

20-0308a - Detailed Summary

20-0308a - *Knowing God Through His Names: Unveiling His Character*

Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer, **Bible Reader(s):** Roger Raines

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI, (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

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Knowing God Through His Names

Summary of Transcript (0:00 - 53:51)

Scripture Reading:

Scripture Reading (0:00 - 0:35), Roger Raines

1 John 4:7-8 - The sermon begins with Roger reading from 1 John 4:7-8, emphasizing the theme of love as a divine attribute. The passage states that love originates from God, and those who love are born of God and know Him, while those who do not love do not know God, as God is love.

Summary - Unveiling the Divine Character

Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(0:45 - 1:57) Context and Opening Remarks

The scripture reading sets the tone for the sermon's focus on understanding God's nature. The preacher, Jim, greets the congregation warmly, signaling the start of the service.

Jim explains that he has not preached in some time and notes that the congregation's minister has retired, leaving the responsibility of delivering sermons to the men of the congregation. He humorously refers to himself as the "lead-off batter" in this new arrangement. Jim expresses gratitude to Kevin for selecting the song "9-11" as the invitation song, jokingly suggesting it might be needed if his sermon does not go well. He praises the song service and introduces his plan to present a series of lessons on the nature of God, though not consecutively, as other men, including Kevin, will also preach in the coming weeks.

(1:57 - 3:28) Introduction to the Sermon Series on God's Nature

Jim announces that his series will explore the question, "Who is God?" using the Bible as the primary source. He acknowledges the limitations of human understanding in fully grasping God's infinite nature due to our finite minds but commits to letting the Bible speak for itself, as it is God's inspired, infallible word, written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. To enhance his study, Jim mentions using resources like Strong's Concordance and Greek and Hebrew lexicons to examine the names of God in both the Old and New Testaments, aiming to capture their essence.

(3:28 - 5:31) Discussion on Bible Translations

Jim explains that the Bible is a translation, often transliterated, from original Hebrew and Greek texts, which can pose challenges due to differences in thought and speech patterns between these languages and English. He notes that the best translations are produced by committees of scholars who review each other's work to ensure accuracy. While most English translations are reliable, Jim cautions against paraphrased versions like the Living Bible, which offer a general sense of the text but lack precision. He shares his preference for the New International Version (NIV) for its readability, despite being a paraphrase, and the New American Standard Bible for its closeness to the original texts. He also mentions using the World English Bible, which preserves Hebrew names for God and is based on the 1901 American Standard Version.

(5:32 - 7:30) The Names of God

Jim discusses the significance of God's names, particularly focusing on "Yahweh" (or Jehovah), represented in the Bible as "LORD" in all capital letters. He explains that "Yahweh" is the tetragrammaton (Y-H-W-H), a holy name whose exact pronunciation is uncertain. Jim expresses mild frustration with modern translators for simplifying God's names, believing they underestimate readers' ability to appreciate the variety of names used for God. He emphasizes that his sermon series will explore God's attributes through His names, relying heavily on scripture to ensure truthfulness.

(7:31 - 9:57) Prayer for the Congregation

Before delving into the main content, Jim leads a prayer for specific congregational needs. He prays for Idris, who faces upcoming challenges, asking for strength and encouragement, and for the Juarez family, who are grieving a loss due to a car accident. Jim also prays for guidance in presenting his lesson truthfully and for the congregation's personal struggles, asking for God's will to guide their decisions. The prayer concludes with a request for blessings on the service and a commitment to glorify God.

(10:11 - 12:55) Exploring the Question "Who is God?"

Jim poses the central question of the sermon: "Who is the God of the Bible?" He suggests that as children of God, believers should be prepared to describe God's nature, acknowledging that this is a complex question requiring deep scriptural investigation. He introduces the concept of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—as central to understanding God. Jim notes that Kevin Clary's earlier Bible class on the Holy Spirit complements his sermon, creating a cohesive teaching theme at the Westside congregation. He clarifies that his focus will be on the Trinity, particularly Jesus Christ and the Father, while Kevin covers the Holy Spirit. Jim emphasizes that his study is not exhaustive but will cover key names and attributes of God. He introduces the Greek word *theos* (God in the New Testament, equivalent to the Hebrew *elohim*) and *kurios* (Lord, meaning master or teacher), often used for Jesus.

