

CF516 THE NAMES OF JESUS

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever noticed how many of your favorite hymns make specific reference to the name of Jesus? Leaf through the average church hymnal, and you will agree that this name has certainly inspired its share of songs. Many of the most familiar hymns referring to our Lord, use the name “Jesus.” And this is not only a phenomenon among English-speaking Christians. Though pronounced differently in other parts of the world, the name “Jesus” has found a prominent place in the expression of Biblical Christianity, regardless of the linguistic or cultural background of the Christian. Constantly it is sung and preached by those who have come to love the One who first loved them and demonstrated that love from a cross.

Is it any wonder the name of Jesus is so deeply loved by Christians around the world? It is the name that brings us salvation and provides all the assistance we need in facing the struggles of life. It bears witness to the fact that Jehovah the Saviour became a man at a point in history that we might spend eternity with Him in Heaven. It challenges us to come with boldness to the throne of grace in prayer, knowing before we pray that He is there to give the grace we need even before we recognize our need. The songwriter was right: “There is something about that name!”

Of the more than 700 names and titles of the Lord Jesus Christ in Scripture, none is perhaps more venerated by Christians than the name “Jesus” itself. A contemporary songwriter acknowledges simply, “There's just something about that name.” The very sound of that name is precious in the ears of Christians worldwide. That name has brought about a sense of overwhelming comfort to many in their darkest hours. It is that name most often verbalized in prayer and preaching, in testimony and witnessing. Many relate dramatic, even miraculous experiences of life to the significance of that name.

The name “Jesus” was, at the time of our Lord's earthly sojourn, among the most popular of names selected by parents of Hebrew boys. In the writings of the Jewish historian Josephus, the name identifies at least twenty different men, ten of whom were contemporaries of Jesus Christ. Its popularity was probably to a large extent due to its relationship with one of Israel's great leaders, Joshua, the son of Nun and successor to Moses. In the Egyptian papyri, the name occurs frequently right through the early part of the second century. Then abruptly, both Jews and Christians stopped using “Jesus” as a name for their boys. The Jews did so because it was so closely related to Christianity, which they rigorously opposed and hated. The Christians refused to use the name for opposite reasons. To them, the name was special and held in veneration. It was almost thought sacrilegious that anyone, but Jesus should bear that name.

When one reads the New Testament, he must be impressed with how often this name appears. It is by far the most often used name in the Gospels; and, even in the book of Acts, where we see the title "Lord" so often, the use of "Jesus" outnumbers "Lord" three to one. In the Epistles, the name of Jesus continues to occur, though not so often. It formed an intrinsic part of the great Pauline formula by which the apostle often referred to the "Lord" (His Title), "Jesus" (His Name), and "Christ" (His Office).

What is perhaps most surprising about the name "Jesus" is not its use but the absence of its use. With the possible exception of the thief on the cross (Luke 23:42), there is no record of anyone ever addressing Jesus directly by the name "Jesus" during His earthly life and ministry. Further, Jesus Himself apparently used this name to identify Himself only twice, both occasions to persons after His ascension to and glorification in Heaven (cf. Acts 9:5; Revelation 22:16).

Learn more by purchasing the entire course that covers the following topics:

- Lesson 1: The Name Of Jesus
- Lesson 2: The Title "Lord"
- Lesson 3: The Office Of Christ
- Lesson 4: The Old Testament Prophetic Names Of Jesus
- Lesson 5: The Salvational Names Of Jesus
- Lesson 6: The Birth Names Of Christ
- Lesson 7: The Service Names Of Christ
- Lesson 8: The Sonship Names Of Jesus
- Lesson 9: The Godhead Names Of Christ
- Lesson 10: The Jehovistic Titles Of Christ
- Lesson 11: The Church Names Of Christ
- Lesson 12: The Apocalyptic Names Of Christ