAHWEH**, Giver of Abundant Life.

H Okay, audience, you and our panelists have all heard our contestants claim to be the “Giver of Abundant Life.” Our panelists will now each have the opportunity to ask our contestants a series of questions to determine which contestant is truly the “Giver of Abundant Life.” Let us listen carefully to what our contestants have to say for themselves. _Panelist #1, will you begin, please?

P-1 Contestant #1, You say money is the way to experience an abundant life.

#1 You bet, anything can be had for a price.

P-1 What about the old saying, “Money can’t buy happiness”?

#1 That may be true, but remember another saying, “Money may not buy happiness, but it provides the next best thing.”

P-1 Thank you #1. Contestant #2, you say your name is Sex, Giver of Abundant Life. Is that sex within marriage or outside of marriage?

#2 Sex is sex. It doesn’t matter if one is married or not.

P-1 But isn’t sex better when it is shared with someone with whom you have made a commitment—a contract of love—if you will?

#2 Love and commitment are overrated. I say live for the moment. There may not be a tomorrow.

P-1 Thank you #2. #3, you say abundant life comes with power and fame.

#3 That's right, we all want to be liked.

P-1 Is being liked and famous the same thing? I mean, look at Hitler. He was and is famous, but I would not say he was liked.

#3 It is all a matter of perspective. Hitler was my kind of guy, both power and fame. Hitler, in his own way, is still influencing our world – the Neo-Nazi movement, the Skinheads, the White Supremacists. When we are superior, we need to act superior and keep all others in their place.

P-1 I see, #4 you identify yourself as "YAHWEH, Giver of Abundant Life." I understand the words sex, money, power, and fame, but YAHWEH.... What kind of name is that?

#4 It isn't so much a name as much as it is an identity. It is how I identified myself to Moses when I called him to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and into abundant life in the Promised Land. YAHWEH simply means "I AM...", and rather than a name, it implies: I Am your God who will be known primarily by His actions. "I Am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." I am the God who acted in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "I AM the God who brought you up out of Egypt, up out of the house of bondage." I am sure you get the idea.

P-1 Ya, I like that, a God who is best known not by His name, but by His actions - the "deeds speak louder than words" idea. Thanks!

H Okay, Panelist #2, do you have any questions for our contestants?

P-2 Yes, I do. #3, I believe it was Reinhold Niebuhr who first wrote: "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Do you agree, and do you believe it is right to use power that may breed corruption?

#3 You are confusing the issue. You see, it is not so much a question of right versus wrong. We are talking about abundant living — about getting what you want out of life. Let me counter with a saying of Machiavelli, "Might makes right." And then there is the old cliché, "Might may not always make right, but it sure wins a lot."

P-2 Interesting perspective. #1, earlier, you as much as admitted, money cannot buy happiness. Is that correct?

#1 Well, yes, but remember "it does provide the next best thing."

P-2 But you are promising abundant life, right? Is there a difference between happiness and an abundant life?

#1 Happiness, I suppose, comes with an inner sense of well-being and perhaps fulfillment. It is true that I may not be able to provide those things; however, don't underestimate me. The abundant life I promise is to fill your life with so many things that you will hardly miss the inner sense of fulfillment that people, for some reason, seem to want.

P-2 I see. #2, You say sex is the way.

#2 That's right. We all want human warmth and companionship. That's what #1 and #3 don't understand.

P-2 Are you saying that sex in and of itself provides human warmth?

#2 Sure. You get two people cuddling together on a cold night and I guarantee you will stay a lot warmer. Besides, you have heard the old saying, "She's hot."

P-2 Well, yes! Um, #4, You say you are YAHWEH, the God who led the Children of Israel into abundant life in the Promised Land. Didn't the Israelites have a lot of problems in the so-called "Promised Land"?

#4 You are right, they did. I provided them with abundance, but they never seemed to fully trust Me. I provided them with all they needed to live happily, both with true human warmth (misunderstood by #2) and with an inner sense of well-being and fulfillment (downplayed by #1), just as I provide these things for you. However, the Children of Israel would not trust Me enough to allow Me to lead them. They would not trust Me enough to do things my way. You remember the story of the twelve spies Moses sent out and how only two had faith in Me. I had the Promise Land all prepared for them, but they would not let Me lead them in. As a result, even though I was with all the Children of Israel throughout their wilderness wanderings, only Joshua and Caleb were able to experience the abundance of what I offered in the Promised Land. Unfortunately, many of My children today still fail to trust Me enough to allow Me to lead them.

H Thank you, Panelist #2, and thank you #4. Panelist #3, do you have some questions for our contestants?

P-3 How come I'm always last?

H Remember Panelist #3, "The last shall be first, and the first shall be last."

