

## Podcast 253 Praise His Name, #2, God is the Great I AM

He's not before, He's not after: He just simply is. He inhabits eternity. He is always present. He's the Great I AM.

Welcome to the Building Faith Family's Podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore – thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve! We're back for part 2 of, what are we calling this? Praise His Name, which comes from Psalm 100

As I introduced in the last episode, seeking God according to the principles of Psalm 100 has become a new discipline for me and one that I'm really enjoying. Yesterday, I dropped Johnny off for an exercise class and I had 20–30 minutes to seek God. As I meandered up the street, I sang a hymn (come into His presence with singing) and I gave thanks (be thankful unto Him) and then I said, "Lord, what can I learn about you today? Teach me about your character."

Two expressions came to my mind, God of all glory, and God of all grace. This idea of meditating on some aspect of His character, which is what I do as I praise and bless His name, is so edifying and bears such good fruit. The more I learn about God from His word the more I love Him. The idea of focusing on God's name is sprinkled throughout Scripture.

Psalm 8:1, "Oh Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!"

2 Samuel 22:50, "For this, I will praise You O Lord among the nations and sing praises to Your name.

Jesus in Matthew 6:9, "Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name.'"

Jesus in John 12:28, "Oh Father, glorify Your name!"

Let's pray: Father, help us to do that, help us to praise your name, help us to magnify your name, help us to understand your name, so that we can understand more about you. In Jesus' name, amen.

In the previous podcast, I mentioned that God had introduced himself to Moses as "I Am that I Am." One of the studies that I put together for the book *Come into His Presence*, which is soon to come out, is about those words I AM in Scripture. In John 8:58 "Jesus said to them, truly truly I say to you before Abraham was, I Am." I think it's really important that we see the connection between when God introduced himself to Moses and He said "I am Who I am." (Exodus 3:14) and later in the same verse: This is my name forever.

“Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.’” (John 8:58) These words disturbed the people because they caught the connection and what He was telling them. He was saying that He was God, He was God in the flesh.

So we're going to discuss some of the I AM's especially in the Gospel of John but also some which are mentioned in Isaiah.

“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last; besides Me there is no god.’” (Isaiah 44:6)

“Thus says the LORD, Your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: ‘I am the LORD, Who made all things, Who alone stretched out the heavens, Who spread out the earth by myself.’” (Isaiah 44:24)

“Listen to me, O Jacob, and Israel, whom I called! I am he; I am the first, and I am the last.” (Isaiah 48:12)

“When I saw him, I fell at His feet as though dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying, ‘Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.’” (Revelation 1:17–18)

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Here are the I AM passages in John's gospel.

"I am the bread of life and the living bread that came down from heaven." That's found 4 times in John.

"I am the light of the world." (John 8:12)

"I am the door of the sheep." John 10, two times in this chapter.

"I am the resurrection and the life." (John 11:25)

"I am the good shepherd." (John 10:11 & 14)

"I am the way." (John 14:6)

"I am the truth." (John 14:6)

"I am the life." (John 14:6)

"I am the true vine." John 15, twice

In the Greek when you're looking for an "I AM" there are two Greek words "ego eime." Ego in English, is "I" and "eime" is am. When you see ego eime, you know that it's an I AM.

I am learning that to give proper attention to a name of God, to not read it quickly and then move on to some other thought, but to let the words marinate in my mind and heart. For example when I read "I am the good shepherd" you start thinking about the description of God as our shepherd in Psalm 23. Read one verse at a time and chew on the fact on how the Good Shepherd calls his sheep. The Good Shepherd

guards and protects his sheep. The Good Shepherd provides for His sheep and finds water and finds grass. In John 10 the shepherd knows His sheep and they know His voice. He sleeps at the door so that nobody can get through the shepherd to attack the sheep while they rest at night. If you read slowly through Psalm 23 and John 10 you have quite a picture of the shepherd. Each of the I AMs we identified builds upon the I Am expressions that God revealed way back to Moses.

