

Knowing God by Name

With Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell, Fourth Baptist Church

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Host: David Wheaton 0:07

How understanding the names of God helps you know Him better. That is a topic we'll discuss today right here on the Christian Worldview Radio program, where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a nonprofit, listener-supported radio ministry. Our website is TheChristianWorldview.org, and the rest of our contact information will be given throughout today's program. As always, thank you for your notes of encouragement, financial support, and lifting us up in prayer.

It's been said that the most important thing about a person is what they think when they think about God. In other words, the more accurate our understanding of who God is, and the more willing we are to obey Him, the more we will think and live as God intends for His glory and our good. Creation is God's general revelation to all people. Romans 1:20 says, *For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made so that they, all men, are without excuse.* Simply by looking at the world and the universe around us, every person everywhere knows that a magnificent, powerful, supernatural God exists. No one has an excuse for unbelief. He is clearly seen through creation. An atheist or agnostic is simply suppressing the truth because of a desire for unrighteousness.

But general revelation through creation does not reveal the infinitely rich tapestry of God's nature in ways. It does not show us how sinners can be restored to a right relationship with Him. For that, we need special revelation, the Word of God, which He supernaturally inspired men to write. Every page of the Bible reveals who God is, His stated will, His interaction with mankind, and His holiness and justice, perfectly balanced with His compassion and mercy.

One of the most instructive ways God reveals Himself in His word is through His many names, about twenty or more. Some He established for Himself, others He inspired men to ascribe to Him. Names such as Yahweh, Elohim, Adonai, along with compound forms like El Shaddai or Yahweh Shalom and Yahweh Jirah. Sharpen the believer's understanding of who God is and how He works. There is much going on in our country and in the world right now. But what can be more important than focusing on the One who created it all and who is in control of it all? The self-existent, eternal, triune Yahweh Elohim. Our guest today is Matt Morrell, pastor of Fourth Baptist Church and president of Central Seminary in Plymouth, Minnesota. He has been preaching a summer sermon series on the names of God and how Christians can anchor their faith and hope in Him. Matt also serves as pastoral advisor to the board of The Christian Worldview, providing personal and organizational accountability to a sound local church. Let's get straight to the interview with Pastor Matt Morrell on the names of God.

Matt, it's good to have you back on *The Christian Worldview Radio Program*. You know, I don't remember if I asked you the last time you were on, but you probably did. But let's hear it again. Tell us about your background and how you came to saving faith in Christ and what you see your mission is as a pastor.

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 4:18

Well, thank you, David. It's great to be on your program again. I was blessed to be born and raised in a Christian home. In fact, my dad was a pastor. And my mom and dad were great, great folks of faith. And from an early age, they taught me the gospel. It was just as a young boy that I came to fully understand the gospel as God was drawing me to Himself and by His grace granting me the faith, the faith of a child, to trust in His death and resurrection. So grateful for my early profession and then my obedience in baptism just a couple of years later as a young boy. Then growing up in a pastor's home, I wanted to serve the Lord. I loved the Lord. I loved His church, but wasn't necessarily inclined toward pastoral ministry because I wanted more adventure in my life. I wanted to be a pilot, or I wanted to be a lawyer, or perhaps go into broadcasting, even some interest there.

But over the course of time, the Lord impressed upon me a call to ministry, and through the course of my Bible college and seminary education, the Lord opened doors for me to serve as a pastor. Wild horses couldn't drag me from it now. I love, love, love His church, His people. I love God's word. And I love the privilege and opportunity to serve as a pastor. Really, my mission is governed by the high calling of pastoral ministry, is the ministry of the word and prayer. So many other activities, good initiatives and such in the job description of a pastor or in the life of a church. But I love, love, love to study, to teach, and to preach God's word. If I can be faithful to His word, then my pastoral ministry be measured by that.

Host: David Wheaton 6:01

What you just said means that God has called you to love the preaching of the word, to love shepherding His church, to love praying for the sheep, so to speak. We're grateful that God called you into pastoral ministry. Before we get into our topic and how understanding the names of God helps us to know Him better, I wanted to ask you a couple questions about the situation or the moment that we are in right now in our society.

As America celebrates 250 years as a nation this year, and we consider the strong Christian influence founding of our country and where we have come to today, much more secular, much less of a belief in God, according to, let's say, the Barnes surveys that come out. Just a very low percentage of people who have a biblical worldview, like in single digits, much more religiously pluralistic society. As you look back over our history, what do you think have been the causal factors to moving from a more Christian influence founding to a much more secular or almost antagonistic to Christianity society we find today?

