

NAMES OF JESUS

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You need a Bible, a notebook and a pen to do these devotions. Each lesson you will be asked to write some things down. These will help you learn and remember. They will be important for you to keep for future use and reference, and will be invaluable if you some day teach the birth of Jesus.

If you want to send me your answers I would be glad to read them and offer comments or suggestions that might help you. If you don't send them to me that is fine as well. You can write me at jerry@schmoyer.net. If you have any questions or prayer requests please feel free to write to me.

'JESUS'

Have you ever wondered about names and what they mean? In some cultures a name is very significant and tells a lot about a person. That is true with names in the Bible. 'Abram' ('father of high places') had his name changed to 'Abraham' ('father of many nations') when God promised the Jewish nation would come from him. 'Sari' ('contentions') was changed to 'Sarah' ('princess, sweet gentle') when she let God change her. Names in the Bible are important because they reveal truths about the character of the person. This is true of God as well (Exodus 3:13) and explains why He has so many and varied names (Exodus 6:2-3).

Before Jesus was born God chose His name to be 'Jesus' (Luke 1:29-33; Matthew 1:20-25). 'Jesus' was a common name because it was the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name 'Joshua.' Many parents wanted their son to grow up to be a courageous leader for God like Joshua so it was a common name. Like Joshua, Jesus led those who follow Him to victory. The word 'Jesus/Joshua' basically means "Jehovah saves" and speaks of Him as our deliverer. That's why God chose that name for His son.

In addition to the Joshua who led the Jews into the land there was a high priest named 'Jeshua' which is another form of the same name (Ezra 3:1-9). He was a high priest following the Jews' return from captivity in Babylon. The high priest carried the guilt for the people's sins in a symbolic way, Jesus did it in a real way as our sin-bearer (Hebrews 4:14-16; 9:6-28).

The same name appears as 'Hosea' in English, which also means 'Jehovah saves.' Hosea is a perfect picture of God's love for us in that his wife left him for others but despite her unfaithfulness He paid the price to buy her back and restore her as his wife (book of Hosea). That, too, is a picture of Jesus who redeemed us, who bought us back from our sin (Galatians 3:10-14).

Jesus is the most common and familiar name used of God in human form in the Old Testament of the more than 300 names and titles, it is the most common, used about 550 times. It is truly a very significant name because it is a saving name (John 20:31). There is no other name we can call upon for salvation (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). We can't call upon Mohammed or Buddha to save us. We can't call upon our good works to earn our salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is only the name 'Jesus' that brings salvation.

The name 'Jesus' is a satisfying name (John 14:1-14). How many people in the last 2,000 years have called upon that name to help them in a time of sorrow? Also it is a strengthening name (Acts 3:6, 16). Strength for healing, for daily life, for whatever we face comes through Jesus. That's because 'Jesus' is above all a supreme name (Philippians 2:9-10; Acts 16:18). Satan and demons must yield and submit to the name of Jesus.

Personally, I know it is a sweet name, the sweetest name ever (John 9:11). What thoughts and emotions come to you when you think of the name 'Jesus'? How many times have you used that name in worship or prayer? It is sweet to all God's people, that's why there have been thousands of songs written about that name. 'Jesus.' There isn't a better word in any language than 'Jesus.'

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

'Jesus' means 'deliverer, savior.' Make a list of as many things as you can think from which Jesus has delivered you. Pray and thank Him for each one individually.

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

One of the best ways to get more out of a Bible passage you study is to put yourself in the place of the person who first read the passage, the ones it was written for. For example, Luke wrote Acts 16:16-18 to a man named Theophilus. He was a Christian living in Paul's time who wanted to know more about Jesus. What would he have thought about Paul casting out a demon in Jesus' name? If you were him and could have asked Luke questions about what he wrote, what would you have asked? I would have asked Paul why he didn't cast out the demon right away? What was he feeling when he was 'troubled' – sorrow for the girl, anger at Satan, frustrated at the interruptions or what? Did the girl know it was a demon speaking through her or was she surprised when Paul talked to her in this way? Did the demon ever try to return? Where did the demon go when he left her? What did Paul do to help you afterwards? We may not know the answer to these questions, but asking them helps the passage come alive and give us greater insight into what the Scripture says.

Before reading the next blog read Luke 9:18-27 and put yourself in the place of the person who read this – also written by Luke to Theophilus. What questions do you have about this passage? What would you have liked to ask Luke if he were there?