Each name or title of God reveals something about God. He is like a multi faceted diamond, where each facet reveals some different part of God's character and nature. The more you meditate or praise His name, the greater your understanding of God.

We read last time that Abraham said Jehovah Jireh, which means God provides. God provided a ram to take the place of Abraham's son. You and I know also know that God provided His Son to take our place on the cross.

"Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name. 'They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.'" (Malachi 3:16 ESV)

The NLT says, "those who feared Him and always thought about the honor of His name." I wondered about these folks. I think they are a group of people who got together and talk about God's name. And God paid attention and heard them. I would like to go to a conference like that, where we sit around and, "What's your favorite name for God?" and "How did God reveal that to you?" If Hagar were present she would say, "Oh! it was when God saw me, when I was totally alone! I call Him the God of seeing" (Genesis 16:13)

Abraham would chime in, "Jehovah Jireh, I was on this mountain about to sacrifice my son, but God provided a ram to take his place." (Genesis 22)

but I think that's the kind of Thing that when we get together, God takes note of that. Then in Malachi chapter 4 verse 2, it says "but for you to fear my name The son of righteousness Will rise with healing in his wings", etc. So there's a group of people in the second chapter it says "he stood in awe of My name."

There are several places in Scripture which encourage us to meditate on God's name, to think about God's name, and to get together with other people and encourage each other with His name. You weren't with us in St. Louis last year when but we did this, but we went around the room and talked about something we could each be thankful for and some aspect of God's character that we appreciated. This activity encourages us and blesses God. According to Malachi, He has assigned heavenly beings to write down the names of the people who fear God, who esteem His name, who praise His name and who stand in awe of His name.

This concept and was a foreign subject to me until two years ago. Now it's becoming a daily part of my times of drawing near to God.

"There is none like you, O LORD; You are great, and Your name is great in might." (Jeremiah 10:6)

"Teach me Your way, o Lord, that I may walk in Your truth. Unite my heart to fear Your name. I give thanks to You, oh Lord my God, with all my whole heart, and will glorify Your name forever." (Psalm 86:11)

I hope that God would give us an appetite to meditate on His name and share with other which aspects of God's character He has revealed to us? When my son was born with Down Syndrome and I burned out and was suffering, I was in survival mode for almost 2 years. One morning I read Psalm 55:22, "Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you, He will never allow the righteous to be moved." I have a personal connection with that verse because I discovered God sustains me and God bears my burden. That's something that I know about God because I've not only read it, I've walked in it, and I've experienced it. I hope that God will give us all an appetite to know more about God and that will start with writing our own stories and keeping track of the ways that God reveals his nature and character to each one of us, amen?

See, Scott? You're doing great.

Scott: I don't take a lot of time to set apart to do this, I listen to the Bible podcast and get His word into me, occasionally I'll look up some passages, but these times together doing this, I'm like wow – I think I used to do this somewhere in my past. but I haven't done it in a long time it feels like water for my soul, you know?

Well, you're a good partner in this podcast, because we encourage each other and I appreciate your input and your honesty. I didn't either set apart time for study when I was younger. But now I'm old and have more time than you. I don't have three kids running around and I don't have to work 40–50 hours a week anymore, but I'm thankful God has led me this way.

When I was younger I don't think I gave myself permission to do this. I saw that this was not working hard; and I would feel like I was wasting time just being with my Heavenly Dad. Now I recognize this is one of the best investments I could've done to set apart 10 or 15 minutes to be still, take a deep breath, renew my mind, and chew on some aspect of His character.

Father, help us to have an appetite to remember and thank You for all the times You have communicated with us; like You communicated with Hagar and Abraham and Moses and Scott and Steve and encourage us to take note of the ways that You've been revealed. Thank you for showing us that You're a God of forgiveness, that you're

patient, that you're merciful, and a multitude of other verses. Give us a heart to know You and thank You for how You have been revealed to us in Jesus. Thank You that He was the great I Am and Thank you that He revealed You. Thank You for sending Him to us and thank You that we have the Word of God to read about Him. In Jesus' name amen.