(12:55 - 17:04) Names and Attributes of God in the New Testament

Jim highlights specific names for Jesus in the New Testament, such as *logos* (the Word), which portrays Jesus as the giver of God's word in both the Old and New Testaments, including as the

“angel of the Lord” and “angel of the covenant.” He cites Revelation 1:8, where Jesus describes Himself as “the Alpha and the Omega” and “the Almighty,” and Revelation 1:17, where Jesus declares Himself “the first and the last,” the living one who holds the keys of death and Hades. These titles connect Jesus’ New Testament identity to His eternal nature in the Old Testament. Jim also references 1 Timothy 6:15-16, which describes God (the Trinity) as the “King of kings and Lord of lords,” immortal, dwelling in unapproachable light, and unseen by humans. He explains that the singular term “God” refers to the three-person Godhead, emphasizing the unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

(17:05 - 17:59) The Unseen Nature of the Godhead

Jim continues his exploration of the Trinity, emphasizing that no one has seen God the Father or the Holy Spirit, as they are invisible forces within the Godhead. He explains that Jesus serves as the representative who interacts and intercedes with humanity. To illustrate this, Jim directs the congregation to John 1:1-3, signaling a focus on Jesus’ divine role as described in Scripture.

(18:00 - 19:11) Jesus as the Word and God

Jim reads from John 1:1-3 using the New International Version, which describes the Word (*Logos*) as being with God and being God, through whom all things were created. He clarifies that John 1:14 explicitly identifies the Word as Jesus, reinforcing the concept that Jesus, the man, is God. Jim introduces Colossians 1:15-20 as another passage to explore Jesus’ divine nature, emphasizing the importance of Scripture in understanding God’s identity.

(19:11 - 20:01) Personal Anecdote and Transition

Before delving into Colossians, Jim shares a humorous personal anecdote about his recent diagnosis of posterior vitreous detachment, a condition causing a visual obstruction in his right eye. He lightheartedly acknowledges this as an age-related challenge but affirms his commitment to serving God despite it. This brief digression humanizes Jim and connects with the congregation before returning to the sermon’s focus.

(20:02 - 21:49) Jesus as the Image of God

Jim reads Colossians 1:15-20, which describes Jesus as the “image of the invisible God,” the firstborn of creation, through whom all things—visible and invisible, including angels—were created. The passage highlights Jesus’ supremacy as the head of the church and the one who reconciles all things through His sacrificial death. Jim explains that Jesus, as a man born of a virgin through the Holy Spirit, embodied the fullness of God, referencing Isaiah 7:14, which prophesies the birth of Emmanuel, meaning “God with us.” He underscores that Jesus, while human, was fully divine, possessing the Holy Spirit’s fullness.

(21:50 - 23:54) The Finite Human Perspective and Jesus’ Revelation of God

Jim reflects on the difficulty of comprehending Jesus as God due to humanity’s finite nature, describing humans as limited by their physical bodies and worldly thinking. He encourages the congregation to look forward to a future in heaven where they will fully understand God’s nature. Jim emphasizes the Bible as the source of insight into God’s will and personality. He cites John 1:18,

where the Apostle John states that no one has seen God the Father, but Jesus, the “only begotten God,” reveals Him. Jim also references John 5:37, where Jesus confirms that no one has heard the Father’s voice or seen His form, reinforcing the Father’s invisibility.

(23:55 - 27:29) Jesus as the Visible Representation of the Father

Jim continues to explore Jesus’ role as the visible representative of the Godhead, citing John 14:8-11, where Philip asks Jesus to show the disciples the Father. Jesus responds that seeing Him is equivalent to seeing the Father, as He and the Father are one, with the Father working through Him. Jim emphasizes that Jesus, as depicted in Colossians and other passages, is the exact representation of God on earth. This point is further supported by Hebrews 1:1-6, which describes Jesus as the Son through whom God spoke in the last days, the heir of all things, and the one through whom the universe was created.