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 7:13

Well, David, that's that's a large question, a profound question. I would answer in this way. We were founded and grounded in so many biblical principles from God-fearing people, families, citizens. But I think if we went back to the late 19th century, post-Civil War, the introduction of secular academic

theories began challenging the traditional biblical interpretations in universities and elite institutions, and we departed from the revelation of God's word as absolute truth. That introduced all sorts of new thinking, new worldviews, of course, Darwinism, evolution, and some of these things. You get into the middle of the 20th century, the cultural revolutions with the rapid visible decline in institutional Christian influence, for example, of course, in the public schools with the removal of Bible reading and prayer.

So in the educational halls, the institutions of our country, beginning in higher education, and then even in our grade schools and such, God was removed. We dismissed God and His word from our culture. So consequently, the delayed response to those actions was to raise up generations of people that did not fear God, did not know God. And now here we are now in the 21st century, and we've got the rise of what sociologists call the nones, N-O-N-E-S. And really, since the early 2000s, I think demographic data shows a sharp increase in Americans who claim no religious affiliation whatsoever and have moved the country, as you just referenced, into a post-Christian, even an anti-Christian era. So I would grieve that along with you. It is alarming how, in the course of just a few generations, we have removed so far from our roots.

Host: David Wheaton 9:09

Not only has that occurred, but we're seeing the rise, Matt, of I would say two other religions, Islam and Marxism, which really is a religion of worshiping big government. Those two ideologies have almost joined together in many cases in this country and become much more prevalent. Whether through the election of the mayor of New York City, Mamdani, right now the looks like a radical Muslim man has won the Democratic primary in the state of Michigan to be a U.S. senator. We know here in our home state of Minnesota, the influence of the Somali Muslim immigration, and this is going on all over the country, Dearborn, Michigan, Texas, mosques being built everywhere.

What do you think biblical churches should be doing in response to this increasingly secular, but not only that, but this rising worldview of Marxism and Islam? This is a situation that impacts everyone, even in the church. Whether it's just through interactions with people, what they encounter at their workplace, where they send their kids to school. I know at the local school district here, they just decided to have a day off on a certain Muslim holiday for all the students in the school. So now we're celebrating Muslim holidays in public schools here in Minnesota, at least in our district. Should the church be responding to this in some way? And if so, how?

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 10:35

Your question's a hard question, David, because it's a convicting question to me as a pastor, as a church leader. I do think we need to respond, and I do think I'll speak for myself. I think my response has been slow and delayed because of maybe an uncertainty of how to proceed. Ultimately, it needs to be the gospel, and it needs to be the salt and light of God's word and the gospel that is going to stem the tide of these things. But there certainly needs to be the action of individual believers in whatever context God has put them in, maybe local politics, school board, and participation in their communities to give voice to the Judeo-Christian ethic that has been part of the fabric of our country for 250 years, and that is now changing. And woe to us if we say nothing.

Host: David Wheaton 11:30

Well, I think your point about speaking, at least informing and educating the congregation about what's taking place and how to respond and how to be salt and light, as you were mentioning, is is a great beginning to it. As you mentioned too, there's going to be people within there going to be involved in the political realm and their school boards and so forth, but everyone has a part in standing up for what is good and right. And we can do that as salt and light. Salt's a preservative, as you well know, and light is truth. So just being informed about these things, I think, is helpful. But you're right, the gospel is preeminent above all, and the gospel is the solution to everything that's taking place. So thank you for answering those couple difficult questions right there to start off the program.

But I think an even more important topic, Matt, than talking about what's going on in current events and all that's very important. But I can't think of a more important topic than talking about who God is, what His character is, what His nature is. And you have done a sermon series on the names of God this summer at church, which I thought has been very good. And so I really wanted to have you on the program to be able to share some of what you've been covering in all the various sermons this summer. I want to start out just by reading a few short passages of scripture where it talks about the name of God, and you realize how much this appears over and over again. Let's say in Exodus chapter 3, and this is where Moses is meeting with God at the burning bush. This is a really pivotal moment in Scripture where he's getting the charge from God to lead the Jewish people enslaved in Egypt out of there to the promised land. Moses said to God in Exodus chapter 3 Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you. Now they may say to me, What is His name? What shall I say to them? And God said to Moses, I am who I am. And He said, Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, I am has sent me to you. God furthermore said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial name to all generations.

