

RESPECT THE NAME!

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17.2.24

Over recent years ... society has become fairly casual — informal. No doubt it has its good points — but there are times when a bit more formality is more appropriate.

In the UK ... most people who might be invited to meet the King would “dress up”. Suit and tie ... best dress. It’s a sign of respect.

Traditionally ... many people going to church would dress up in their “Sunday Best”. They believe they’re appearing before God. And want to show respect.

Increasingly however ... I see congregations — and ministers — who seem to delight in how casual and almost sloppy they can be.

I’ve seen church services where the minister is wearing a tee shirt ... Bermuda shorts and trainers or denim jeans — all ripped and with holes.

I can’t be sure of their hearts — but to my mind it’s disrespectful to their audience and especially to God. Unfortunately ... many would take the lead from their pastor ... and copy their standards?

A little leaven leavens the whole lump!!

Irrespective of dress sense ... **there’s one area where I believe we need to be thoughtful and respectful — namely how we regard and use the NAME OF JESUS.**

It’s easy to fall into bad habits ... but **we need to take care with the Name of Jesus.** How we handle the name may reflect how we relate to Jesus Himself?

Exodus 20:7

7 "**You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.**

This commandment is one of the Big Ten! Respect God's name! He thinks it is important. It is fundamental! (Which includes Jesus' name in the New Testament).

The Ten Commandments are key. **This indicates what God thinks of His name and everything that goes with it. It shows our attitude.**

Note also our belief that the "Lord" of the Old Testament is (usually) the Being who became Jesus — **He expects us to reverence His name.**

We don't want to be careless with God's name.

Philippians 2:5-11

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,
(*talking about the attitude — be humble*)

6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

8 And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.**

9 **Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,**

10 that **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, (*should bow = submit*)

11 and that **every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Jesus' name is above every name. And ... at that name ... EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW.

We're very familiar with the name "Jesus" — but should remain alert when using it. It is a great name and carries power. We should avoid using it in vain or casually. (Today's culture often uses it like a swear word ... a curse word).

(I probably refer to “Jesus” from time to time ... but most often I try to use “Lord Jesus” — just to remind me that it is **the Lord Jesus**).

Hebrews 1:1-4

1 **God**, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

2 **has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;**

3 who **being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person**, and **upholding all things by the word of His power**, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

4 having become so much better than the angels, as **He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.**

Jesus has a more excellent name — by inheritance.

It is a God-given name ... delivered via the Angel Gabriel.

Luke 1:26-33

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,

27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. **The virgin's name was Mary.**

28 And having come in, the angel said to her, “Rejoice, highly favoured one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!”

29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

30 Then **the angel said to her**, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

31 “And **behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.**

32 **“He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.**

33 “And **He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.**”

Lots of people today say we should use Jesus’ Hebrew name — that the angel would have spoken Aramaic or Hebrew ... not Greek. They tell us

it is disrespectful of us to use English etc! They will say that we are taking the name of the Saviour in vain.

That has several problems.

No one can agree as to what the Hebrew name might be! Yeshua ... Yahushua ... Y'shua ... etc. Disagreement ... though some are quite forceful in their opinions.

A bit like the Old Testament name of God. Same debate — same arguments! Should you pronounce God's Hebrew name as Yahweh ... Yahwah ... Yahuwah ... Jehowah ... Jehovah ... Yahu? **The point is ... NO ONE KNOWS!**

Secondly ... all New Testament books are in Greek. **The name Jesus (Greek: "Iesous") appears about 975 times.**

That's nearly 1,000 times that Y'shua etc are not used. All of the thousands ... then tens of thousands ... then millions who read Luke's account of Gabriel's visit to Mary saw the name "Iesous" ("Jesus" to us).

There's no other name like it.

Acts 3:1-9

1 Now **Peter and John** went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.

2 And **a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried,** whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple;

3 **who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms.**

4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us."

5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

6 Then **Peter said,** "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: **In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.**"

7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them--walking, leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God.

The healing of this man who had been lame from birth was THROUGH THE NAME OF JESUS.

That didn't go down well with the Temple rulers ... so Peter and John were arrested and held in custody overnight!