(27:30 - 30:07) Jesus as Creator and Sustainer

Jim elaborates on Hebrews 1:1-6, noting that Jesus, as the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His being, sustains all creation through His powerful word. He marvels at Jesus’ role in holding together the laws of science and matter, acknowledging human limitations in understanding this divine power. Jim highlights Jesus’ role in providing purification for sins and His exalted position at the right hand of God, referred to as “the Majesty.” He reiterates that Jesus, as the Godhead’s representative, spoke and acted on the Father’s behalf, embodying God’s image and authority.

(30:07 - 33:08) Old Testament Prophecies of Jesus

Jim transitions to the Old Testament, focusing on Isaiah 9:6-7, which prophesies the birth of a child who will be called “Wonderful Counselor,” “Mighty God,” “Everlasting Father,” and “Prince of Peace.” This child, born of a virgin (referencing Isaiah 7:14), will establish an eternal kingdom on David’s throne. Jim connects these titles to the Trinity, suggesting that “Wonderful Counselor” refers to the Holy Spirit, as described in John 14. He emphasizes that these prophecies, fulfilled in the Gospels, affirm Jesus’ divine identity as God with us, reinforcing the continuity between the Old and New Testaments in revealing the nature of the Godhead.

(33:08 - 34:43) Elohim and the Trinity in the Old Testament

Jim introduces the Hebrew term **Elohim** as the Old Testament name for God, representing the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He explains that **Elohim**, translated as “God” (G-O-D), signifies the mighty God and encapsulates the triune nature of the Godhead. Referencing Isaiah 9:6-7, Jim reiterates that the child born of a virgin, Jesus, embodies the entirety of the Godhead, with titles like “Everlasting Father” and “Prince of Peace” highlighting His divine attributes and role as head of a peaceful kingdom. He contrasts the Jewish expectation of a warrior God, as seen in the conquest of the Holy Land under the “captain of the Lord’s army,” with Jesus’ peaceful nature, noting that this captain was another manifestation of the divine being who interacted with humanity.

(34:44 - 37:33) The Trinity and Creation

Jim elaborates on the Trinity’s unity and equality, describing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as

eternal, equal in power, knowledge, and love, and united in purpose. He emphasizes their collective role in creation, referencing Genesis 1 where **Elohim** (a plural masculine Hebrew term) indicates the Trinity's involvement. Jim explains that **Elohim** reflects the three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—working together, with “El” signifying strength. He notes that translators often simplify **Elohim** to “God,” which can obscure its plural nature, but cites Deuteronomy 6:4, where Moses declares, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one,” affirming the unity of the Trinity. Jim highlights Genesis 1:26, where God says, “Let us make man in our image,” indicating the Trinity's collaborative role in creation, particularly through Christ, empowered by the Father and the Spirit.

(37:34 - 40:51) Christ's Role in Creation and Human Reactions

Jim explains that Jesus, as part of the Trinity, created both the physical universe (earth, heavens, stars) and the spiritual realm (heaven, angels, seraphim, cherubim). He references Deuteronomy 29:29, noting that God reveals what is necessary for humanity through His word, while keeping some things, like the Trinity's activities before creation, hidden. Jim underscores Jesus' immense power, suggesting that encounters with divine beings, such as angels or Jesus in His glorified form (as in Revelation 1:17), overwhelm human senses, causing people to faint or “take dirt naps.” He recounts the resurrection scene where guards fainted before an angel, humorously noting that the women present, including Mary, remained steadfast, showcasing their strength.

(40:52 - 43:39) God's Names in the Patriarchal Age

Jim discusses other names for God in the Old Testament, focusing on Exodus 6:3, where God reveals to Moses that He appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as **El Shaddai** (God Almighty, or **Elohim Shaddai**), but not as **Yahweh**. He explains that **Yahweh** (the tetragrammaton, YHWH), considered the holiest name, was withheld from the patriarchs for reasons not specified. Jim notes that the Jews revered **Yahweh** so deeply that they avoided pronouncing it, using **Adonai** (Lord, with a capital L and lowercase o-r-d) instead. He mentions that in the Complete Jewish Bible, **Yahweh** is replaced with **Adonai**, reflecting the Jewish practice of substituting the sacred name to honor its holiness.