'CHRIST'

My name is Jerry. But some people feel uncomfortable using that name so they call me 'Pastor.' I have gotten used to that designation and answer to it when addressed in that way. It has become almost like a second name for me. In reality, though, it isn't a name at all but a title. Common use turns it into a name. That is true of other titles like 'Doctor,' 'Coach' and 'Teacher.' It also applies to the title 'Christ,' for 'Christ' is the label which describes The God-man who was prophesied to come to earth to reconcile man and God by His death and resurrection. The fact that this title was applied to Jesus of Nazareth shows that Jesus the man was also the Christ/Messiah. Others recognized this about Him (Luke 9:18-27; John 1:40-42; 4:25-26).

What was so special about being the Christ? We must understand more about the name to grasp the full significance of it. 'Christ' is the Greek word for 'anointed (or smeared).' The Old Testament equivalent is 'Messiah;'" which also means 'anointed.' This was usually done with oil and was used as the initiation of a man as a priest (Exodus 29:29; Leviticus 4:3), a prophet (Isaiah 61:1) or a king (1 Samuel 10:1; 24:7; 1 Kings 19:16). When Christ was baptized by John the Holy Spirit anointed Him as a priest, prophet and king (Matthew 3:16-17). This was one of the hundreds of prophecies that He fulfilled showing He alone qualified to be the Christ. No other person could ever be all three for no mere human being could be both a king (tribe of Judah) and priest (tribe of Levi). Jesus was able to be both because He was a priest after the order of Melchizedek, an eternal priesthood, and not of Aaron's priesthood which lasted only for this life (Hebrews 7:1-17).

Jesus as priest. A priest was a go-between between God and man. He represented God to man but showing us what God was like and what He expected of us. He also represented man to God because, as a man, He knew by experience all that we go through. We benefit from His sacrifice and intercession (Hebrews 7:25). As the Messiah He showed man God's perfect standard, which man cannot meet. As the Messiah He also paid God's price for sin by His suffering on the cross so we could be reconciled to God. When Jesus left His carpenter's shop in Nazareth to present Himself to John as the Messiah He was volunteering to do all that was required of the Messiah and prophesied in the Old Testament (Isaiah 53 for example).

Jesus as prophet. A prophet warned of danger and guided the people in their future direction. Jesus does this through His teaching ministry. His words are recorded in the 4 gospels. He reveals them to us through His Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13). Having provided salvation as our priest, He now teaches us how to live as our prophet.

Jesus as king. Jesus came as King of the Jews on Palm Sunday, but most rejected Him because they wanted a military king to fight against Rome instead of a lamb to be slaughtered for sin. Pilate recognized who He was and put a sign on the cross proclaiming Him as the king of the Jews. Revelation 19 describes what it will be like when this King returns! A king is responsible to provide for and care for His people, and Jesus does that for us by giving us spiritual gifts (Ephesians 1:3; etc.). Paul lists many blessings from our King ("in Christ") throughout Ephesians.

In the Gospels He is referred to as "**Jesus Christ**" for the focus is on His humanity. The man Jesus of Nazareth is the God-man prophesied to be our Priest, Prophet and King! However in the epistles Paul refers to Him as "**Christ Jesus**" for after His resurrection and ascension the focus is on Jesus as the God-man who conquered sin. He is exalted and glorified God who had become the man Jesus of Nazareth. **Jesus** suffered in the past but **Christ** lives eternally at the right hand of God in heaven.

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

Christ as king has given you many great gifts. List as many as you can.

What gifts can you give Him? What is the main gift He wants from you?

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Lets continue to dig deeper into a passage by asking questions. Read Romans 10:9-13. If you were in the church at Rome and this was read to you, what questions would you have for Paul the next time he visited? Think of as many as you can and write them down.

LORD

What comes to mind when you think of the word 'lord'? Often it has to do with something from the feudal system, and that is pretty much what the word means in the Bible. Master, owner and authority figure are pretty close synonyms. In the feudal system a lord protected, guided and cared for his people who, in turn, were loyal and obedient to him. That's the way it is with us and Jesus today.

Lord often used as a title (name) of Jesus and is the second most common designation used for Him. It occurs 150 times in the Gospels, 100 more as 'Lord Jesus,' and over 500 times in the rest of the New Testament. Basically it refers to Jesus as Master, in effect as God who sovereignly rules over the affairs of men. Some times it is used of men who are in a position of authority (Genesis 24:12, 18, 21) but they, too, are under the authority of Jesus Who is 'Lord of all lords' (Revelation 17:14; 19:16).