P-3 Ya, Ya. #2, aren't there a lot of dangers and negative consequences to sex outside of marriage in society today?

#2 I just knew someone would bring up AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

P-3 Well, the danger is real. And then there is also the chance of an unwanted pregnancy.

#2 You just have to take precautions and be careful.

P-3 Do even the best precautions always work?

#2 Well, there are no guarantees, but. . .

P-3 . . . but . . . (pause) #1, you said money could fill one's life with so many things that one would "hardly miss" happiness—a sense of well-being—in essence "abundant life."

#1 Did I say all that?

P-3 Basically.

#1 Wow!

P-3 It sounds like you are making money a substitute for an abundant life, or making it a drug to distract us or to deaden the pain of living.

#1 Well, if you want the truth, "life is the pits." We just have to make the most of what we have and get by the best we can. Oh, what have I said?

P-3 #3, you would have us believe that power and fame make us superior and that an abundant life comes in being superior or better than others.

#3 Right.

P-3 But what about my weaknesses and faults? We all have some, don't we?

#3 Shh. . . Just don't tell anyone. What they don't know can't hurt you.

P-3 You mean wear a mask. Hide. Live a fake life, a phony life. Is that the abundance you are offering?

#3 Put on a good enough, a strong enough, front, and no one will ever know.

- P-3 #4 You ask us to trust You on the basis of Your actions. You say trust You on the basis of what you did for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for Moses and the Children of Israel. Can You tell me more?
- #4 Well, first let Me clarify a point. The abundant life I am offering is more internal than external. It does not mean no problems, but it does mean fulfillment, a sense of well-being, and, yes, happiness. The abundant life I offer is primarily a life of love, and it is seen and understood best in My acts of love for you and for all people. My greatest act of love, unquestionably, was when I gave My Son Jesus to die for you. Romans 5 says it well, "God showed us how much He loved us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." However, Jesus' death for you is just the beginning of My love for you, and the beginning of My acts to enable you to experience abundance in life. Romans 8 says, "He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things." I want the very best for you. There is so much I have to give you.
- P-3 You also say that the only way we can experience an abundant life is to follow Your lead.
- #4 That's right. This is where you just have to trust Me. If you listen to others, be it sex, money, power & fame or whatever, you will miss what I offer. You will miss it, not because it is not here for you, but because you were too preoccupied with other pursuits to receive My blessings. Trust Me, let Me lead you. I AM "YAHWEH, Giver of Abundant Life."
- H Okay, panelist, it is time for you to decide. Is the real Giver of Abundant Life Contestant #1 - MONEY; Contestant #2 - SEX; Contestant #3 - POWER & FAME; or Contestant #4 - YAHWEH?
- Are you ready, panel? Panelist #1, whom did you choose?
- P-1 Well, it was really hard. I like money and all the things that it can buy, but I guess what I really want in life is a sense of well-being and fulfillment. #4 seemed best able to provide that.
- H Panelist #2, for whom did you vote?
- P-2 I too voted for #4. #2 would be easy to follow. I can't imagine life going on without sex. However, I voted for #4. There was a warmth and sincerity about #4 that I just couldn't ignore.
- H And Panelist #3, for whom did you vote?
- P-3 I also voted for #4. I know how easy it is to get caught up in a hunger for power and fame. They are temptations I am constantly struggling with. However, I have learned the hard way that there is a right and a wrong, and that might doesn't always make right. #4 expressed an attitude of serving, of giving in love, of acceptance, yes, even of forgiveness. Those are the things I believe it will take to truly live abundantly. Those are the things I need.
- H Well, ordinarily we would now reveal the true "Giver of Abundant Life," however, we have run out of time. You have heard the panelists' questions and the contestants' responses. The only question that remains is in whom will you trust? Who will you follow to lead you into an abundant life? So long until next week, and may you live abundantly.

"I HAVE COME TO GIVE YOU LIFE, LIFE ABUNDANTLY!" John 10:10

by Bill Cullen 2/86

Discussion Prompts

1. In the skit, which false "giver of abundant life" (Money, Sex, Power/Fame) do you think is most tempting in our culture? Why? In today's culture, what other things might you add that falsely promise a more "abundant life"?
2. Which one is most tempting for you personally?

3. Money says it can distract you from the lack of inner fulfillment.
 - Where do you see this happening in real life?
4. Power/Fame says, “Wear a mask. Hide.”
 - How does Jesus invite us into a different kind of life?
5. Yahweh says, “Trust Me... let Me lead you.”
 - What makes trusting God difficult?
 - What makes it compelling?
6. YAHWEH (Jesus) invites us to trust Him on the bases of His past actions on our behalf.
 - How have you seen Jesus acting in your life or in the life of someone you know?
 - To what extent does this help you trust in Jesus enough to daily follow His lead?
 - Which of Jesus' actions or promises is most meaningful to you at this time?
7. The skit suggests that true happiness is more internal than external. It comes with a sense of well-being and personal fulfillment.
 - Do you agree? Explain. Site examples of this truth.
 - In what ways does Jesus provide you with a sense of well-being and personal fulfillment?
8. How do you define “abundant life”? Explain.



