

WEEK 1 PREVIEW

Names for Jesus

We play a great game around our dinner table. It's called the "What do you like about?" game. We go around the table, saying things we like about a family member. It's especially gratifying to hear what the kids say: "Mommy is kind." "Daddy is silly." "Mommy is a hard worker." Or one of my personal faves: "Daddy is a beast." While we can never put into words how much our family means to us, it sure is fun to try.

When you think of some of the most respected Christians of all time, how would you describe them? John the Baptist. Mother Teresa. Jim Elliot. Bill Bright. The Apostle Paul. C.S. Lewis. Billy Graham. Peter. We are in awe of people like this and rightfully so. They were fiercely obedient to the call God placed on their hearts, costing some of them their lives. If we played the "What do you like about?" game, we could easily come up with four or five attributes that could sum up the depth of their character.

When we think of Jesus, though, the greatest man of all time, summarizing suddenly gets harder. There just are not enough words in all the languages on Earth. No human descriptions could adequately capture the profundity of who He was and is. But it sure is fun to try.

To get the fun started, we need to look no further than Scripture. Some of the most poignant, descriptive, and apt titles for the only man to have lived perfectly reside there. The only man on whom calendars are founded. The only man to have conquered death. The only man who has the authority to give eternal life.

The more we understand who He is, the better we can rely on Him. The better we rely on Him for our everything, the more we can understand Him. Then we realize that the

names attributed to Jesus equip us! They equip us to deal with our jobs, focus on our families, face our trials, and handle our health. All the names of Jesus equip us to bring glory back to God and experience victory . . . daily.

Yet, as each name flawlessly portrays the person of Christ, each one is also inadequate on its own—helpful but still only pieces of a much bigger puzzle. Start connecting the pieces, however, and an image appears. A beautiful, overwhelming, and life-shattering glimpse of Christ emerges. However, on this side of heaven, it will only ever be a glimpse. There just aren't enough pieces to complete the puzzle.

But it sure is fun to try.

Daily Spiritual Exercise: Pray Without Ceasing

While Jesus was fully God, he was also fully man. He remained sinless because He remained in constant communion with the Father. If the Son of Man needed to be in constant communion with God, how much more do we need it?

We need it in every area of our lives, fitness included. Fitness is a struggle for many, but nothing is a struggle for God. He wants to help you with it and He is more than able. In order for Him to help, though, He needs to be the one to do it on our behalf. He needs to be the one to power it.

Set a reminder on your watch, phone or computer to go off every hour (or even more frequently). This is a reminder to pray, to stay in constant connection with God, to realign your mind, will, and purposes to His. You don't have to stop and drop to your knees (though you can if you'd like). Just converse with Him in your heart and mind. Surrender your will to His and ask for His strength to help you during this fitness journey. We are seeking a permanently open dialogue with God. Do this every day this week and pray that He helps you make it second nature.

Remember: the more we remain in Him, the more victory we will experience in all areas of our lives.