Lord is often used in conjunction with another term to describe Jesus. Paul says He is "Lord of all" (Romans 10:12; Acts 10:36). Isaiah calls Him "Lord God" (Isaiah 40:10). Stephen referred to Him as "Lord Jesus" when he was dying (Acts 7:59). He is 'Lord' because He is Stephen's Master, the one Stephen serves in life and as he is dying. 'Jesus' refers to the man from Nazareth who lived on this earth, died and came back to life. 'Lord' is mentioned first because Stephen lived after Jesus' earthly life and Jesus is now proved to all as God and Lord. Conversely, the angels told shepherds that "Christ the Lord" was born (Luke 2:11) because His work as the Messiah who came to pay for sin was in focus. It was the "Lord," God Himself, who would be the Messiah/Christ.

So now we have 3 names/titles: "Jesus" is His human name referring to Him as Savior, Deliverer (Matthew 1:21). It is the New Testament (Greek) equivalent of the Old Testament (Hebrew) name Joshua. "Christ" ("Messiah" in the Old Testament) refers to Him as the Anointed One, the Priest, Prophet and King who was to be both God and man. "Lord" refers to Him as our Master, Owner for He is deity. He is God (Lord) and man (Jesus) in one person (Christ). Just as blue (sky, deity) and red (blood, humanity) mix to make purple (royal kingly color) so the Lord Jesus Christ is 100% God, 100% man and thus God and man in one.

Whenever you come across a combination of these names always note which comes first for that is what the author is emphasizing. "Lord Jesus Christ" for example emphasizes His death and is commonly used in the Epistles (after His death and resurrection). "Jesus Christ the Lord" focuses on the man Jesus who came from Nazareth and who was God. This is more commonly used in the Gospels, before His death and resurrection. Whichever is first is emphasized. Every word in the Bible is inspired, even the order of the words. Nothing is insignificant.

How does this apply to you? Can you call Him "Jesus"? Is He your Savior and deliverer, the one who paid for your sins on the cross? Have you accepted this free gift by faith? Only a small portion of mankind can call Him "Jesus." But only a minor portion of those who can call Him "Jesus" can then also call Him "Lord." Calling Him "Lord" means recognizing He is your master, your owner, the one with sovereign control over your life, the one you promise to obey and faithfully live for. Can you call Him "Lord"? Calling Him "Jesus" is of no cost to us, He paid the whole cost. But calling Him "Lord" is very costly to us for we commit to giving up everything for Him. What about you? Can you call Him "Jesus"? Can you call Him "Lord"?

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

Take a moment to pray and thank Him for His role as "Jesus" your savior and deliverer. Then refer to Him as "Lord," committing yourself to Him as your owner and master. Thank Him for His protection, guidance and care. Promise your loyalty and service to the one who is your Lord.

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Some times it is hard to tell which Person of the Trinity a name refers to. For example, In Revelation 19:6 the title "Lord God Omnipotent" is used. Does it refer to the Father or Son? The verse doesn't make it clear, but the context does. Look at the verses before and after the verse in question to determine the

context. This One is called "God" (verses 5 and 1). We read that He is seated on the throne (verse 4). Just whom does John picture on the throne in Revelation? Chapters 4 and 5 in Revelation have already detailed this scene. The One on the throne has a scroll that no one is able to open until the Lamb of God comes and stands before the throne to take and open this scroll (5:6-7). That is clearly a picture of Jesus (verse 12). So it must be the First Person of the Trinity on the throne, God the Father.

By knowing the context many of the questions you have asked can be answered and more insight gained into a passage. Let the Bible interpret itself in this way. Read Judges 6:22. Gideon says He is God. Look in the context, the verses before and after, and write down all the proofs you can find that this Angel of the Lord is God. Also write down questions you would like to ask the author of this passage.

ANGEL OF THE LORD

As He was waling on the road to Emmaus on the day He resurrected, Jesus came upon 2 disciples who were sad and confused over their Messiah's death. While walking with them He went back through the Old Testament and explained to them all the things it had to say about Him (Luke 24:13-35). That night back in Jerusalem He gave this same talk to all His disciples gathered in the upper room (Luke 24:45). What a lesson that must have been!

Too often we relegate Jesus to the New Testament miss all the Old Testament has to say about Him. There are hundreds of prophecies (456 the rabbi's say) and many, many types as well. These are pictures of Him, like Joshua being a picture of Jesus as deliver, Melchizedek a picture of Jesus as eternal king and priest in one, Joseph a picture of one rejected by his brothers despite no recorded sin in his life, Passover and the innocent blood of a lamb to cover sin and hundreds more. But what we often overlook is Jesus' appearances in the Old Testament.

