

The Meaning Behind the Names

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[0 : 00] So, as I mentioned, this is an all-age service. We are at the start of a new series today, looking at the names of God.

If we can have the next slide. Here's the beautiful person. This is my new nephew, who was born two and a half weeks ago.

He actually shares my birthday, which I think probably the best birthday present. I've ever received, if you can count it as a present to me. But his name, which I think is on the next slide, is Tobias Alexander McGuff.

So, we're thinking about names. And when we met Tobias for the first time, we were talking with my sister and brother-in-law about actually why did they choose those names?

Did James, my brother-in-law, have anyone in his family with those names? He's like, no, we liked the meanings of them. So, the meanings of those names. Tobias. We'll have to come up on the screen because I don't entirely remember them.

[1 : 07] God is good. And Alexander, I do remember, I believe is defender of men. And that's why my sister and brother-in-law chose those names, because of the meanings behind them.

And it's got me thinking about the meanings of names quite a bit. So, the fact that we're starting a series on the names of God is quite a good, maybe coincidence, maybe God's timing, I like to think is that one.

So, a lot of parents spend time, like parents spend a lot of time thinking about names for their children. Some parents will choose names because they like the sound of it.

I know some parents who have chosen names, in part because it's hard for bullies to make fun of them. But I know a lot of parents who choose names because of the meaning behind them, just like my sister did.

And that's perhaps parents choosing a name for their child because that's the type of person they want their child to become.

[2 : 18] But when we think about the names of God, actually it's the other way around. We're given a lot of different names for God throughout the Bible. And the names that we are given tell us something about God.

Many of those names, most of those names are given to us by God himself because they reveal to us information about who he is.

There are lots of people who you could look at their name and then look at them and say, yeah, I'm not sure you quite fit the meaning of your name. But God's names reveal his character to us.

Isaiah chapter 9. Prophecy the coming, the birth of Jesus.

Verse 6. For to us a child is born. To us a son is given. And the government will be on his shoulders. God knew.

[3 : 36] God knew way before we even came along that Jesus was going to be coming to earth. And he knew the names that Jesus would be given.

And he didn't just pick those names because, oh, they're good titles or they sound good. He picked those names because God knew that that is exactly the man that Jesus was going to be.

And that was the role that Jesus was going to fulfill. So over the next few weeks, as we are looking at different names of God, these names that reveal God's character to us, and also tell us more about the role that God fulfills as well.

Let's think about what we can learn from the names of God. We've been thinking this morning about meaning behind names.

Why names are so important. And then I said that actually there is a difference between God's name and our names. Our names are given to us, maybe because our parents like the sound of

them, maybe because it's the type of person our parents want us to become.

[4 : 54] But God's names tell us about who God is. But there's more to it than that as well.

It's not just God's character that is revealed through his names. But the Bible tells us that God's name has power as well.

In John 14, verses 13 to 14. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. Jesus tells us to use God's name. It's when we pray, when we are asking God for help or for provision, to use God's name.

Peter and John 14. Peter and one of the other disciples, Peter and John, were walking into the temple when they saw a man begging.

[6 : 13] A man who had been lame from birth. Peter and he asked them for money. Then Peter looked at him and he said, silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you.

In the name of Jesus Christ, walk. Peter healed somebody exactly the same way that he had seen Jesus healing people countless times.

But he said, in the name of Jesus. It's not through our power that we can do the things that Jesus did. It's through his. There's two key moments I want to pick up on when God's name is specifically referred to.

Two of them for very different reasons. The first, we're going to go back into the book of Exodus. When Moses is given the Ten Commandments to take down to the people, one of those commandments is do not use the Lord's name in vain.

How often do we hear people saying, oh my God, or for God's sake, or something worse than that. It's not just about, I mean, I described this to children in St. Jude's a few weeks ago by saying, think of someone important to you.

[7 : 38] If I was to go around and saying, oh my Tobias, oh for Tobias, that's not going to feel good. People aren't going to be happy with that. But there is more to it than that.

The Bible says that God's name is important. It's through God's name. When we call to him through his name that he provides to us. It's when we call upon his name that he gives us the power to heal people who need healing.

To comfort people who need comforting. If we take that name in vain, if we go around turning into a swear word or using it so casually, where's the power in that name?

And then the other is in the Gospels, the Lord's Prayer. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. We start the Lord's Prayer.

Jesus tells us to pray first by saying how great God's name is. God's name is important.

[8 : 43] It reveals his character to us. But there is power in it as well. When we call on God's name, when we say, please God help me because I don't know what to do.

God knows that we are serious about crying out and calling out to him. But when we go, when we say to somebody who we're wanting to heal, when we say, in the name of Jesus, be healed.

God knows that we are not just calling upon his power, but we're remembering that it's God who is healing, not us. We're not taking credit for the things that God does when we use his name.

Colossians 3 verse 17. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

I've got a video that I want us to play. It's a worship song called I Speak Jesus. And it demonstrates the difference that God's name can make in our lives.

[10 : 09] What does the name of Jesus mean? When you think about the meaning of the name of Jesus, what comes to mind? Wonderful counselor, guider, comforter, companion, friend, king above all other kings.

Jesus' name means all of those things and more. So over these next few weeks, as we are looking and exploring some of the names of God, let's think about what can we learn about God's character through that.

But also, what does that mean in our lives? What difference does it make? Because when we call upon God's name, it makes a difference.

So in everything you do, in both word and deed, do it in the name of Jesus. I'm going to invite you to stand for one last song together.

Let's praise the name of Jesus this morning. Father God, thank you that your name is the highest. Thank you that your name is the greatest.

[11 : 29] Thank you that that means we can call upon you. Always, at any time, both in the good and the bad. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen.