Introduction – what’s in a name?
Do you know the most popular boys & girls names in Australia for 2017?
For Girls – Charlotte
For Boys – Oliver

What’s in a name?
Names are very important. Why is a name important? They give us identity. Many times they describe your character. Think about the 7 dwarves in Snow White. Do you know all seven?
Happy, Sneezy, Sleepy, Grumpy, Bashful, Dopey & Doc.

Last week I was at the Voice of the Lord African Church at Kruger Parade. The Pastor is Godfrey, and his wife’s name is Patience. His daughter’s name is Lovely. Many cultures, particularly in Africa, name their children according to a character that they wish to see in their children. They grow up then surrounded by their name, being encouraged by the village to fulfil this special nature in their life.
I wonder if I observed the character of those in our Church to determine what their names might be according to their behaviour and characteristics.
Would it be Grumpy? Argue? Whingy? Negative?
Or would it be more like Happy? Joyful? Thankful? Helpful? Peace? Kindness?
I pray that it would be more like the fruit of the Spirit – God’s amazing nature living within us. Wouldn’t it be great if you wore the name tag – Child of the One True King. (or ‘Saved by Grace’ or ‘Loved for Eternity’).

There’s nothing like being called by your name. In a group of people, to be recognized and encouraged by your name. It is something special.

This morning I want to look at the many names of God. There are many (beautiful) names given to God in the Bible, but what do they all mean? We sing about them. We’ve sung about them today.

First let’s pray …

*Gracious God & our Heavenly Father,*

*We desire to know you more intimately. Our lives are busy, filled with pressures and activities. It’s often hard for us to just stop and think about You. Still us now. Strengthen our faith in You. King of Glory, open our minds to Your spectacular majesty. Draw our hearts closer, precious Saviour. May your infinite love and marvellous grace guide us as we learn more of You and your mighty name today.*

*In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.*

**Knowing what your name means**

Do you know what your name means? (Ask people to share if they know).

**Do you look like your name?**

I checked out what my name means and got a bit of a surprise.

My Christian name (Marshall) means ‘carer/keeper of horses!’

My surname (Muller) means miller/grinder of grain.

I also checked out my wife’s name Yvonne.

Her Christian name comes from the name for wood (yew) that they made bows from around the time of the Norman Conquest.
Her surname Powell is Welsh and means eminent.
So every morning when I get up I can greet my wife with ‘Your eminence!’ and today when you address Yvonne you have to start with your eminence!

So do we know God’s names?
The more we understand God’s character, His ways, the more we love Him.
Because God is way beyond human beings, the only way we can know what God is really like is to know what He reveals about Himself. The Bible is God’s letter that reveals these things about Him.
Knowing God seems like an impossible task. But to really know God, is to know His many names. If you want to know God intimately, then get to know His many names in the Scriptures. You will find a wealth & richness as you discover the titles of God.

These days parents choose a popular name or something that they have heard that they like. But it was different in biblical times – they named people (like I mentioned earlier in African culture) according to the parent’s hopes for the future of their child. The giving of a name is an auspicious occasion. Their name was a prophetic glance into the character of the one being named.

A change of name signalled a new relationship or a new phase of life or new destiny. For example, Jacob, who was renamed Israel by God (Genesis 32) when he was a middle-aged man. God desired to change his inner character from Jacob (deceiver) to Israel (one who interacts with God).

We find in the bible many times that God revealed His many names in times when they were facing problems and needed salvation.
For example, when David faced Goliath, he proclaimed, ‘You come against me with sword & spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.’ (1 Samuel 17:45).
The name ‘Lord Almighty’ reveals He is all powerful, and ‘God of the armies of Isreal’ means he is the Supreme General leading His army into battle.
How is Goliath expected to win against that?

How many names does God have? God has over 200 names. (Some say up to 900!)
Why does God have so many names?
Because no one name tells us everything there is to know about Him. Each name highlights another aspect of who He is. The more you know about His names, the more you will love Him. As you grow in knowledge and love of God, your faith grows – why? Because we learn to place our trust more in our Sovereign God.

I can guarantee you that if you were to do a study on the 200+ names of God, your relationship with God would enhance your faith and love for Him.

Matthew 22:37 says – ‘love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’

Psalm 9:10 - “Those who know your name will trust in you, For you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.”

The Lord’s actions are always tied to His name. It is a beautiful thing to know that His ways are always consistent with His character. It strengthens our faith when we are surrounded by difficult circumstances or troubled times. The King of Kings will give us peace:

Psalm 91:14 – ‘Because He loves me, says the Lord, I will rescue him. I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.’