Now understand that He wasn't called 'Jesus' until He took up our humanity at His birth, but He always existed as the Second Person of the Trinity (John 1:1, 15; 8:58). He was with the Father before creation (John 17:5, 24) and took part in creation itself (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17). He even walked and talked with Adam and Eve in Eden (Genesis 3:8-24). The Bible tells us that no man has seen God (the Father) at any time (John 1:18) and the Holy Spirit is unseen with no visible form. Therefore every appearance of God to man is the Second Person of the Trinity, before His birth, when He was on earth as the man Jesus, and when He returns at the end of the Tribulation to rule and reign on earth (Revelation 19-22). Not only did this same Person walk and talk with Adam and Eve, He killed the animals whose skins were used to cover their shame and guilt. In doing this He knew that it was just a picture of what He Himself would do to cover sin when He came to earth.

It was this same Second Person of the Trinity, this 'Jesus' before His birth, who spoke with Noah, then closed the door of the ark and joined them inside. He rescued Hagar when she fled Abraham (Genesis 16:7-14) and appeared to Abraham to reaffirm the covenant (Genesis 17:1-27). He came to Abraham to assure Him He would have a son the next year (Genesis 18:1-15) and then later told about the coming destruction of Sodom (Genesis 18:16-19:22). He stopped Abraham from sacrificing Isaac and provided a substitute instead (Genesis 22:10-11). In fact, this was done in the same place where He Himself would die on the cross as the final substitute for all our sins.

He also spoke to Jacob in a dream (Genesis 31:11-13) and wrestled with Jacob (Genesis 32:24-32). He appeared to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-14). He brought the plagues on the Egyptians and led the Jews out of Egypt in the cloud of fire. He gave the law to Moses on Mount Sinai and appeared many, many times to speak with Moses (Exodus 33:11).

He blocked the way of Balaam's donkey (Numbers 22:21-35), gave Joshua instructions as to how to conquer Jericho (Joshua 5:13 – 6:2) and appeared to Gideon (Judges 6:11-23) and Samson's father (Judges 13:1-7). He appeared to many of the prophets like Ezekiel (1:1-28) and Zechariah (1:12; 12:8). He was in the fiery furnace with Daniel's three friends (Daniel 3:25) and killed 185,000 Assyrians in a single night when they surrounded Jerusalem (II Kings 19:35; Isaiah 37:36). In fact, when He came it was to bring judgment on sin. That is true in Old Testament where He brought judgment in the form of the flood, to Sodom and Gomorrah, in Egypt, on the Canaanites through Joshua, on the Assyrian army and many others. In the future He will return to earth to bring judgment at the end of the tribulation. When He was born as Jesus and grew up as a man, that was to bring judgment on sin as well. Only instead of the judgment being poured out on guilty mankind He took it Himself on the cross to spare us results of His judgment (Romans 8:1). Coming as the meek and mild Jesus, full of grace and mercy, is only possible because He became our substitute.

Every time God appears to man in the Bible it is the Second Person of the Trinity. In New Testament He is called Jesus. In the Old He is referred to as 'God', 'Lord' or more commonly 'The Angel of the LORD.' 'Angel' is Hebrew word which means 'messenger.' Jesus was God's messenger. 'LORD' is the special covenant

name God used with His people. It was composed of 4 consonants, Y, H, W, H. In honor and respect the Jews never pronounced this name so no one knows what the vowels were, but 'Jehovah' and 'Yahweh' or the most common suggestions. Basically it means "I AM," referring to God's eternal existence, The First and Last, the Alpha and Omega. When Jesus used this name for Himself (John 8:58) the Jews understand He was claiming to be the One Who appeared to man in the Old Testament and tried to stone Him for blasphemy (John 8:59f).

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

Think through the Old Testament, even go back and reread it. Each time God appears to man think of Him as 'Jesus' before His birth. Your understanding and appreciation for Him will grow greatly, as well as your love and trust. It is very moving to see how many times God has reached out to man, and to us as well. It is humbling to realizing that the only reason He didn't come to bring judgment to us as well is because He volunteered to take that judgment Himself. He stepped in front of us to take the bullet of eternal condemnation for us. What a wonderful God we serve!

