

The Name Quest: Explore the names of God to grow in faith and get to know Him better.

John Avery

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What's in a name? Plenty, if it's the many names of God.

The Name Quest: Explore the Names of God to Grow in Faith and Get to Know Him Better by John Avery gives a full picture of the God of the Bible by exploring all the names he's called.

From nicknames to job titles to legal forename and surname, people are known and defined by their monikers. God is no different, and in the Bible he bears many, many different names. Just like knowing only one of a person's names indicates an incomplete knowledge of his roles and characteristics, knowing only a few names of God falls short of the fullness of who he is. Avery aims to help Christians know God more completely by examining the different ways the Bible refers to God: from Abba, to friend of tax collectors and sinners, to redeemer, to Yahweh.

The book is organized thematically: each chapter highlights an idea about God's character (such as his glory, God's role as father, and how Jesus was different from what people expected). This is more effective in conveying the full identity of deity than the name-by-name, dictionary-like format of many similar books. Typesetting the names in bold and inserting pull quotes (with the name in English, then in its original language [Hebrew or Greek], then a verse reference) makes the book easy to skim and use as a quick reference.

The book equips people, rather than talking at them. Plentiful verse references in the text and in the endnotes allow deeper exploration and bolster Avery's assertions. Avery's style is meticulous and well thought out. His voice is warm, clear, and inviting: it's clear he knows God well and wants others to be able to do the same. His words and insights give life to the scriptures.

While many Christians will be familiar with some of the names of God that Avery discusses, the average layperson will find much to learn: from specific titles of God to the depth of meaning that the names, individually and collectively, communicate. Avery's language is accessible to all who are familiar with Christian teachings but aren't necessarily theological scholars. This book is particularly helpful to newer Christians who want to explore who God is.

The cover is colorful and appealing. The image of the road mirrors the word *quest* in the title and in the faith journey the book's content describes. The title type alongside the rainbow gives the book a somewhat feminine feel that doesn't match the tone of the book and may alienate male readers.

The Name Quest helps Christians know God better.

MELISSA WUSKE (December 10, 2014)

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