

God...I'm Listening... What are you really like?

Exodus 34:5-8

Tim Strickland, Leadership Development Director, FEB Central

2017 CROP Poll* – 65% of Canadians say they believe in God

- 22% believe in God “As taught by my religion”
- 37% believe in God “In my own way (own constructed image of God)”
- 21% believe in God as “A force of which we are all part”
- 20% believe “Life is a purely biological phenomenon” (atheistic)

*Source: <https://www.crop.ca/en/blog/2017/169/>

“God...I'm Listening...What are you really like?”

To find the answer, we will focus on the “Name of the Lord” in Exodus.

But Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and moreover, I will not let Israel go.” Exodus 5:2

Exodus tells us what God is like in several ways:

- He is the Great “I AM”: Exodus 3 – “I AM WHO I AM.”
- He is a God of Great Power: Exodus 7-12 – The Ten Plagues
- He is a God of Salvation: Exodus 12-15 – The Passover & The Red Sea
- He is a God of Laws: Exodus 20 – The Ten Commandments
- He is a God of Holiness: Exodus 25-31, 35-40 – The Tabernacle
- He is known through His Name: Exodus 34 – “**The Name of the Lord**”

Moses said, “Please show me your glory.” And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘The Lord.’ And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.” And the Lord said, “Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen.”

Exodus 33:18-23

The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.” And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped.

Exodus 34:5-8

1. The Name of the Lord – Seven Defining Characteristics

“The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.” Exodus 34:6-7

- “merciful”** (or “compassionate”)
 - God is compassionate, “providing care and protection for that which is helpless and dependent” (NET Bible Notes)
- “gracious”**
 - God gives you “undeserved favour” (Ryken)
- “slow to anger”**
 - God is patient with you (See 2 Peter 3:9)
- “abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness”**
(or “lovingkindness and truth”)
 - God abounds in loyal, reliable, unfailing, covenant love
 - God abounds in faithfulness and truth
- “keeping steadfast love for thousands”**
 - God’s love extends to thousands (of generations)
- “forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin”**
 - God forgives when you confess our sin

vii. **“but who will by no means clear the guilty”**

- God delivers justice if you are guilty of sin

The Bible is filled with References to the Name of the Lord

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to your **steadfast love**; according to your abundant **mercy blot out my transgressions**.*

- David, Psalm 51:1

*But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The **steadfast love** of the Lord never ceases; his **mercies** never come to an end; they are new every morning; **great is your faithfulness***

- Jeremiah, Lamentations 3:21-23

*That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you **are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love**, and relenting from disaster.*

- Jonah, Jonah 4:2

*For “everyone who calls on **the name of the Lord** will be saved.”*

- Paul, Romans 10:13

2. The Name of the Lord is on full display in Jesus, especially in his sacrificial death on the cross for your sins

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” Matthew 21:9

- “merciful” (or “compassionate”)
 - Jesus had compassion for the multitudes
 - God shows you mercy through the cross of Jesus
- “gracious”
 - God freely offers salvation through Jesus’ death on the cross
- “slow to anger”
 - Jesus is patient with you (see 2 Peter 3:9)
- “abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness”
 - God sent Jesus to die for you because of his love -John 3:16
 - Jesus is full of grace and truth (John 1:14), faithful to death
- “keeping steadfast love for thousands” (thousands of generations)
 - Jesus’ faithful love has continued from before creation
- “forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin”
 - God forgives sin through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross
- “but who will by no means clear the guilty”
 - God’s justice is satisfied through Jesus’ sacrificial death

3. The Name of the Lord lives in believers through the Holy Spirit

But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

1 Corinthians 6:11

- “merciful” (or “compassionate”)
 - The Spirit produces God’s mercy in you towards others
- “gracious”
 - The Spirit empowers you to show God’s grace to others
- “slow to anger”
 - The Spirit produces patience as part of his fruit in you
- “abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness”
 - The Spirit enables you to show God’s love and faithfulness
- “keeping steadfast love for thousands” (thousands of generations)
 - The Spirit empowers you to persevere in showing God’s love
- “forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin”
 - The Spirit enables you to forgive others as God forgave you
- “but who will by no means clear the guilty”
 - The Spirit convicts you of sin and moves you to right wrongs

Your Response

When you know what God is really like, it makes you want to follow Him.

I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever; with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations. Ps. 89:1

Have you put your trust in Jesus? Why not do so today!?

Trusting in Jesus involves three steps:

- 1. Faith**, a turning towards Jesus
- 2. Repentance**, a turning away from sin
- 3. Surrender**, a transfer of Kingship from you to Jesus

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus Romans 3:23-24

because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9

For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. Eph.2:8-9

A Prayer to Believe in Jesus

“Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need your forgiveness. I believe that you died and rose again to save me from my sins. Please forgive me, and please be the Lord of my life. I give my life to you and put my full trust in you for now and forever.

Thank you for hearing my prayer. In Jesus’ Name amen”

Questions for Further Reflection and Small Group Discussion

- Have you ever wondered what the phrase “The Name of the Lord” means? How has today’s message helped you to understand it better?
- Reflect on each characteristic in the Name of the Lord. How does each one encourage you? How does each one challenge you to better reflect the Lord in your own life?
- How does Jesus display the Name of the Lord through His life and sacrifice?
- Thank God for each of the characteristics in the Name of the Lord. Ask Him to empower you to live them out through the power of Jesus in you.

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