So an incredibly important pivotal portion of Scripture, and God is talking about His name over and over again. Then go to the Ten Commandments, Pastor Matt. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. There again, the name again. For the Lord will not leave Him unpunished, who takes His name in vain. And that is violated all over the place in our society today. Or Jesus Himself in Matthew chapter 6 telling His followers how to pray. What's the first line? He said, Pray then in this way, our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. And I'll just give one more, Psalm 29, verse 2, ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name. Worship the Lord in holy array. And there's lots more passages in scripture that talk about the name of So I think the first question for you, Matt, is why does the Bible, or really God, because He inspired the Bible, put so much emphasis on God's name? And therefore, why is understanding the names of God so important?

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 15:10

Well, David, that's really at the heart, I think, of my sermon series this summer for our local church. I feel like it's important that we understand who God is by the self-revelation of His names, because names are not just for identification, they're for description. In today's day and age, we just call each other by name to identify each other. You're David, I'm Matt. It's just a point of a moniker of

identification. But in God's case, His names are more than identification, they are descriptive, and they inform us about His character and His conduct. God has revealed Himself to man at different times with different names so that man might know that He is our all-in-all. And in fact, I think one of the great insights of this study, as I've discovered this summer, is that God's names are given to man during a context, a scenario, a situation when man was in crisis. Man was in need and needed to know something more about God's character or about God's conduct. So God's names are not just for identification, they're for description, they're for the revelation, the self-revelation of God in His names all through the scripture. It's a rich study.

Host: David Wheaton 16:29

Pastor Matt Morrell of Fourth Baptist Church in Plymouth, Minnesota is our guest today here on the Christian Worldview Radio program. Charles Spurgeon said, Matt, the highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy which can engage the attention of a child of God is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings, and the existence of the great God whom he calls his Father. That was Charles Spurgeon actually preaching at age 20. You referenced that in one of your messages this summer, that quote, so, you know, I'm in my mid-50s here and been in church for many, many years, and I'm not sure I've ever heard a sermon series on the names of God, and it's important because as you meant, it's about His self-revelation of who He is, not just identification, but his character and conduct. Why do you think there's so little emphasis on the names of God? Because there's many of them, as we're going to discuss today. There are many. Why do you think there's such little emphasis on it?

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 17:33

Perhaps I've been guilty of the same thing. Again, we think of names as simply as an identifier. We in the modern age don't fully appreciate or value the meanings of names, but it's an aspect of God's revelation to us that we can't ignore. And I'm grateful for a number of resources that really turn me in this direction. One is a Moody classic by Nathan Stone, simply titled The Names of God. And I read it initially devotionally for my own personal enrichment. Then it dawned on me that this would be so helpful for our church So I'm grateful to have been introduced to this, and I would exhort any other pastor or Bible study leader to consider a study on the names of God.

Host: David Wheaton 18:16

After this two-minute break to tell you about some ministry updates, we're going to examine the meanings behind some of the names of God, including core ones like Elohim, Yahweh, or Jehovah, and Adonai. Matt Morrell, pastor of Fourth Baptist Church and president of Central Seminary in Plymouth, Minnesota, is our guest. Much more coming up. I'm David Wheaton, and you are listening to The Christian Worldview Radio Program

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Our topic today is how understanding the names of God helps you know Him better. And our guest is Matt Morrell, pastor of Fourth Baptist Church in Plymouth, Minnesota. Now, is it accurate to say, Matt, that there are three core names that God uses for Himself: Elohim, Yahweh, and Adonai. And that there are many derivatives of those three. Is that correct to say?

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 21:38

It is largely correct. El is the Hebrew name meaning God. Elohim is the plural masculine form of God. And so Elohim is introduced to us in Genesis chapter one. From Elohim or El, there are a number of compound names for God Elion, El Shaddai, some of these. And then Jehovah or Yahweh as you referenced from Exodus chapter 3, the tetragrammaton, the four Hebrew letters there that really just speak to the self-existence of God. There are compound names for Jehovah or Yahweh, Jehovah Jira or Jehovah Nisi. So there are compound names there. The name Adonai, very, very common in the Scripture, but also common just among ancient civilization, Adonai meaning Lord or Master, and individuals would even address one another as Lord or Master. Sarah called her husband Abraham Lord, or Adonai, in some context there. So those are maybe primarily where we would begin in just with the common frequency of those in the Scripture.

