

Series: John

Title: Beholding God's Name

Text: John 18: 1-6

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John 18: 1: When Jesus had spoken these words,...

This includes everything he had spoken to his apostles that night from chapter 13 to his prayer in chapter 17. But the immediate words were in John 17: 26. Read this and think on it.

John 17: 26: And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Christ declared God's name most clearly at the cross. He declared God's name throughout his life. He declares God's name to us as the gospel is preached. But our Substitute declared God's name most at the cross.

He was going forth now to his suffering for his people. It is the cross where Christ declared God's name as the "holy Father" and the "righteous Father" (Jn 17: 11, 25). The cross is where we behold the love wherewith the Father has loved Christ. Did you notice how the Lord said this in John 17: 26? He declared the name of God the Father to his people "*that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them.*" The Father loved Christ and would give him all preeminence in the salvation of his people—Paul wrote that in Colossians. The Father loved Christ because he laid down his life for his sheep—Christ said that.

Paul spoke of receiving the love of the Truth (2 Thess 2:10). What is the love of the Truth? What makes a sinner receive the love of the Truth?

Proposition: It is only when Christ is formed in us and declares God's name that we behold the love of God the Father for his Son, who is the Truth, and thereby, we behold the love of the Truth and thereby we receive the love of the Truth.

In order for God's elect to be made to receive the love of the Truth, two things must be done. One, Christ must be formed in us in regeneration. Two, Christ must declare the name of God to us. That makes us behold the love of the Father for Christ and it makes us receive Christ the Truth in love.

Before this, in the carnal heart, the bible, preaching, and all our religious deeds were about "big me and poor little Jesus." But then the gospel becomes about God our Father and his Son Christ Jesus. His people reap the benefits. But the glory of God the Father and his Son is the preeminent purpose. That is when we receive the love of the Truth of the gospel of Christ and him crucified. That is when we value the preaching of the gospel of Christ above all. That is when all our dealings with one another will have one preeminent goal: to preserve unity in peace so that we can continue hearing the gospel of Christ.

So let's hear Christ declare the name of God once again

John 18: 1: When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

This was foreshadowed with David. Ahithophel, David's friend, had betrayed him like Judas had betrayed Christ and pursued our Lord. David crossed over the brook Cedron—

2 Samuel 15 23: And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness.

Here we see Christ our King do the same. Cedron means dark water. It was the sewer ditch where the blood of the sacrifices flowed from the temple and all the refuse. Here the sinless Lord Jesus Christ willingly crossed over to bear the dark sin of his people.

When David crossed, all the people passed over with him—his people. Likewise, when Christ passed over this brook cedron his disciple went with him, all his people. You sitting here today crossed over that brook cedron in Christ and were in Christ when he suffered and died at Calvary.

Notice, the Lord Jesus "*entered into a garden, and his disciples.*" The first head, Adam, with all his people in him disobeyed God in a garden and made all his people sin by his disobedience. The last head, Christ Jesus, with all his people in him, entered into a garden and by his obedience unto the death of the cross made all his people the righteousness of God in him.

But John does not record the things that Matthew, Mark, and Luke record in their gospels. Nothing is said of the Lord taking Peter, James and John with him that they might watch and pray as Christ prayed. Nothing is said of Christ's agony and sweating great drops of blood. Why? John is not portraying the Lord Jesus as the suffering Savior. He is declaring Christ as the Son of God made flesh—the GodMan—declaring God's name to his people.

John 18: 2: And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. 3: Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4: Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

ALL-KNOWING GOD

John 17: 4: Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

The Lord Jesus is God who knows all things. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit is one God. He is the sovereign, ordaining God who knows all things that come to pass because he ordained it and brings it all to pass.

Notice, it says knowing all things that "should" come upon him. Jesus of Nazareth is God in human flesh—"he knew all things that should come upon him." He is the second person in the trinity. As the Son of God, one with Father and Spirit, the Father anointed the Son to be the Christ before the foundation of the world. So the Son of God along with Father and Holy Spirit ordained all things that should come to pass in order to declare God's name in the salvation of his people.

The Son of God entered covenant to be the Christ and bear all things that should come upon him. They “should” come to pass because he ordained it. These things were a must: the Son of man must be lifted up; God’s name must be declared; the law must be honored; his people must be saved from our sins; the scriptures must be fulfilled. Years and years before this, he used David to declare what “should” come to pass concerning him.

Acts 4: 25: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26: The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27: For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28: For to do WHATSOEVER THY HAND AND THY COUNSEL DETERMINED BEFORE TO BE DONE.

God is all-knowing. Christ declares God’s name here. One of the very reasons the Lord Jesus went to the garden of Gethsemane that night is because he knew Judas knew the place, “*And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.*” He knew Judas knew. He went there so Judas could find him more easily. Christ did it because our eternal Surety knew all things that should come upon him.

So this is God’s name. Christ is the Son of God declaring God’s name as the sovereign, all-knowing, God of purpose. He is God who ordained all things that should come to pass, who knew all things that should come to pass and who brings all things to pass because they should come to pass.

