

## See Yourself Here Series 3, What God Sees In Your Name

By: Bobby Sullivan

Quote of the week: F.F. Bruce “It is because man bears the image of his Creator that it was possible for the Son of man to become incarnate as man and in his humanity to display the glory of the invisible God.”

John 1:42b - 50.

“...Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone)... WHATS IN A NAME?

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!” 48 Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” 49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” 50 Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these...”

PASSION TRANSLATION<sup>47</sup> When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said, “Now here comes a true son of Israel—an honest man with no hidden motive!”<sup>48</sup> Nathanael was stunned and said, “But you’ve never met me—how do you know anything about me?” Jesus answered, “Nathanael, right before Philip came to you I saw you sitting under the shade of a fig tree.”<sup>49</sup> Nathanael blurted out, “Teacher, you are truly the Son of God and the King of Israel!”<sup>50</sup> Jesus answered, “Do you believe simply because I told you I saw you sitting under a fig tree? You will experience even more impressive things than that! <sup>51</sup> I prophesy to you eternal truth: From now on<sub>[c]</sub> you will see an open heaven and gaze upon the Son of Man like a stairway reaching into the sky with the messengers of God climbing up and down upon him!”

Jesus sees you, not through you. And when He sees you He sees:

1. Your past!
2. Your true Identity
3. Your future!

Why is it so important that Jesus sees us and why does he change some peoples names?

Rick Hanson

“Even though it's scary, everyone longs to be seen, to be known. To have your hopes and fears acknowledged - the ones behind a polite smile or a frown of frustration. To have you're true caring seen, as well as your positive intentions

and natural goodness. Most intimately of all, to feel that your innermost being - the one to whom things happen, the one strapped to this roller coaster of a life trying to make sense of it before it ends - has been recognized by someone.”

We all just want to be seen for who we are. So does God. That’s literally his whole program for creation, to make him known and to be intimately known.

RENEE BROWN: “In order for connection to happen we have to allow ourselves to be seen.”

Jesus came to identify with us, to let us know that we are seen, heard, and valued, that we can come out of hiding and stop trying to prevent God from seeing us.

Remember our ancestors Adam and Eve, when they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they became infected in their consciousness with a deep sense of inadequacy... as if they didn’t measure up and were worthy of death. And ever since then we have developed and passed along an ingrained, innate fear of God that makes us want to hide from him rather than run to him.

2 Corinthians 5:17-18a

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God...”

**1.)** He sees your past! John 1:48

“Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

NOTE: A fig tree is often a biblical metaphor of God’s purpose and destiny coming to fruitfulness, especially as it relates to God’s kingdom realm being established on the earth. See Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10. There is some speculation that the phrase “I saw you under the fig tree” could be an Aramaic phrase for “I knew you since you were in the cradle.”

Jesus Christ is that stairway that joins earth to heaven and brings heaven to earth. The word for “angels” can be translated “messengers” and could be humans given access into the heavenly realm through the blood of Jesus. Jesus, as the stairway, is both in heaven and on earth as he speaks this to Nathanael. What mysteries surround him!

I am encouraged in scripture that Jesus sees my past.

Romans 8:28, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (NIV)

Isaiah 61:3, "... to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendour." (NIV)

Now thanks to Jesus, when God looks at my past what he sees is me, not my sin, not my failures... that empowers me to move forward into today, knowing that what he sees from yesterday is just me in Christ.  
FORGIVEN! FORGOTTEN! FOREVER!

Jesus sees your past and asks you to share your past. Why? Because as you share your past, others will see that only Jesus could set a slave of sin free!! Only Jesus can set at liberty the broken and battered! Only Jesus can break the chains of addiction! Only Jesus can change the direction and destiny of the destitute.

Luke 8:27-39 story of the demon possessed man being set free. Jesus said, "What is your name" He said, "Legion for we are many. The man didn't even know his name because Legion had taken him over!!

People can deny Christ, dispute Scripture and ignore prophecy, but they cannot deny, dispute or ignore God's transformational power in someone's life. Our stories of pain, adversity and overcoming in Christ are meant to serve as a testimony of God's faithfulness and power, evidence that God really can take what the devil meant for evil and use it for good.

Shows me that Jesus is more concerned about your future than your past.  
WHAT'S DOES JESUS SEE IN A NAME?

2.) He sees your true identity!

John 1:42

"Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, PETER A Stone)..."

Cephas is Aramaic for rock, or Peter (verse 42).

Peter (Petros): "a stone" or "a boulder,"

4074 Pétros (a masculine noun) – properly, a stone (pebble), such as a small rock found along a pathway.

Jesus says, you may have been this but "you will now be known as Cephas or Peter."

PETER:

Imagine going from being one of many fishermen on the Sea of Galilee to a pillar of Christ's church. That is the life change that Peter experienced. His name

change came from the Lord Himself. Simon means, "he has heard" or "to listen," probably a good description for someone who spent most of his time out at sea. But everything changed the day his brother Andrew brought Him to meet Jesus.