Host: David Wheaton 22:41

Okay, we're going to get into each one of those names more in a second. But in Scripture, in the English translations, you typically see the words for God is just God, G-o-d, and then you see LORD with all caps. That's Yahweh, you'll explain that, or just Lord with an uppercase L and then lowercase o-r-d. Why do you think English translations of the Bible didn't just use what those actual Hebrew words were? Why didn't they use Elohim, Yahweh, and Adonai instead of just kind of rounding it out into more just God generally or Lord and maybe not creating more distinction?

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 23:21

Well, in hindsight, now after a study of the names of God, I think there would be great value to making greater distinction. I think the Legacy Standard Bible, which is new for us, does help us in that case and identifies specifically Yahweh when the Hebrew is there. However, our English editors did recognize the difference. That's why when the Hebrew Elohim is used, we have in the English capital G, lowercase o-d, God. When we find the name Jehovah or Yahweh in our English Bibles, they did use all capital letters, capital L-O-R-D. And then when Adonai, also super common all through the Old Testament scripture, just capital L, lowercase o-r-d, our English translators and editors did do us a service to that degree. However, how great would it be if there was even more specificity as we encounter all of these names of God throughout the Scripture?

Host: David Wheaton 24:18

Pastor Matt Morrell of Fourth Baptist Church in Plymouth, Minnesota is with us today talking about the names of God. Let's go to the first reference to God in the whole entire Scripture. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth in Genesis 1, chapter 1. And so this is the name of God Elohim. You said in your message that week that it's used, Elohim, 2,570 times in Scripture, 32 times alone in Genesis 1. You said that this name Elohim refers to God in three ways as the Creator, that He's eternal, and that He's triune. In other words, Elohim, right there in Genesis 1:1, is

the eternal triune Creator. Now, those to me seem like very fundamentally important three aspects of God's identity. Why are those, do you think, included in the meaning of that name Elohim?

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 25:19

And David, again, this is more than just identity, this is description, right? And so what we have in the Hebrew Old Testament is not the word El, that would just be a generic God. We have the plural masculine form, Elohim, which would allow for the Trinity of God. Then we back it up to the eternal triune creator. Well, Elohim is in Genesis 1 the one who created all that is. And so when we begin identifying who God is and describing who God is, embedded in the very name Elohim is the eternal triune Creator. In the beginning, before anything else was, Elohim created all that now is. And it's the plural masculine form, which of course it's difficult to build a Trinitarian theology out of just the name in Genesis 1:1. However, it makes allowance and affords for it as we go through the rest of progressive revelation. We discover God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, the triune God, all of that provision is made for it in that name, Elohim. And it is the very beginning of God's revelation to us in the scripture. And it's the first thing that we know about God. And if we were to teach our children who God is, it begins right there in Genesis 1 with Elohim.

Host: David Wheaton 26:36

It's amazing how that's just presented right away over and over in the first chapter. Elohim is the eternal triune Creator. Let Us make man in Our image. He's talking about the unity of the Trinity right there in Genesis chapter one.

Well, we don't have a lot of time to spend on each name, but let's go from Elohim to Jehovah or Yahweh. You said in your message that this is whenever you see in your Bible, capital L-O-R-D, LORD. That's the word for Jehovah or Yahweh. It appears 5,000 times in the Hebrew Old Testament. It means the self-existing One, the uncreated, uncaused One. That's what makes God unique, and one of the many things that makes God unique. We're all created. God is uncreated, uncaused. You also said that message that the YHWH, the vowels making up Yahweh or Jehovah, those were added later, and it's not really even known how this name of God was pronounced because it wasn't spoken. It was so holy, it wasn't to be spoken. And you said all the names of God in Scripture are derived from His works except one, Yahweh, because it teaches plainly and unequivocally of the substance of God. So tell us more about why this name Yahweh, this self-designated name, by the way, by God Himself, is so critical.

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 28:06

Well, and as you referenced just a few moments ago, David, when you read from Exodus chapter 3, Moses is at the burning bush, and Moses objects to God in this way, says, How can I convince the children of Israel that You are anything other than the gods of Egypt? What is unique about You? How will they trust You or believe You in a pluralistic society? And it's then that God reveals Himself to Moses as Yahweh or Jehovah. It's literally the Hebrew verb to be. It simply means I Am. I self-exist. As you just mentioned, I'm the uncaused cause. I'm the self-existing one. We call it the aseity of God. And it is literally his essence to simply be.