THE LOVE WHEREWITH THE FATHER LOVED THE SON

John 17: 4: Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

Here we see the Lord Jesus manifest the love wherewith the Father loved him before he made the world. We see it in Christ’s willingness to lay down his life for the sheep. In love to his Son, the Father gave his Son this honor of manifesting God’s name and saving his people. The Father loved the Son because Christ was willingly to lay down his life for his sheep in obedience to the Father. We see Christ’s willingness to lay down his life for his sheep, here. “*Knowing all things that should come upon him*” Christ went forth willingly. That is why the Father loved the Son. That is how the Father loved the Son. When Judas came with the officers of the Pharisees and scribes, knowing all that should come upon him, Christ willingly went forth to Judas and these officers and said, “Whom seek ye?”

In eternity, Christ willingly entered covenant that he should willingly obey the Father unto the death of the cross in order to manifest God’s holiness and righteousness as he fulfilled the law of God and made his people the righteousness of God in him. This willingness of Christ to lay down his life for the sheep manifests the love wherewith the Father loved him. The Father loved his Son and gave his Son this honor to declare his name and justify his people. The Father loved his Son and gave him this honor that he might give his Son all preeminence before all. And it was Christ’s eternal willingness—without beginning or end—for which the Father loved him.

Joh 10: 17: Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18: No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to

lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

GOD'S NAME: I AM

John 18: 5: They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. 6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

The Lord Jesus said he *had* declared the name of God to his disciples and *would* declare it. Here he declares the name of God once again—“*Jesus saith unto them, “I AM!” ...As soon then as he said unto them, I AM they went backward and fell to the ground.*” Christ is the great I AM, God in human flesh.

This name is difficult for us creatures of time. God is eternal without any of the constraints of time. Here is the best scriptural meaning of this name.

Revelation 1:8: I AM Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

It was the Son of God preincarnate that appeared to Moses in the burning bush and declared he had come to deliver his people out of bondage. He declared his name, God's name, to Moses.

Exodus 3: 14: And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. 15: And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this *is* my name for ever, and this *is* my memorial unto all generations.

The Lord Jesus told the Pharisees how Abraham believed on him. They said how do you know Abraham? The Lord Jesus said,

John 8: 58: Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM.

This name is manifest most clearly in Christ and him crucified in that he fully accomplished glorifying the Father and justifying and sanctifying his people.

John 8: 28: Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I AM, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

Our Lord has declared the name of God as the I AM many times in this gospel of John. Each time the Lord Jesus declares God's name and what Christ is to his people.

One, if a dead sinner will be saved we need spiritual life. Life is perfect righteousness, with a total absence of sin. Sin resulted in death. Righteousness is Life (Rom 8: 10). God in Christ is eternal Life.

John 6: 35: And Jesus said unto them, I AM the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst....51: I AM the living bread

which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world

Two, for a sinner to live we need the light of life. God in Christ is the I AM, the Light of his people, who he calls out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people in the world.

John 8: 12: Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I AM the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Three, for a sinner to enter Christ's church and kingdom—his sheepfold—we must know the one way to enter.

John 10: 7: Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I AM the door of the sheep. 8: All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9: I AM the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

Four, since his people are defenseless sheep we need a shepherd to lead and protect us. Christ said,

John 10: 11: I AM the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep...14: I AM the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. 15: As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Five, if we will come to the Father, it will only be by Christ declaring God's name in our hearts giving us faith to believe on him. He said,

John 14: 6: Jesus saith unto him, I AM the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me

Six, God is life. We can do nothing without God. Christ is God who produces life and fruit in each of his people and who blesses the gospel we preach to produce other saints as his fruit.

John 15: 5: I AM the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Seven, God's people need to be raised and our bodies must be made incorruptible and immortal.

John 11: 25: Jesus said I AM the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

Jesus Christ is the Son of God who declares God's name and continues to declare it. All these things that Christ is for his people shows the love wherewith the Father loved Christ. The Father chose his Son to manifest his name because the Father would have his Son exalted preeminently as the Salvation of his people. It is only when Christ is formed in our hearts and declares the name of God in our hearts that we behold this love of the Father for Christ. Then the gospel ceases to be about us and we see it is entirely about God our Father and his Son Christ Jesus receiving all the glory in our salvation. Then we receive the love of the truth and believing on Christ we are given eternal life through his name.

John 20: 31...these [things] are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life THROUGH HIS NAME.

Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? When Christ declared God's name to Judas and the officers of the Pharisees, apart from grace working in their hearts, they fell backwards. Christ said,

John 8: 24...if ye believe not that I AM *he*, ye shall die in your sins...

But when he made his name known to Moses in the heart in grace, Moses did what every sinner does when Christ reveals God's name in our hearts, Moses took off his shoes and hid his face in reverence. That is the difference grace makes. That is when we know and declare,

Acts 4: 12: Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is NONE OTHER NAME under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Amen!