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Read Matthew 8:22-32. Write down questions you would have asked Matthew were you there when he was writing or reading this passage. Look at the context, what happened before and after this passage, to get additional insight to what it is all about. Then see if you can discover the significance of calling Jesus 'Son of God' after this event? Why that name? Why did it become so common? See what you can discover.

SON OF GOD, SON OF MAN

Son. The word brings many emotions and meanings with it. What does it mean to be a 'son'? To the Jews 'son' mean the person was of the same nature and essence as the father. It described a close intimacy, an equality. Jesus, the **Son of God**, possessed the same attributes as God (John 5:21). He performed the same works (Matthew 9:2-6; John 5:24-29) and claimed equal honor with the Father (John 5:23; 14:1). The title "Son of God" referred to Jesus as total deity.

This name, used 50 times in the Bible, was first used by John the Baptizer (John 1:34). He was so convinced Jesus was God that he was willing to die for that truth. Jesus Himself used this title to refer to Himself as God (disciples (see John 3:13,16; 5:17-31; 6:62; 8:58; 10:30; 14:1,11; Rom 1:3-4; 9:5; Col 2:9; Titus 2:13). Before His birth one of His appearances to man was in the furnace with Daniel's 3 friends. There he is called a "son of God" (Daniel 3:25). Had he claimed to be the 'Christ' (Messiah) the people would have taken that to be presenting Himself as the general who came to lead an army of Jews to bring deliverance from Roman bondage. By using 'Son of God' instead there was no mistake that He was claiming to be God. In fact, He was ultimately crucified as a blasphemer for this claim (John 19:7).

This name was used by Gabriel in describing the child she would have (Luke 1:34-35) and by God Himself when Jesus was baptized (Matthew 3:17). Jesus called Himself Son of God (John 10:36), as did the disciples (Matthew 14:33) and even the demons (Matthew 8:29). The centurion at his crucifixion recognized He was God's Son (God Himself, Matthew 27:54). The resurrection proved Him to indeed be God (Hebrews 1:2; Romans 1:4; Revelation 2:18).

While Son of God affirms Jesus as God, **Son of Man** identifies Him as a human being, a descendant of Adam. By becoming a man He identified Himself with all humanity. Before His birth He is seen at God's throne in heaven and is identified as a "son of man" (Daniel 7:13-14). This refers to when He will return in glory as the Son of Man (Matthew 24:30; John 1:51).

This term is used 85 times in the Gospels, and always by Jesus for Himself (Matthew 8:20; Mark 2:10; 10:33; John 3:13; etc.). He wanted to make it clear that He came to be part of the human race, to identify with us in our need. Being recognized as the Son of God brought glory to Him, but being known as the Son of Man who came as our representative to pay for our guilt and shame brings us eternal life!

Jesus is also called Son of Man by Stephen who said he "saw the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:56). This so-called blasphemy motivated the Jews to kill Stephen. When we get to heaven we will see Jesus as God but also as the Son of Man (Revelation 1:13; 14:14) because He left everything to be one of us.

We can summarize by saying that the Son of God left heaven to come to earth and become the Son of Man. Because He did that we, who are sons of man (human beings) can one day be sons of God (believers, brothers and sisters of Jesus Himself, Galatians 3:26; Romans 8:14). He was naturally the Son of God like we are naturally sons of men because we follow in Adam's race. But in order for us to be a son (child) of God and spend eternity with Him He would have to humble Himself to be a lowly human being like us. As the Son of God we recognize and worship His deity. As the Son of Man we recognize He Who became one of us, Who knows all we go through because He went through it, and Who loved us so much He took our place and as a human went through our eternal punishment. Because the Son of God became the Son of Man we sons of men can become sons of God!

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

Spend some time thinking about the last sentence above. Praise and thank God for its truth. Think about all the privileges and blessings you have because you are a son (or daughter) of God. How many can you name?

Being the son of royalty has its privileges, but also its obligations. As a child of God, what responsibilities do you have to Him? What does He expect of you in return? How well are you fulfilling the duties that come with your sonship?

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Read 2 Timothy 1:8-12. Continue to think of what questions you might have for Paul. Make sure you look at the context, the verses before and after it, to better understand what it is saying. Write down a list of all the different names used for Jesus in this passage. What is the significance of each particular name? Try to figure out why each particular name was used where it was used? Why that name and not another name instead? This can be a richly rewarding time of study and worship.