Peter didn't have any idea at that moment what an amazing role God had in mind for him. But he knew enough to obey Jesus' call to join Him. Jesus expands his vision by saying.

"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of [heaven](#); whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" ([Matthew 16:18-19](#)).

Jesus considered Simon worthy of a tremendous honour, one he would have to grow into. As Peter, learned the power of being known and accepted completely by his Saviour.

Eventually, he lived up to his new name, "rock," by preaching boldly and helping to build Christ's church on earth.

When we talk about identity we are talking about that deep inner sense of self - a knowing of who I am on the inside.

Biblically speaking - identity is one of those things that humans get most deeply and most profoundly from God. We came from Him.

You can generate a false sense of self from other things like your job, your family, your relationships, your race, gender, sexuality, the persona that you try to cast - but deep down, identity, a true sense of self can only be fully satisfied in the human heart when your sense of self comes from Jesus.

My question this week is, "WHATS IN A NAME?"

Question: "Why did God sometimes change a person's name in the Bible?"

Answer: When God changed a person's name and gave him a new name, it was usually to establish a new identity.

Matthew 16:18-29

"And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church..."

(pétra) is a "solid or native rock, rising up through the earth" – a huge mass of rock (a boulder), such as a projecting cliff.

[2 pictures of mountain](#)

Can you smell what the rock is cookin??? THE ROCK CLIP

<https://youtu.be/oUDk3Y6Wgrl> 4:00-4:13

The revelation of Jesus is the foundation and essence of all of our own identities and the substance of who and what we are. Peter would later come to appreciate that he had become a partaker of the divine nature. We share the same nature as God Himself!

2 Peter 1:4(NIV)

“... you may participate  
in the divine nature...”

Isaiah 51:1 “Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the Lord: Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn;”

You want righteousness to show up in your life? You want to be the best version of you? It starts right here: “Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn...” When you do, realize that you are of the same substance, one with the One you came from.

In both the Old and New Testaments where God changed someone’s given name, what would lead God to take this drastic step? I found that in each case, God wanted to instill a new vision for that person’s life, or a new role He wanted them to play in His Kingdom.

Gideon went from a whiner in winepress to a mighty warrior who became a legend instead of a loser.

NOTES: Gideon earned the title Jerubbaal (or Jerub-Baal) after he destroyed his family’s altar of Baal. “Because Gideon broke down Baal’s altar, they gave him the name Jerub-Baal that day, saying, ‘Let Baal contend with him’” ([Judges 6:32](#)).

The name Jerubbaal means, “Baal will contend” and is a combination of two Hebrew words: the first is riyb or rub, which means literally “to grapple” and holds the figurative meaning, “to wrangle” “To reach or grab” or “to hold a controversy.” The second is the proper noun Baal, the name of the Phoenician god that Gideon picked a fight with.

NOTES: The angel confirmed God’s Word with a miracle (verses 20–22) and gave Gideon a promise: “I will be with you” (verse 16).

That night, after his meeting with the Lord, Gideon was ready to transform into Jerubbaal. Following God’s specific instructions ([Judges 6:25–26](#)), Gideon and ten of his servants tore down Baal’s altar on his family’s property and cut down the [Asherah pole](#) next to it. Gideon then built a proper altar to God, laid the wood of the Asherah image on top, and sacrificed a bull to the Lord. “But because he

was afraid of his family and the townspeople, he did it at night” ([Judges 6:27](#)).

The next morning, the men of the town discovered that Gideon had torn down the altar to Baal, **after** that, Gideon was called Jerubbaal, or “Let Baal contend with him” because Gideon had broken down the altar of Baal (verse 32).

Gideon not only contended with Baal but also with the Midianites. God was true to His promise, and Gideon won a decisive victory over the enemy.

Abram, a rich landowner who lived in Harran, in [Genesis 11](#). Abram had most everything he could want, except a child. His wife, Sarai, could not have kids. . But God’s will has a way of overriding any human limitations, and He clearly commanded Abram in [Genesis 12](#):

“Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you...” ([Genesis 12:1-2](#)).

Abram pulled up stakes and left his home, travelling to a land he’d never seen before. Along the way, God gave more details about His promise, knowing the cry of Abram and Sarai’s heart was to have a child.

Their names changed when God made a [covenant](#) concerning their future. God spoke this over Abram, and it concerned Sarai as well:

“You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram, your name will be Abraham, It means “exalted father” for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you” ([Genesis 17:4-6](#)).

“God also said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her’ Sarai, whose name means “princess” becomes Sarah, “my princess,” “mother of nations” and grows into a woman who trusts God’s promises rather than scoffing at them in disbelief. ([Genesis 17:15-16](#)). “As for Sarai your wife, you will not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give a son of her: I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her” (Genesis 17:15–16).

Both times God chose to refine their names which also redefined their identity. HE saw them not as they were but what they were about to become.