So imagine then Moses going back to the children of Israel and says, Hey, Elohim has spoken to me, and Yahweh is His name. He is simply the One who is. Every other God in that culture at that time had been fashioned and created by hand, out of wood, out of stone. And here we have the self-existing God, Yahweh or Jehovah. Of course, as you also explained, that name became so sacred among God's people that it went unspoken for centuries. The Hebrew language having only consonants, no vowels, we lost the pronunciation to history. And maybe that's God's mercy and grace to us. But then later the Nazarenes and such did add vowel appointing so that we can have it either pronounced Jehovah or Yahweh. But just the covenant name that God gave to His people there in Exodus chapter 3.

Host: David Wheaton 29:45

Now I just want to ask one follow-up question on this because there was a portion of your sermon on this particular name of God, Yahweh or Jehovah, that I thought was very, very good. This was again Moses at the burning bush, as you've been referencing, talking to God, and God is commissioning him to go back into Egypt and lead the people out of Egypt, out of slavery, away from Pharaoh into the promised land. And Moses has all these objections. Who am I to be able to do this? And you said your message, he's asking the wrong question. The correct question is: who are You, God, that You're great enough to do this? He shouldn't have been thinking about himself. He should have been thinking about the greatness of God because Moses, as you pointed out, was saying, I'm not good enough, I don't have all the answers, people won't believe me, I'm not a good speaker, someone else can do it better than I could. Those are all listed in the text in Exodus 3 and 4.

But then God responds by saying, I Am Who I Am. And then God makes the points that Yahweh is personal, Yahweh is particular. And I could read the verses, I just won't for the sake of time. Yahweh is present, Yahweh is purposeful, He's patient, and He's powerful. This is what this brought out in this passage. And so I thought this was actually really relevant, not just for Moses at the time, but what should a believer today, in understanding who God is as Yahweh, how should that change our thinking and living as being a child of Yahweh?

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 31:16

We should be overwhelmed. We ought to be stunned, we ought to be prostrate on our faces before the God who simply is. He exists, He's dependent on no one. He needs no other source other than in Himself for His existence, for His being, for what He purposes to do. He is all sufficient in Himself. That is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That is the God of Moses and David and Paul and the Apostle John. This is the God of Martin Luther and John Calvin. This is the God that we can recognize as sufficient in Himself. Anything other than that is less than God, a God who is fashioned, or a God who needs resources or needs help. I think the greatest thing that I can do as a pastor in shepherding people is to give them the biggest view of God. And this is Yahweh. Moses is he goes back to the children of Israel, says, Hey, I met with Elohim at the burning bush, and let me tell you about Him. He's not just the eternal triune Creator, as if that should be enough. He is Yahweh, the self-existing One. And that big view of God, I think, gives us the courage to follow and obey where He leads us.

Host: David Wheaton 32:37

So well said, Pastor Matt Morell with us today here on The Christian Worldview, talking about the names of God. Just moving quickly along, Matt, just for sake of time, we've gone from Elohim to Yahweh to the third core name. And there's again there's lots of derivatives, but here's the third core name is Adonai. You said in your message, this is a Hebrew name. God did not reveal Himself to man with this name. It means Master or Lord in capital L, then lowercase O R D. Lord. It signifies His authority over us like a Master. And then you went on to say, Our Adonai does not oppress us, but we go to Him as one who can meet our needs. This is not a negative thing to have a Master, but a positive thing. We run to our good Master. And then you quoted Psalm 123, to You I lift up my eyes, the psalmist writes, O You who are enthroned in the heavens.

And then the rest of this passage is interesting because it has all three names we've discussed for God in this passage, verse 2 of Psalm 123. Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their Master, there's the word for Adonai, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to Yahweh, our Elohim, until He is gracious to us. God as our Master, you conclude just your notes here as our Master is not a point of threat, but He's a point of resource. So tell us more about this name Adonai. It's different than the other two. Tell us the distinctives here.

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 34:12

Adonai was a common name in the ancient Hebrew that recognized the economy of relationships. One would be a Master or a Lord, another would be a servant or an underling. So that was common even among men to recognize one another as a Master or Lord. When assigned to God as our Adonai, there is an economy of headship or Lordship, the Master and the servant. But of course, we're mindful of some of the abuses and the atrocities of slavery over the course of human history in many different countries, many different cultures, certainly our own, just two centuries ago. And we abhor that, the mistreatment of a Master over a servant. And consequently, because of the rebellion of our own hearts, none of us want to be lorded over or to be accountable to anyone.