REDEEMER, SAVIOR

When Jesus first appeared to John the Baptizer to be baptized, marking the start of His public ministry, John immediately knew Who He was. The name He called Him says it all: “Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world” (John 1:29, 36). In fact, John called Jesus this twice. He, along with those who heard him, would have immediately connected this title with the Passover lamb (Exodus 12) whose blood applied to doorposts covered the sins those inside and saved the firstborn from death. From then on the yearly festival of Passover commemorated and taught the truth that innocent blood redeems guilty sinners.

This trust was further expanded upon by the law of the kinsman redeemer (Leviticus 25:25-34). The book of Ruth clearly illustrates. Naomi’s debt could be covered and land redeemed by one who was a near relative like Boaz (Ruth 2:1,3,20; 3:12) who was free himself, had the required price (2:1) and was willing to pay the redemption price (2:8; 3:11). This beautifully pictures our redeemer, Jesus, who became our ‘kinsman’ by becoming a human being like us (Philippians 2:5-8). He, too, was free from debt to sin Himself (Hebrews 4:15), was able to pay the price for our sins (1 Peter 1:18-19) and who was willing to pay that price on the cross for us (John 10:18).

As our **Redeemer** Jesus paid the price to buy back that which was already His by creation but which had turned from Him into sin and needed redemption. Hosea did the same when he bought back his wife Gomer from slavery after she ran away from him. This is a common term that many have applied to Jesus, including Job (19:25), Isaiah (44:6, 24; 59:20; 41:14; 43:14; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7, 26; 54:5, 8; 59:20; 60:16; 63:16), Jeremiah (50:34), David (Psalms 19:14; 78:35), and Anna (Luke 2:38).

Closely related to the title Redeemer is **Savior**. This comes from the same root word as the name ‘Jesus.’ “You will give Him the name Jesus because He will save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). Jesus buys us back from sin (Redeemer) and He also saves us from that which would destroy us (Savior). When people shouted ‘Hosannah’ to Jesus they were literally saying, ‘Please save us’ (Psalm 118:25).

This is one of David’s favorite names for Jesus (2 Samuel 22:3, 47; 1 Chronicles 16:35; Psalm 18:46; 24:5; 25:5; 27:9; 38:22; 42:5, 11; 43:5; 65:5; 69:19; 79:9; 85:4; 98:26). It was also used by Isaiah (43:3), Mary His own mother (Luke 1:47), angels (Luke 2:11), those who heard about Him from the woman at the well in Samaria (John 4:42), John (1 John 4:14), Paul (2 Timothy 1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13), Peter (2 Peter 3:18) and His earthly brother Jude (Jude 25).

Each of these called Him their Savior, each but the angels. The angels never knew Him as Savior or Redeemer. They could call Him ‘The Savior’ but not “My Savior” or “My Redeemer.” Only we regenerated human beings can call Him that, and then only after we have accepted His free gift of salvation by which we are bought back from sin (Redeemer) and delivered from that which would bring eternal destruction (Savior). Only we can claim Him as our Kinsman-Redeemer, the one who paid the eternal price for our sin so we can be reunited with Him for all eternity.

What about you? Can you call Him your Redeemer, your Savior?

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

Use these names as you pray. Call Him “my Redeemer,” “my Savior.” Say them slowly, savor the significance and implications of being able to call Him that. Use that as the foundation for a time of praise and worship right now. And throughout the day use these names for Him whenever you think of Him or talk to Him. What an honor and privilege to call Him MY Redeemer, MY Savior!

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

We've seen the many Bible people who have called Jesus their Savior or Redeemer. Each verse takes on fresh meaning when we see it through the eyes of those who said this. Job had no books of the Bible and wasn't a Jew, but somehow he knew his Redeemer lives. Throughout the Old Testament those under the law realized the law didn't save, only God did. Mary called her own baby her Savior, showing her recognition of Who He was and of her need for Him. The angels couldn't call Him Savior, but Jesus' younger earthly brother, who grew up in the same house as Him and knew Him as well as anyone recognized this about Him. Seeing the name through the eyes of the writer of the passage adds fresh significance to it. That is true of each passage you read. Knowing something about the person who wrote the passage helps give insight and understanding to the meaning. As you study your Bible always ask yourself who wrote this passage and seek to see the words through his grid: who he was, when he lived, what was going on in his life and what his personal relationship to God was like.

Do this with John 1:1-14. Ask questions as any who were hearing it then would, look at the context, but pay particular attention to the person who wrote it. What significance does this have for what is said? Then note down the names he uses for Jesus and think about why that particular name or title was chosen at that very spot.