You know many times we end our prayers with a casual ‘in Jesus’ name, Amen’. But praying in Jesus’ name means to pray according to His attributes and promises. Our faith-filled prayers relate to things that are in the heart of God and based on the character of his beloved son.

Listen to John 14:13-14 – ‘And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name and I will do it.’

Great passage – when we have a need, or when we want to praise Him, address God using the name that addresses the situation.

When you pray this way it challenges our thinking about who the Lord really is. It deepens your relationship with Him. For example, when we are in an atmosphere of turmoil and stress, depend on the Prince of Peace.

When you are hurt, come to Jehavoh Rophe – the Lord who heals.

If you have sinned, you can find forgiveness from the Lamb of God.

As you enter dark times, follow the Light of the World.
Don’t get me wrong. Many names doesn't mean many gods. There is only one God. The Triune God – One God, but 3 distinct persons. Equal in nature and attributes but distinct in personality and function.

Some of the names in the Bible are use interchangeably for all three, such as God or Lord. While others refer to a specific person of the Godhead- e.g. Heavenly Father, Saviour, Holy Spirit.

The goal of our lives as believers is to glorify God through faith in Him and obedience to His Word. As we understand the many names of God and deepen our love for Him, He will reveal more of who he is and His ways to us.

The Psalmist puts it this way – ‘But let all who take refuge in the you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you.’ (Psalm 5:11)

So let’s have a look at some of the names of God. We won’t have time to look at all 200+ of them, but I want us to whet our appetite by looking at a few. Can I encourage you, when you read the Bible, to look for the specific names of God? Study them and what they are saying in the circumstances they are being used.

**GOD (Elohim)** – Genesis 1:1-31

Before there was anything there was God. The English name for God in the Old Testament is usually a translation of the Hebrew name Elohim.

It means **omnipotent power**. It refers to the Lord’s absolute dominion of the whole universe.

It is used 3,393 times from Genesis to Malachi. God’s power goes beyond any other force in the universe.

**God Almighty (El-Shaddai)** – Genesis 17:1-27

God Almighty is a translation of the Hebrew name El-Shaddai. ‘El’ is the root of Elohim and refers to his mighty power.

The word shaddai means breast and refers to God’s nourishing and sustaining us. Therefore, El Shaddai is all-powerful to meet our needs and fulfil His promises, according to His will and timetable.
When Abraham was 75 years old, God promised to give him descendants that would make a great nation (Genesis 12). But at the age of 99, he still did not have a son. In Genesis 17 Abraham encounters El-Shaddai – all powerful to meet Abraham’s needs.

We need to recognise that El-Shaddai can do impossible things. That He is sufficient to answer our every need.

**LORD (Jehovah) – Exodus 3:1-22**

I AM is actually the Hebrew word Yahweh. The ancients Hebrews changed the pronunciation of the letters to Jehovah. This name has then been translated into the English word as LORD with the last 3 letters in smaller capitals.

It appears over 6000 times in the Old Testament and is the most frequently used name.

Lord refers to His eternal nature and supremacy/sovereignty over all heaven and earth. He is always present with His people.

The nation of Israel had been enslaved to the Egyptians for hundreds of years. God chooses Moses, an 80 year old Shepherd, to lead a million Hebrews out of slavery. In the process He reveals His name – “I AM” (Jehovah) – which assures his people that He is in control of all things.

When we feel that we are in bondage or tied up, or we can’t see any solution, our prayer is to Jehovah – the one who is in control of all things.

There is another word for Lord which is Adonai. The last three letters are all in lowercase. In the New Testament it is translated in the Greek as kurios. Jesus claims to be the I AM in John 8:48-59.

**Lord (Adonai) – Isaiah 6:1-13**

In the Old Testament the name Adonai is translated into English as ‘Lord’ and appears 412 times. Adonai means master or owner and refers to God’s right to possess and rule His creation. Even though He has this right, He gives us as human beings the choice to obey or disobey Him. We then have to bear the consequences of our choices. So when we hear the voice of the Lord, choose to obey.

Adonai is used in the passage in Isaiah 6 – Whom shall I send? And who will go for us (triune God)?
Our prayer is to pray for forgiveness for the times we have failed to obey the Lord’s (Adonai’s) call.

**JEHOVAH-ROPHE** (The LORD who heals) – Exodus 15:1-27

The English phrase – ‘the LORD who heals you’ is a translation of the Hebrew name Jehovah- Rophe.

Many times we can be tempted into thinking that the LORD doesn’t want to help us, or that our trouble is too small for Him to think about. But God has the power to heal the big and the small hurts of those who obey Him.

We find this term for God used in Exodus 15:26 when He promises to look after them in the wilderness.

Our prayer is to thank God for His promise and power that He will heal us.