(43:40 - 46:48) Yahweh's Attributes Revealed to Moses

Jim explores the divine name **Yahweh** through Exodus 33:18-19 and 34:5-7, where Moses asks to see God's glory, and **Yahweh** proclaims His name and attributes before him. God describes Himself as compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, forgiving yet just, punishing the guilty across generations. Jim lists 11 attributes associated with **Yahweh**: **El** (mighty God), **Racham** (merciful), **Canaan** (gracious), **Erech Apayim** (long-suffering and kind), **Rab** (great or mighty), **Kesed** (bountiful), **Emeth** (truthful), **Notzer Kesed** (preserver of bountifulness), **Nos Avam**, **Vapesha**, **Vaketa** (bearer of iniquity, transgression, and sin), **Naked Lo Yekenah** (righteous judge), and **Poked Avam** (visitor of iniquity). He admits to limited Hebrew knowledge but uses a Hebrew dictionary to share these terms, emphasizing that **Yahweh** encapsulates these divine characteristics, revealing God's personality to Moses.

(46:49 - 49:09) The Meaning and Tenses of Yahweh

Jim delves into the significance of **Yahweh**, explaining its meaning through Exodus 3:13-14, where God tells Moses, “I am who I am,” identifying Himself as **Yahweh** in the first person, implying

eternal existence. He notes that **Yahweh** can also be expressed in the third person future tense as “I will be what I will be,” highlighting God’s timeless nature. Jim finds this dynamic use of tenses “cool” and emphasizes that these attributes, as revealed to Moses, define **Yahweh**’s essence. He concludes with Exodus 3:15, where God declares **Yahweh** as His name forever, affirming its eternal significance as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

(49:10 - 50:16) The Significance of Yahweh and Translation Concerns

Jim emphasizes the eternal significance of the name *Yahweh*, as declared in Exodus 3:15, where God instructs Moses that this is His name forever, to be remembered by all generations. He notes that in English Bibles, *Yahweh* is typically rendered as “LORD” in all capital letters, but argues that modern translators do a disservice by not using the actual name *Yahweh* or its variant *Jehovah*. Jim believes this omission fails to honor God’s explicit desire to be known by His sacred name, suggesting that the Bible should reflect *Yahweh* directly to preserve its significance.

(50:17 - 51:16) Additional Names of God in the Old Testament

Jim introduces several other Hebrew names for God found in the Old Testament, each revealing a distinct aspect of His character. These include *Adonai* (Lord or Master), *Shaddai* (Almighty, as in *El Shaddai*, Almighty God), *El Sabaoth* (God of Hosts), *Sur* (the Rock), *Barah* (Creator), *El Yon* (God Most High), and *Kedosh* (the Holy One). He also mentions *Elkanah* (the Jealous God), noting that due to time constraints, he will focus only on this name in the current sermon, with plans to cover others in future lessons. Jim references Exodus 34:14, where God declares Himself as *Yahweh*, whose name is Jealous, emphasizing His exclusive claim to worship.

(51:17 - 52:42) Understanding God as a Jealous God

Jim elaborates on the concept of God as *Elkanah*, the Jealous God, citing Deuteronomy 4:24, which describes God as a “consuming fire, a Jealous God.” He explains that God’s jealousy is not petty but relational, using the metaphor of marriage to describe God’s covenant with His people. When the faithful worship other gods or engage in sinful behavior, it is akin to adultery, breaking the covenant with God. Jim clarifies that this jealousy reflects God’s desire for preeminence in the lives of His people, likening it to a spouse’s rightful anger at infidelity, though God remains in control and expresses this emotion to underscore His exclusive claim to their devotion.

(52:43 - 53:51) Invitation to Make God Preeminent

Jim concludes the sermon by transitioning to an invitation, urging the congregation to make God preeminent in their lives. He highlights God’s interaction with humanity through Jesus Christ, the perfect sacrificial Lamb who takes away sins. Jim invites those who have not yet committed to God to seize the opportunity to shed their old life and embrace a new one through baptism, which he describes as the means to wash away sins and be added to Christ’s church. He encourages anyone in need to come forward, assuring them of the congregation’s support, and closes by extending the invitation to respond to God’s call.