WEEK 6 — “Trust, Discipleship, and the Abundant Life”

Scripture: Psalm 19; Jeremiah 29; John 14–15; 1 John 5

Document tie-in: “True happiness is more internal than external... fulfillment, a sense of well-being.”

Discussion Prompts

1. On a scale of 1–10, how much do you trust Jesus?
 - What shaped your number?
2. In what areas of life is it easiest to trust Him?
 - Hardest?
3. Jeremiah 29:11–13 promises that God’s plans give “hope and a future.” (Note: While God does have plans for each of us and does give us an eternal hope and a future, this promise is being given to the Jewish people as a people.)
 - Where do you need hope right now?
4. Jesus says, “My peace I give you... not as the world gives.” (Jn. 14:27)
 - How is His peace different from the world’s version?
5. What step of faith do you sense God inviting you to take?
 - What step are you ready to take today? ...this week? ...this year?
6. How can this group support you in that next step?



Bonus / Supplemental Material for Those Interested

Other Descriptors of God/Jesus Found in Scripture

Foundational Names/Identifiers

- **Jesus (Yeshua):** Meaning "The Lord saves" or "Yahweh is salvation," this personal name reflects his core mission to save people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).
- **Christ / Messiah:** Meaning "Anointed One," these titles identify him as the promised king and redeemer chosen by God (John 1:41).
- **Immanuel:** Meaning "God with us," highlighting that God became human to dwell among his people (Isaiah 7:14).
- **Son of God:** Declares his divine nature and unique relationship as the second person of the Trinity (Matthew 16:16).
- **Son of Man:** Jesus' most frequent self-title, emphasizing both his humanity and his role as the prophesied heavenly judge (Matthew 8:20).

Redemptive Roles

- **Lamb of God:** Represents Jesus as the perfect sacrifice whose death pays for the sins of the world (John 1:29).
- **Redeemer:** One who "buys back" or rescues someone from bondage, specifically from the debt of sin (Job 19:25).
- **Savior:** The title for his role in rescuing humanity from spiritual death and danger (Luke 2:11).
- **Mediator:** The one who stands between God and humanity to reconcile their relationship (1 Timothy 2:5).
- **High Priest:** Acts as the ultimate representative for humanity before God, interceding on their behalf (Hebrews 4:14).

Majestic and Authoritative Titles

- **Alpha and Omega:** The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, meaning he is the "Beginning and the End" of all things (Revelation 22:13).
- **King of Kings / Lord of Lords:** Declares his absolute sovereignty and authority over every earthly power (Revelation 19:16).
- **Prince of Peace:** A prophetic title indicating his rule brings true harmony between God and man (Isaiah 9:6).
- **Wonderful Counselor:** Describes his infinite wisdom and ability to provide perfect guidance (Isaiah 9:6).
- **Lion of the Tribe of Judah:** Symbolizes his royal lineage from the tribe of Judah and his power as a victorious conqueror (Revelation 5:5).

A-Z List of Names/Identifiers

Here are additional identifiers found across scripture:

- A:** Advocate, Almighty, Author and Finisher of Our Faith
- B:** Branch, Bright and Morning Star, Bridegroom
- C:** Chief Cornerstone, Creator, Captain of Salvation
- D:** Day Star, Deliverer, Door
- E:** Everlasting Father, Eternal Life
- F:** Faithful and True Witness, Firstborn from the Dead
- G:** Great God
- H:** Head of the Church, Holy One of God
- I:** I Am, Image of the Invisible God
- K:** King of Israel, King of the Jews
- M:** Master, Mighty God, Morning Star
- N:** Nazarene
- O:** Only Begotten Son, Our Passover
- R:** Rabbi, Rock
- S:** Servant, Shiloh, Son of David
- T:** Teacher, True Light
- W:** Word (Logos), Worthy

A Few Bible Passages Inviting Us to Trust

Psalms 19:7-11 (NIV)

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. ⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. ⁹ The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. ¹⁰ They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. ¹¹ By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Jeremiah 29:11-13 (NIV)

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹² Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Matthew 6:25-27 (NIV)

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

Matthew 20:25-28 (NIV)

Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ²⁶Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— ²⁸just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

John 3:16-17 (NIV)

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

John 10:10 (NIV)

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 14:27 (NIV)

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 15:9-12 (NIV)

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

John 20:30-31 (NIV)

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Romans 5:7-8 (NIV)

Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8:28 (NIV)

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

1 Corinthians 1:18-25 (NIV)

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. ²² Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NIV)

We live by faith, not by sight.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Philippians 1:21 (NIV)

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Philippians 4:7 (NIV)

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

1 John 1:7-9 (NIV)

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. ⁸If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 2:1-2 (NIV)

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ²He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 John 4:19 (NIV)

We love because he first loved us.