Jacob went from deceiving to Devout

Jacob’s birth just seconds after his twin Esau illustrates how accurate his name was. The baby whose name meant “to grasp the heel of” came out literally holding onto his brother’s foot. Coming of age, Jacob’s goal seemed to be getting

what Esau was entitled to as the eldest, living out another definition of his name: “supplanter”, or “one who replaces another.”

Many years later, Jacob is about to face his brother after all his trickery, and is afraid Esau will be seeking revenge on him. [Genesis 32](#) tells what happened as he prepared for the meeting:

“That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.”

But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

The man asked him, “What is your name?”

“Jacob,” he answered.

Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome” ([Genesis 32:22-28](#)).

This new name commemorates Jacob engaging directly with God. But the blessing Israel receives begins a change in him. Over time, he lets go of his need to gain for himself and instead acknowledges the Lordship of God over his life, taking on the stature of patriarch.

Notes: There is a massive difference in what people see and what Gods sees! People have a tendency to see through the lens of manipulation, but Gods sees through the lens of motivation.

He is always motivating us to move in the direction of faith and faithfulness. In other words he wants us full of faith when we see our face!

WHO IS CALLING OUT YOUR NAME? The Stands or the Savior? The crowd or the creator? Lets get up close and personal

When the unseen supernatural shows up on the scene it has more significance than what is seen in the natural

The world always celebrates what they see. God celebrates the unseen. The unseen presence of God is far greater than the seen presents of man

Our need to be seen by our peers can keep us unseen by God because we do whatever it takes to be recognized and applauded by man at the expense of being unseen by God.

Matthew 6:1 “Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men, to be seen by them. IF you do, you will have no reward from your Father in Heaven,”

How many know how easy it is to compromise your character in order to be seen when you feel invisible? There is even a compulsion to cover up your Christianity for the applause of man!!

We are not citizens of this kingdom that celebrates and compliments everything that is seen. We are citizens of an invisible kingdom where Jesus says, what you do in secret your father sees and will reward when the world will not. In Gods eyes what is unseen is often what is the most significant.

The word equates success and significance by what is seen. Jesus says, “What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world yet loses his own soul?”

People will always celebrate what they see in the natural but have a hard time celebrating what they cant see by faith!!

IF you do what you do in secret because of your values and not external validation, you understand the meaning of THE FATHER SAW.

Many sacrifices athletes make is for the applause of the audience. But what would it look like if the audience were God? Sometimes its hard for me to live my life for an invisible audience when I am so reward, achievement driven! I don't think I'm any different than anyone else! I like trophies, rewards, plaques, and recognition!

Matthew 6:4 “...so that you're giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

### MY REWARD IS FROM THE LORD!

How good are you at celebrating the unseen times that God is making you stronger.

We live in a world where the visible is more celebrated than what is valuable!!!

We can't follow the clap of the crowd because it will lead you off the cliff! What are you going to do when the applause dies down and they are no longer paying you attention? What will happen when you chase the clout and the chants of your name that you're trying to please no longer pay attention?

God sees you! He saw you. In other words he is paying attention to you. You have his undivided attention, devotion and affirmation. He is on your side and clapping for you, cheering for you and leading you on!

I want you to know that just because you can't see the Father or hear the Father it doesn't mean he cant see you. We have a deep longer desire to be seen!

How many of you know sometimes we need to be set free from people as much as sin!



- Jesus saw...he continues to see. What is seen is not always what's significant.
  - The devil can't defeat you. He will however try to distract you or discourage you. It is easy to get distracted and discouraged when you don't get approval and applause because it is own primal response to be loved.
- When your starving for status in society it is easy to sacrifice your sacredness for a standing ovation!! Because you're more interested in what people say about you!!

What else does Jesus see? He sees below the surface, beyond the bitterness. He sees you in your distress, He sees you in the distance, He sees you in his arm when you see yourself in a farm!

3. He sees your future!

John 1:50

“Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.”

Jesus see the potential in you. He sees the dreams, passions in you. They are not lost on Him, he doesn't ignore them and nor is he blind to them.

In closing I want you to see one last thing that the Father sees.

In Luke 15

He sees your future when all you see is fault

Luke 15:11 Jewish law the older son got more than the younger by 2/3rds. Younger son left and it got so bad for him when he got disconnected by feeding pigs and eating slop himself. He had the seen resources from his father but he no longer had the unseen relationship to his father.

Vs 16 He was waiting for people to give him that only his father could provide. Vs 17 He came to his senses that his father had what he was hungry for!!!! He could only be full from the food the father had!

“When you are starving for status you will stuff your soul with what can never satisfy the true me.” Steven Furtick

<sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ <sup>20</sup> So he got up and went to his father. “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

Even though he looked like a slave the father saw his son!

What does Jesus see in you? What does he see in a change of names? He sees a life that can only function with his compassion. We may live in the present and bring up the past but God always has the future in mind.