**JEHOVAH-ROHI** (Shepherd) – Ezekiel 34:1-31

God is a loving attentive compassionate Shepherd to us. We can trust Him to take care of us. We are one of His sheep. As a Shepherd, he rescues us, protects us, guides and directs us to the right provisions (water and grass).

There were false shepherds in Israel who abandoned and scattered the flocks. But God gathers His people (His flock) and guides them & protects them.

**JEHOVAH-SABAOTH** (LORD Almighty) – Zechariah 8:1-23

The name Lord Almighty appears 249 times in the Old Testament. It signifies that He reigns with power, compassion and righteous judgement. He is vitally concerned for His people their welfare.

After the destruction of Judah (southern kingdom) and the scattering of the people all throughout the world, Zechariah predicted their return to Zion.

Another translation of the name Jehovah-Sabaoth is ‘Lord of Hosts’. The word ‘sabaoth’ means hosts ( or a large number of beings organized for battle). God is the leader of the army of heaven. He is the LORD Almighty.

**God of Israel** – 1 Kings 8:1-30

‘God of Israel’ appears 195 times & represents the Lord’s sovereignty over the nation and His people. Because He is the Supreme Ruler he is able to keep His promises. So people can trust Him in all circumstances.
Once the nation of Israel had arrived and settled in the Promised Land, Solomon built and dedicated the Temple to the God of Israel. God’s presence came and filled the Temple.

What do we need to dedicate to the God of Israel – the one who is sovereign over all? We need to ask Him to fill us with His presence.

**Prince of Peace** – Isaiah 9:1-7

*And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.*

When you are worried, frightened, stressed, unsure, or doubtful we can call on the Prince of Peace. The peace He offers will calm your soul, ease your mind and rest your heart.

Each day we need to pray for peace of mind, and call on the Prince of Peace to meet our needs in this way. Are you a person who is easily troubled? You need to call on and pray to the Prince of Peace so that you may experience His peace.

Jesus lived up to this name (predicted in Isaiah 9) just before he went to the cross. He offered hope and peace of mind to his followers in John 14. Do not let your hearts be troubled / I am going to prepare a place for you / I am the Way, the Truth & the Life / But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name will teach you all things & will remind you of everything I have said / no one will take away your joy (John 16:22).

**King of Kings & Lord of Lords** – Revelation 19:1-21

In Revelation 19 it mentions that this name will be written on his robe and his thigh – King of Kings & Lord of Lords. At the end of human history, when time is completed, Jesus will reign supreme as the King of all Kings and the Lord of all Lords.

**ROCK** – Deuteronomy 32:1-47

God is a refuge & source of security. When things get tough, we can depend on God – He is our rock. He doesn’t change, He always keeps his promises throughout all generations.

We need to pray that God our rock can shelter us.
**FATHER** – John 17:1-26

God the Father is our heavenly Father – perfect, loving, compassionate. His family consists of Christ, His Son, and those who put their faith in Him. He desires for each person to believe in Him and become His child forever.

The Father image is a wonderful image in the Bible. We see Jesus’ special relationship with His heavenly Father in John 17.

I haven’t got time to go through all the other names of God, but here’s just a few more quickly.

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<tr>
<th>Holy One</th>
<th>Ancient of Days</th>
<th>Author of Life</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living God</td>
<td>Defender / Deliverer</td>
<td>Cornerstone</td>
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<td>God of Heaven</td>
<td>Creator</td>
<td>God Most High (El Elyon)</td>
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<td>Most High God</td>
<td>God of Abraham</td>
<td>God of Glory</td>
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<td>Spirit of Truth</td>
<td>God who sees (El Roi)</td>
<td>Great King</td>
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<td>Hope of Israel</td>
<td>Immanuel</td>
<td>Judge of all the Earth</td>
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<td>King of Glory</td>
<td>Living God</td>
<td>Lion of the Tribe of Judah</td>
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<td>LORD is my banner (Jehovah Nissi)</td>
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<td>Lord is Peace (Jehovah Shalom)</td>
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<td>Lord My God</td>
<td>Lord of All</td>
<td>Lord of the Harvest</td>
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<td>Lord of the Sabbath</td>
<td>Lord our Maker</td>
<td>Lord who makes you Holy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Majesty in Heaven</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Maker of all things</td>
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<td>Mighty One</td>
<td>Overseer</td>
<td>Prophet</td>
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<td>Redeemer</td>
<td>Righteous One</td>
<td>Root of David / Jesse</td>
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<td>Spirit of Grace</td>
<td>Spirit of the Living God</td>
<td>Stone</td>
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<td>Strength</td>
<td>Truth</td>
<td>Vine</td>
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<td>Witness</td>
<td>The Word</td>
<td>Word of Life</td>
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<td>Saviour of the World</td>
<td>Advocate</td>
<td>Alpha &amp; Omega</td>
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<td>Son of Man</td>
<td>Saviour</td>
<td>The Word</td>
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<td>Christ</td>
<td>Messiah</td>
<td>Light of the World</td>
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<tr>
<td>Son</td>
<td>The Lamb of God</td>
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As I said, each of these help us to understand God and His Son Jesus more. It also helps us when we pray to recognize God’s might and power and His ability to help. Every name of God has special significance for Christians. But there is one name that is very special. It is the beautiful name of Jesus – God’s begotten son.