So we shrink away from a Master or a Lord or a boss or a supervisor, anybody that might threaten us, we consider that a negative relationship. But it's the exact opposite with God as our Adonai, as our Lord. And you read from Psalm 123, as a servant would look to the Master, as a maid would look to her mistress for the resource. We look to the Yahweh, our Elohim. And so when we are in need, where do we go? We go up, we go upward to that One who has authority, who has control, who has resource, who can help us, I think, just in pedestrian ways. When a child has a need, they go to their parents. When an employee has a need, they go to their boss. When we as citizens need help, we call law enforcement. Or those that are ordained by God over us in civil government. We're expecting help. So we can run to our Adonai as our Lord and our Master. That is not a threatening thing, that is a great comfort to us.

Host: David Wheaton 36:12

Pastor Matt Morell with us talking today about the names of God. And we are just scratching the surface on an inexhaustible subject, examining the names of God and their meanings so that we can better know and worship Him. After this short break, I'll ask Matt about the longtime debate over Christ as Curios or Lord. In other words, can one be a Christian and yet living as though Christ is not

their Lord or Master? I'm David Wheaton, and you are listening to The Christian Worldview Radio Program.

Host: David Wheaton 38:53

Welcome back to the Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit TheChristianWorldview.org where you can sign up for our weekly email and The Christian Worldview Journal print publication, order resources for adults and children, and support the ministry.

Our topic today is how understanding the names of God helps you know Him better. And our guest is Matt Morrell, pastor of Fourth Baptist Church in Plymouth, Minnesota. Now in the New Testament, Matt, Adonai, in Greek, I believe, correct me if I'm wrong here, is Curios. The word for Lord or Master in the New Testament is Curios, and that's used 750 times in the New Testament that Jesus is Lord, Curios. He's referred to, you said, 92 times as Curios or Lord, and only two times as Savior. I thought that was interesting because we often are calling, well, Jesus is my Savior.

Well, that's absolutely true, but there's such a stronger emphasis on the Lordship, the Mastership of Christ in the New Testament. This brought up a debate that has been going on for years and years. The debate is over what's called Lordship salvation. I'm just going to read you kind of a summary from gotquestions.org about both sides of this issue, and then just ask you a follow-up question about it. So I'm going to put you in the hot seat a little bit here to try to resolve a bit of a testy topic.

So there's two sides of this: there's a free grace side and there's a Lordship salvation side. The free grace movement contends that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. There is no repentance and or turning from sin necessary at the moment of salvation. Saving faith in Christ does not necessarily result in a life of good works, obedience, and following Christ. Spiritual growth, obedience to God's word, and a transformed life are greatly dependent on discipleship. It is possible for believers to remain in a "carnal state" for their entire lives. That's how gotquestions.org described what the free grace movement believes.

Now you can correct if there's something incorrect in that, and we're basing on their definitions. Now I'm going to do the second, the other side of this issue, the Lordship Salvation side. So here's how gotquestions.org defines what they believe, this side believes. Lordship salvation contends that while salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone and Christ alone. So same. Salvation is also a call to turn from a life of embracing sin and rejecting Christ to a life of rejecting sin and embracing Christ. Saving faith will always and inevitably result in a transformed life of good works, obedience, and following Christ. Spiritual growth is greatly dependent on discipleship, but even an undisciplined believer will exhibit some spiritual fruit. It is not possible for believers to remain in a carnal state for their entire lives. So, listeners, if you're listening closely to that, you see some distinctions between those two sides of the Lordship of Christ. Matt, let's just try to get away from being pigeonholed, oh, you're a free gracer or you're a lordship salvation person. What do you believe the Bible teaches on the issue of the Lordship, the Curios of Christ when it comes to justification and sanctification?

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 42:24

David, as you mentioned in the book of Acts, the name Lord, the Greek "Curios", there, which would be the equivalent of the Old Testament Adonai, used more than nearly a hundred times, I think, and just a couple times as Savior. I think we've inverted the balance in our vernacular. We're always referencing Jesus as our Savior, and He is. But I think it's been to the neglect of recognizing Him as our Lord. And we would all affirm that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, and Christ alone. However, I would reject the notion that saving faith does not necessarily result in a life of good works. Saving faith is going to result in a life that is surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and must necessarily, and there will be fruit in the life of a genuine believer. But I think it's certainly something that we must emphasize is that one's justification, one's sanctification is to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ as Lord, not simply an easy believism, not simply a fire escape from hell that liberates me to live as I please, but to recognize Him as Lord. And that is not a threat, but that is a blessing to put Him on the throne of my life, which would be the supernatural result of genuine conversion.