1 John 5:3-5 (NIV)

This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, ⁴for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

⁵Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

HEY, ANT, LISTEN TO ME!

Oh my. Oh no. Good grief, I must hurry. How am I going to get there in time? Oh no! I'm not going to make it. Oh, hurry, hurry, hurry. No, please don't rain. Oh no. Now what will I do? Oh, what should I do? What's this? It's too slippery to climb over. Well, I guess I'll have to go around it. Whoops, what direction was I headed in? Oh, shoot! Where am I?

Lookout!

(pause)

What a terribly big mountain. How will I get around it in time? Oh, I have to hurry, hurry, hurry.

Listen to me, ant.

(pause)

Did I hear someone call me?

Yes.

Who?

The elephant. I have something to tell you.

Sorry. I don't have time right now.

Wait just a minute, would you?

I don't know who you are, or even where you are, so would you leave me alone! I must go. I'm late.

I'm the elephant, and you can't see me because I'm too far up for you to see me --

No, wait! Don't go away.

Listen, I've never heard of an elephant before, and if there was an elephant, I'm sure he wouldn't be invisible, so leave me alone, okay? I'm in a hurry. I have to go.

I AM WHAT I AM. I wouldn't be talking to you if I wasn't. If you would stop long enough to listen to me. You wouldn't end up in the rut that you're headed for.

Would you leave me alone? You're nothing but a distraction, and I can't afford any distractions. I have to concentrate on getting--oh, no! Help! Oh, I've fallen into a muddy hole. Oh, I'm doomed! Stupid ant! Why didn't I see this hole before I fell into it? Oh, I'm doomed to die and I'll never get where I was going. Oh, what terrible misfortune! Help! Help! What's the use? This hole is too big anyway. No one could help me out.

I can.

Who?

Turn around.

Oh! What is it?

It is me, the elephant.

But I can see you. You're in front of me, why couldn't I see you before?

You don't see all of me.

Why?

You only need this part of me that you see.

I don't understand.

Climb onto that part of me that you see.

Why?

I'll get you out of the hole. I don't want you to die.

But...

All you have to do is climb onto my trunk and I'll carry you out of the hole.

There's got to be a trick involved somewhere...

There isn't.

What if I don't choose to climb onto your trunk?

You'll die.

Oh.

Your only other choice is to trust me to live.

That's all?

Yes.

Well then, let's quit wasting time.

(the ant climbs on)

There. Now you are on better ground.

Where did you go?

I'm back up here where I belong.

Are you always up there?

Yes.

Can you see me from up there?

Yes, I can see you and your family and friends and everyone else. That's what I tried to tell you before.

I don't remember hearing you say anything like that before.

That's because you were so worried about yourself, and you didn't have time for me.

Yes, but...

I tried to tell you that I could see where you were headed. I could see that you were going in the wrong direction.

Yes, but...

I could have helped you.

Yes, well, I know that now, but I know you are for real now.

(pause)

Elephant?

Yes?

Thank you. Umm. This might sound dumb coming from me, a tiny ant, but is there anything I can do for you?

Yes, you could be of great service to me. You can tell everyone you know that they too can be saved from their worries by simply listening to me.

Oh, they will.

No, they won't listen to me. I need you. They won't understand the type of life I could bring them unless they hear about me from you and see with their own eyes how I have brought peace to you.

But if they then believe that you will lead them in their lives also, will you then direct them?

Yes, I will.

Story by Mary Carol Thomas, 1980; adapted by Bill Cullen into a dialogue with discussion guide, 1981.

Discussion Guide:

Read: *Jeremiah 29:11-13; Matthew 11:28-30; Mark 5:19; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:14-17; 1 Timothy 1:15-16; 1 John 1:1-4; 1 John 4:10*

1. What strikes you about the story? ...about the Bible passages?
2. What parallels can you draw between the ant and the elephant and your relationship with God? Where do you see yourself in the story?
3. What are some of the ruts you have encountered in life?
4. Where/how have you experienced God's deliverance? What have you seen, heard and touched of God's grace and goodness? To what can you give witness?
5. Who is someone you know that needs to hear and learn of God's grace and goodness? To whom can and will you give witness?
 - What specifically does this person need to hear?
 - What can and will you say?
 - What can you do to create the opportunity?