WORD & LIGHT

The disciple was perhaps Jesus' closest friend on earth. Because they were probably distant relatives John had watched his older cousin for years, and when he followed Him he was chosen not only to be a disciple but one of the inner 3. He knew Jesus as well or better than anyone in his day. After Matthew, Mark and Luke had written their synoptic Gospels focusing on Jesus' earthly life, John wrote his bringing Jesus' deity to the forefront. This was needed for heresies and false teachings were undermining the belief in Jesus as fully God. John wrote to correct that. He opens his book with a 14 verse short biography and summary of the whole Gospel. What is significant are the names he used for Jesus: "Word" and "Light." These are very key since they set the foundation and direction for all John will write. Just what do they mean?

A word is a medium of manifestation. Words convey subjective unseen concepts, and Jesus as the **Word** revealed aspects of God's character and being that are essential to our understanding of Him. These include traits like compassion, initiation, mercy and grace, holiness, forgiveness, sovereignty and power. Thoughts must be clothed in words to understand and remember them. That's why babies can't remember anything until they can attach word labels to the experience. We can't really understand God without looking at the person and life of Jesus.

A word is also a means of communication. They are necessary to transmit information to others. That is how I am able to express my thoughts to you in this blog. If not for words, we couldn't convey known truth from one generation to the next. We would each have to learn everything from nothing by trial and error. Jesus communicates what God is like and teaches about God by His words and works.

Finally, words reveal the speaker's intellectual caliber and moral character. We form opinions about others by the words that come out of their mouths. Jesus, the Word of God, exemplifies the intellectual and moral character of God (John 1:18) and shows us how truly wonderful He is!

So Jesus as the Word reveals God to us because He is God in human flesh. But John uses another name for Him as well. He calls Him **Light** (John 1:4-9). Jesus called Himself the Light (John 8:12; 9:1-7). This, too, is a very significant name for there are many similarities between Jesus and light. Life cannot exist without light. Light is needed for everything to grow and for health as well. Light removed darkness, gives joy, reveals things as they are and provides guidance and direction for us. Darkness must flee from light, light never flees from darkness. All of these, and more, are true of Jesus as the Light of the world.

Physical light is a picture of the spiritual light He provides for all. In eternity He will also be the physical light. His Shekinah glory will light up the New Jerusalem and the whole universe (Revelation 21:34-24; 22:5). John also calls Him the Bright and Morning Star (Revelation 22:16), the first light in the darkness, signifying that the full light is on its way. Now Jesus is the Light for all who follow Him (Psalm 27:1).

Therefore these two names, Word and Light, clearly show that the man Jesus is totally God and therefore able to reveal God to us. He is 'God with skin on.' However Jesus also said that we are the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:14) and that we are to communicate God's words to men (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). As God reveals Himself to us and we become more like Him we exemplify His character and nature to others. As we walk in the light then His light reflects from us to others who are attracted to the light. Make sure your light is showing clearly, not dull, not flickering from time to time. And make sure your words and works are godly so others are attracted to Jesus through you!

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

Think of some specific ways that Jesus reveals God to you? What do you know and appreciate about God because you see it exemplified in Jesus' earthly life? What traits and characteristics of God as revealed in Jesus mean the most to you personally? Which is He trying to reveal to you now, in this stage in your life?

Also think about Jesus as your light. What would your life be like without His light? Think of specific times He has guided you when you need guidance, brought joy when discouraged, given hope when things seemed hopeless, and revealed danger so it could be avoided? Thank Him for these.

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

We've seen the importance of seeing a passage through the eyes of the original recipients and coming up with questions they might have asked when they hear it. We've talked about looking at the whole context to discover the meaning of a passage and that we must view the passage through the personality and perspective of the author. Now we'll see how to use other similar passages to bring insight and meaning to our study. Next we'll look at the name Mediator, which is mentioned half a dozen times in the New Testament. No one passage says it all, but together these form a complete picture of the significance of calling Jesus 'Mediator.' Look at each passage and write a summary of what it says about a Mediator, then summarize what they all say together. The passages are Galatians 3:19, 20; I Timothy 2:5; and Hebrews 8:6; 9:15 and 12:24.

MEDIATOR

We are all familiar with the work of a mediator: he (or she) brings differing parties together. It could be countries, workers and a union, players and owners in basketball or football, or friends who aren't getting along. A mediator is a middle man who is trusted by both sides and represents equally each side, seeking for a fair and equitable compromise solution to the situation. When 2 parties are divided, often the only way there can be reconciliation is through a mediator.