Host: David Wheaton 43:51

I think you really well answered that from scripture, Matt. Thank you for creating some clarity on that particular issue that's been a hot topic, hotly debated over the years.

Host: David Wheaton 44:01

We only have um a few minutes left here. So I want to just I'm not going to summarize here the rest of your sermon series here. We have it linked at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org for listeners who want to hear some of these sermons. But there were sermons on God's name as El Shaddai, God Almighty. This was what He spoke to Moses before delivering the people from Egyptian slavery, El Shaddai, or Jehovah Rapha. This is the God who heals. This is when they're in the wilderness and they come across bitter water, and God makes the water drinkable, makes it pure. He's the God who heals.

And then there was a message on Jehovah Shalom. This is God who is our peace. This name was started at the commissioning of Gideon when God chose him to rescue His people who were being oppressed. There was a message on Jehovah Jirah. This is the God who provides. In Genesis 22, this is the amazing chapter of the near sacrifice of Isaac by his father, Abraham. Isaac was to be the promised, the child through whom there would be all the descendants and all the blessings. Then God tells Him to sacrifice his son Isaac. And then he almost does it, and he lifts the knife up, and then he stopped, and God provides a ram for a burnt offering as a substitute. That is just it was a very, very powerful message. The Lord will provide, God who provides, Jehovah Jirah. You did a message on Jehovah Shamma, the God who is there.

And then finally, the most recent one, I think there are more coming, but Jehovah Nissi, God is my banner. And this is when the Israelites were defeating Amalek, their sworn enemies. When Moses holds up his staff, or his assistants hold up his arms to hold up the staff with the banner on top of it. I always thought it was a flag, but it was apparently a shiny object representing God. My final question for you today, Matt, is I'd like you just to pick one or two of those names in there. You select, and how they should be embraced or appropriated to help someone, a Christian listening today, whether in their own personal life or kind of circling back to what we talked about at the beginning, where

our present moment is that I think it make Christians feel uneasy about the direction of our country, that God is in control.

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 46:27

Well, David, I would encourage your listeners to do a deep dive into the study of the names of God, to not just know their meaning or their definition, but to understand the context, the story in which God revealed Himself by that name. Because that I think is where we then bridge the gap to our current condition and experience. So for example, El Shaddai, God Almighty, God told Abraham and Sarah, He asked them, is anything too hard for the Lord? Nothing is too difficult. And of course, then in their old age, God gave them the promised son Isaac. And so I would say to any of your listeners, any believer today, God is El Shaddai. He can do the supernatural thing against nature beyond what we could ever, ever ask. Just as He did with Abraham and Sarah, giving them a child in their old age. So what could God do in your home? What could God do in your church? What could God do in this country? And many would say, but Pastor Matt, you don't understand. It's impossible. Well, nothing is too difficult for El Shaddai. And so there's a name of God that teaches us about His character. He is Almighty.

Or another, you cited Jehovah Shalom, God our peace. The revelation of God as Jehovah Shalom in Judges chapter 6 is when the Midianites were harassing the children of Israel, pillaging their harvest. And the Midianites, which by the way, the name Midian means strife people. The strife people were causing conflict and strife and chaos among the camp of Israel, and God comes to Gideon and says, I want you to conquer the Midianites with a small army. I am Jehovah Shalom. I'm going to restore peace to your world here in this moment. So I don't know, David, what your listeners are going through. I know what many of our church family are going through. There is conflict, there is strife, there is great agony and suffering, chaos. How can God be shalom, peace in a troubled world, and the blessing of claiming that name? So there's to answer your question, there's just two. There are many, many more. But I think the secret to this is to appreciate the revelation of God to man during a time of man's need. So the context for these names is just a great series of Bible studies, and I would commend everyone to it.

Host: David Wheaton 49:00

Well, Matt, we thank you for how the Lord led you to doing a sermon series on the names of God. It has been very rich, and it points our thoughts and our eyes and our affections and our wills where they need to be, up at who God is and the great God who we serve. And so thank you for doing this, and thank you for coming on the Christian Worldview Radio program today. We so appreciate your being pastor of the church and shepherding your flock so faithfully, and we just wish all of God's best and grace to you and your family.