Acts 4:5-12

5 **And it came to pass, on the next day**, that their rulers, elders, and scribes,

6 as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, **they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?"**

8 **Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit**, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:

9 "If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well,

10 **"let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.**

11 **"This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'**

12 **"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."**

Jesus is the only name by which anyone can be saved.

What about the Jews today? The Muslims? They cannot be saved without the name — the Door to the Father. Despite George Bush Jnr's statement or the 2021 USA survey asking Christians if there is more than one way — to which 70% of Bible believers and churchgoers answered that there is more than one way to be saved. Not so!!

Acts 3:11-16

11 Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed.

12 So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: "**Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?**

16 "**And His name, through faith in His name**, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. **Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.**

Faith in Jesus name.

More than just a "label". It includes Jesus' character ... His purpose ... His status ... His power and authority. Not to be treated lightly.

Luke 10:1-3, 17-20

1 **After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.**

2 Then He said to them, "The harvest (*talking about people*) truly is great, but the labourers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest.

3 "Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves.

17 **Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."**

18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

19 "**Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, (authority over the spirit world/demons) and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.**

20 "**Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."**

The disciples relied on Jesus' name — it carries power — then and now!

Verse 20: Don't rejoice as much at authority over demons ... as in your eternal future.

Authority rather than power. Like the lady traffic police officer who can halt a 40 ton truck with an upraised hand. She has authority — though no personal “power”.

It's not just the sound of the name. **It's the authority in the name.**

Acts 16:16-18

16 Now it happened, as we went to prayer, **that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us**, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling.

17 This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "**These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation.**" (*there is no “the” way in the Greek — it says “a” way of salvation*)

18 And this she did for many days. **But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her."** And he came out that very hour.

The girl with the spirit of divination was demon possessed.

She alleged that Paul spoke of “A Way of Salvation” (in Greek — no definite article). A bit like George Bush and 78% of American evangelists saying that there are many ways to salvation? No! **ONLY ONE WAY!**

Paul had no personal power. **It was IN THE NAME OF JESUS — authority which Paul could draw on.**

Acts 19:11-20

11 **Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul,**

12 **so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.**

13 **Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches."**

14 **Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so.**

15 **And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"**

16 **Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.**

17 This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, **and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.**

18 And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds.

19 Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totalled fifty thousand pieces of silver.

20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

These Jewish Exorcists speak “the words” —they quote “the name” — but they have no relationship and no authority.

To do something in The Name of Jesus Christ is to declare that you're doing it with His authority ... with His power ... and you would expect Him to back it up.

Not just anyone can do something “In the Name of Jesus”.

But ... if we have the permission and approval to use it ... then it is very powerful ... and needs to be recognised and respected as such. Not just a label to be thrown around carelessly.

John 14:12-14

12 **"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.**

13 **"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.**

14 **"If you ask anything in My name, I will do it. (Quite a promise)**

Quite a challenge to us? The common response is to water down Jesus' statements — spiritualise them all away? Turning the wine of God's truth into water? But — **Jesus means what He says.**

John 16:23-24

23 "**And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.**

24 "**Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.**

This is the Charter Promise of Prayer.

Up till that time ... the disciples had not prayed to the Father “in Jesus Name”. Now they are authorised to do so!

US TOO!

But ... we do have to respect the Name — and all it stands for. Just throwing it around mindlessly is not going to help.

We probably use the name Jesus often — but need to guard against over-familiarity.

1 John 3:21-23

21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.

22 And **whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.**

23 **And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.**

“Believe on this name”. This is more than just believing in the person ... **Jesus has the name above all names.**

Perhaps in general conversation about Biblical things it’s understandable that we may use the name Jesus in a more routine ... matter-of-fact way — but keep in mind its power ... authority ... glory — much of which we can draw upon.

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

11 **Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power,**

12 **that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Jesus' name is WORTHY OF GLORY.

So ... perhaps it is worth considering our own use of the Name of Jesus ... how respectful we are ... and whether we genuinely understand **the POWER OF THE NAME** that God has given to us.

THE ONLY NAME UNDER HEAVEN by which anyone can be saved — and **the NAME WHICH CAN STOP THE DEVIL AND HIS DEMONS IN THEIR TRACKS — THE NAME WHICH CAN EVEN RAISE THE DEAD.**

DON'T TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN VAIN ... but give it the glory it deserves.

CONCLUSION: TAKE CARE WITH THE NAME OF JESUS.