Philippians 2 - At the name of Jesus we are told that every man (every knee) will bow in heaven & on earth and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the father.

This phrase comes from the Old Testament book of Isaiah. It means that God is the only one who can save. There is no other, no idol, nothing else that can save us. Only those who turn from their idols and turn to God through the name of Jesus will be saved. There is only one name that is above all heaven and earth.
The name of Jesus. The beautiful, powerful name of Jesus.
Demons shudder at the name of Jesus. Luke 10:17 The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!”

It is only through believing in the name of Jesus that we find Life. John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

It is only through this name that we can be saved.
Acts 4:12 ESV – “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

It is only through this name that we can be healed from sin ... forever.

It is only through the name of Jesus that healing is possible. Acts 4:30 – “While you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

It is only through the name of Jesus that we can be forgiven.
It is through Jesus that we can become children of the Most High God.
It’s only recognizing what has been done in this name – the beautiful name of Jesus – that we are raised to life eternal.
We're going to sing our new song “What a Beautiful Name it is” in a minute. Let me read the words of the song to you.

What A Beautiful Name - Hillsong Worship

Verse 1
You were the Word at the beginning
One with God the Lord Most High
Your hidden glory in creation
Now revealed in You our Christ

Chorus 1
What a beautiful Name it is
What a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King
What a beautiful Name it is
Nothing compares to this
What a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

Verse 2
You didn’t want heaven without us
So Jesus You brought heaven down
My sin was great Your love was greater
What could separate us now

Chorus 2
What a wonderful Name it is
What a wonderful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King
What a wonderful Name it is
Nothing compares to this
What a wonderful Name it is
The Name of Jesus
What a wonderful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

Bridge
Death could not hold You
The veil tore before You
You silence the boast of sin and grave
The heavens are roaring
The praise of Your glory
For You are raised to life again

You have no rival
You have no equal
Now and forever God You reign
Yours is the kingdom
Yours is the glory
Yours is the Name above all names

Chorus 3
What a powerful Name it is
What a powerful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King
What a powerful Name it is
Nothing can stand against
What a powerful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

Tags
What a powerful Name it is The Name of Jesus
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I want you to imagine the whole of heaven singing the name of Jesus - giving glory to Jesus for his sacrifice as God’s Son. Praising Jesus for his blood the perfect sacrifice. Revelation 14 describes the sound of all heaven giving glory to the name of Jesus as the roar of rushing waters, peals of thunder as all heaven sings the powerful name of Jesus.

In John 16:23 Jesus states: "If you ask the Father anything in my name he will give it you."

Right now as we sing this song – What a beautiful name it is the name of Jesus – if there is anything that you wish to ask for in the Name of Jesus, cry out to Him. Perhaps there is healing for someone. Perhaps there are ones who need to come to the Lord. Perhaps you are going through a tough time right now. Perhaps there are doubts or trouble.
Jesus is encouraging us to ask the Father for anything in His name, and He will give it to you.

Can I encourage you to believe in the powerful name of Jesus Christ our King, and seek Him now as we worship Him?

Let's worship Jesus – the one in whose name we can be saved.

**Closing Song ~ What a beautiful name**

**Let’s Pray**

_Almighty God, El Shaddai, Adonai, Lord, our Heavenly Father, Father of Jesus our Saviour & Messiah,_

*Thank you for Jesus – what a beautiful name it us. All of heaven proclaims His name as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*

_You want each one to enjoy heaven, so you sent your Son Jesus, lover of my soul. Thank you for your love that shattered my sin and forgave me and gave me a clean heart. We give thanks that you love us, sustain us, nourish us, protect us, heal us, and save us. I thank you that those who believe and trust in you – that our names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life._

_I thank you that you have given us a new name, because of Jesus’ blood. I thank you that I’m not just the keeper of horses or the grinder of grain, but that I am a child of the Living God. Thank you for being our Father. May we be encouraged by your Holy spirit to know you more. Give us a desire to seek you through your Word._

_May your name be lifted high in our lives. May the beautiful name of Jesus be upon our lips this week and forever as we serve you. Bless your Holy name forever._

_Amen._