Guest: Pastor Matt Morrell 49:34

Thank you, David.

Host: David Wheaton 49:35

Again, our guest today has been Matt Morrell, pastor of Fourth Baptist Church and president of Central Seminary, both in Plymouth, Minnesota. Matt is also the pastoral advisor to the leadership of

this radio ministry. We have links to some of his sermons this summer on the names of God at TheChristianWorldview.org.

In one of his sermons, Pastor Matt talked about the effects of knowing God's name. Our joy will increase, our worship will deepen, our satisfaction will be full, our strength will come from above, our protection will come from above, our forgiveness will be given, and our salvation is sure. All these things come from drawing near and meditating or ruminating over who God is. And the various names of God help us do that. Some of the names or descriptions of God that we didn't cover today are Yahweh Maccaddeshem, the Lord who sanctifies or makes holy, or Yahweh Shalom, the Lord is our peace, or El Roi, the God who sees.

Jesus Himself had many descriptive names and titles. He was called the Word, the Christ, the Anointed One or Messiah, the Son of Man, the Prince of Peace, Emmanuel. Philippians 2 says the following although He, Christ, existed in the form of God, He did not regard a quality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond servant, and being made in the likeness of men, being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

And then in verse 9 of Philippians 2, for this reason also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him, here it is, the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

So here's a question for you as we close today. Have you bowed willingly to the name of Jesus as your Savior and your Lord? This means have you obeyed His command to repent and believe in the gospel? In other words, to trust in His life, death, and resurrection on your behalf as the only way to be forgiven and be granted righteousness by God.

To find out more about being born again spiritually, like Jesus said, call us or go to the [Christian Worldview.org](http://ChristianWorldview.org) and click on the page What Must I Do to Be Saved? Because the point of knowing God's name or Christ's name is not just knowledge, but rather to trust in, to worship, to be a slave of the perfect Master Adonai Yahweh Elohim, the self-existent, eternal triune Creator. Thank you for joining us today on the Christian Worldview and for your support of this nonprofit radio ministry. Until next time, think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm.

The mission of the Christian Worldview is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end. To hear a replay of today's program, order a transcript, or find out what must I do to be saved, go to the ChristianWorldview.org or call toll-free 888-646-2233. The Christian Worldview is a listener-supported, nonprofit radio ministry furnished by the Overcomer Foundation. To make a donation, order resources, become a Christian Worldview partner, sign up for our weekly email, or the Christian

Worldview Journal print publication, or to contact us, go to TheChristianWorldview.org, call 888 646 2233, or write to box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. Thanks for listening to the Christian Worldview.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, Sept 12 - Speaker Series at Stone House Farm in Jordan, MN

You are invited to two events in September. The first is the Christian Worldview Speaker Series event on Saturday, September 12th at Stone House Farm in Jordan, Minnesota with Pastor Travis Allen of Grace Church in Greeley, Colorado, who is a longtime favorite guest on the program and former managing director of Grace to You and a U.S. Navy SEAL. We will discuss a wide range of current events and issues of the faith, along with audience questions. Dinner will be served.

Monday, Sept 14 - The Overcomer Foundation Cup at White Bear Yacht Club

Two days later, on Monday, September 14th, is the annual Overcomer Foundation Cup golf and dinner event at White Bear Yacht Club near St. Paul, Minnesota. Golfers from near and far experience an enjoyable day of golf, meals, and fellowship, all in support of the Overcomer Foundation, which is the nonprofit organization that directs the Christian Worldview.

More details and registration for both events is at TheChristianWorldview.org or call us at 888-646-2233.

Bi-monthly Print Publication: The Christian Worldview Journal

The July-August issue of the Christian Worldview Journal commemorates 250 years of America. Ed Vitagliano of American Family Association writes how foundations of our past provide a blueprint for future political and cultural renewal. My column is about the consequences of a nation rebelling against God and the blessings for repentance as described in Psalm chapter 2. There is lots of additional content, including the insert with resources for adults and children.

The Christian Worldview Journal is a bi-monthly print and digital publication designed to sharpen your biblical worldview on current events and issues of the faith. The Journal is sent to Christian Worldview Partners as a thank you for their support of this radio ministry. To become a Christian Worldview partner or to order an individual issue of the journal, go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call 888-646-2233 or write to box 401-Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.