

Names, Names, Names

How many names do you have? Let's find out! There's your first name. First names are names such as Sam, Ruth, Shannon, and Carlos. What is your first name?

Then there is your last name, which tells what family you are a part of—Nelson, Steward, Garcia, or Kasahara. What is your last name?

Some people also have a middle name. Do you?

But you have more names than this. Other names are called “titles”—like “son,” or “daughter,” or “sister.” Does your family use those name-titles for you? Does Dad ever call you “Son”? Do your brothers or sisters ever call you “Sis” or “Bro”? Maybe you have even gotten a letter calling you “Mr.” or “Miss.”

Then there are the fun names! They are the special names that people who love you call you—“Sweetie” or “Pumpkin” or “Buster.” These are called “nicknames.”

Some nicknames are just a shorter way of saying your name—like using “Will” for “William.” Other nicknames show something about you—like calling someone with red hair “Red,” or calling someone “Speedy” because he runs really fast. Do you have any nicknames?

Usually a nickname describes you, or reminds you of something that happened to you, or says something about the kind of person you are. If you won a race, someone might give you the nickname “Champ”—short for “Champion.” If you are smart, you might be called “The Brain.”

To have ten names would be a lot! How many names do you have? Let's count them.

Sometimes there is a special reason that we have the first or middle name we have. Maybe you are named after someone who is loved by your parents—a grandfather, or an aunt or uncle. Sometimes there are clever reasons for choosing

a name. If Mr. Joel and Mrs. Jackie chose “J” names for their children—Julia and Jesse—we could call them the “J”s!

Sometimes parents choose names with meanings because they want their children to grow up to be like the meaning of the names—such as Anna Hope and Katherine Joy. “Christina” means “follower of Christ,” so parents might choose that name because they pray that their daughter would follow Jesus.

Why do you think your name was chosen for you?

Many names in the Bible mean something. “Eve” means “the mother of all living things.” Why do you think she was named that?

God changed Abram’s name to “Abraham,” which means “father of a multitude of nations.” The name “Abraham” showed God’s plan for Abram’s life. Jesus



changed Simon Peter's name to "Peter," which means "rock." Peter was not always strong like a rock. Can you think of some times when he was not like a rock? But Jesus changed Peter into a strong, rocklike man who was not afraid to preach about Jesus even when he was put in jail for his preaching.

Now, here is a very hard question. How many names do you think God has?

20 names? No, not enough!

50 names? Still not enough!

How about 100 names . . . this is STILL NOT ENOUGH!

The one true God of the Bible has MORE THAN 200 names!¹ And if you were to count all the names, titles, and nicknames of God in the Bible, there are more than 700 names!

Wow!

Why do you think God has so many names?

Remember that a name in the Bible tells something about the person. God is so big . . . so GREAT, SO WONDERFUL, that it takes more than 700 names to tell what He is like! All His names have meanings—wonderful meanings that show how big and great and wonderful God is.

The Bible says, "And those who know your name put their trust in you" (Psalm 9:10).

Why do you think that knowing God's names will help you to trust Him—to know that He is strong and good and in control of all things, and able to take care of the whole world and everyone in it?

Would you like to learn some of these wonderful names of God? In this book we will learn only a small number of the many names of God, but every name we learn will tell us a little more about who God is and what He is like.

1. While God is called by many names in the Bible, He gives a special significance to the name Yahweh/Jehovah, often translated as "the LORD" (see Exodus 6:3).

Little by little by little, you will see how big and how great and HOW WONDERFUL GOD IS.



LEARNING TO TRUST GOD

- * Look up Psalm 9:10 in your Bible. Read the whole verse and talk about it with your mom or dad.
- * Ask God to help you to trust Him. Only God can give you a trusting heart. Ask God to help you to look for Him—to see every day that He is real and strong and good and wonderful.
- * **Activity:** Find out why your name was chosen for you, and what your name means. Make a name card with your name and its meaning.