So when the Bible calls Jesus 'Mediator' (Galatians 3:19, 20; I Timothy 2:5; and Hebrews 8:6; 9:15 and 12:24) it pictures Him as the One who represents both God and man – the only One who can. But there is a difference between Jesus and other mediators today. For one thing, usually both sides must move to a central position, each must give up some of what it wants to accommodate the other. But with us and God there can be no movement from perfect holiness on God's part. He can't and won't lower His standard of what is sin. And on the side of man, there is nothing we can do to change and move toward Him. We have nothing to offer, we are hopelessly stuck in our negative position. So how is a mediator going to reconcile the two? Jesus did that by becoming man like us so He could represent us. By then paying for our sins on the cross He made it possible for us to meet God's perfect standard of holiness, not on our own but because of what He did for us. He went between us and God and became the Mediator of this new covenant.

In the Old Testament the covenant was law, which only condemned man and showed how far short we fell. The covenant Jesus mediated, the bargain He secured for us, was by grace. There is nothing we can do to earn or deserve it, nor to keep it. It is freely given. That's the only way it could be – our Mediator did it all, we do nothing but receive it.

The only way this could have been avoided was to create us in such a way as we would have never sinned and so never need a mediator. But if God has created us without a free will we would be robots, unable to ever freely choose to love and follow God. Free will brings the option to sin, which man has chosen, thus the gap. As a result our Mediator has interceded for us and has provided the best package any mediator ever produced – being a child of God in this life and living with Him forever throughout all eternity (instead of eternity in hell) just for freely accepting His gift of grace! There's never been a mediator like Him. We were helpless on our own. We needed a mediator who could pull off a miracle – and we got One! We got the best Mediator with the best deal ever!

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

What does it mean to you personally that Jesus is your Mediator? Have you accepted that free grace gift? What are you doing to show your love and appreciation for what He did for you? Think for a moment about how much He must have loved you to do that for you – before you could even do anything for Him. He knows every rotten thought and deed, yet loves you so much He died for you. What a plan! What a Mediator!

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Let's continue with looking at parallel passages to gain light on the subject we are studying. Seldom does one verse contain everything that is to be said about a subject, so taking into account other verses' contribution to the subject is important. Next we'll look at Jesus as our High Priest. Look at these verses from Hebrews about Jesus as our High Priest and write down a short summary of what each says about Him. Then write a summary paragraph combining all you have learned. These are the verses: Hebrews 2:17; 4:14-15; 5:6 (same thing is said in 5:10; 6:20 and 7:17); 7:1, 26; 9:7; 10:11-12.

HIGH PRIEST

If we would have grown up in Jewish culture at the time of Jesus we would have understood the significance of calling Him our 'High Priest (Hebrews 2:17; 4:14-15; 7:26; 9:7; 10:11-12, 19-22),' but since we haven't we miss the rich meaning behind this term. As 'Christ' ('Messiah') He is prophet, priest and king. The name "High Priest" specifically refers to the priestly role of Jesus.

To the Jews the priest was the go-between of God and man. He represented God to man and man to God. This is a perfect picture of Jesus. An understanding of the priesthood and tabernacle adds much to our understanding, but that is beyond the scope of this blog (see "The Tabernacle" by Jerry Schroyer for more details).

When Jesus died one of the accompanying phenomenon in nature was the tearing of the veil in the temple, from top to bottom (Matthew 27:46-52). This was humanly impossible. The veil protected man from god's presence because for a sinful human being to be in God's holy presence brought instant death. However when Jesus paid for sin on the cross then the way between man and God was open, sin was paid for, and we can come into God's presence any time we want in prayer or fellowship (Hebrews 10:19-22). Under the law only one man, the High Priest, carrying the blood of the innocent animal shed on Yom Kippur, could enter the Holy of Holies where God's presence was, and that could be done only once a year (Hebrews 9:7). Because of the work of our High Priest we can come into His presence any time, any where. That is the significance of praying "in Jesus' name." His name, authority, allow entrance to any one any time!

'High Priest' is a name for Jesus that refers to this special privilege we have. As our High Priest Jesus represented us because He was human, but the innocent blood He presented to God to cover sin was His own shed on the cross. He didn't bring a sacrifice, He was the sacrifice (Hebrews 10:11-12).

However the priesthood in Israel had limits. A man was a priest temporarily, only as long as he lived on earth. And a priest had to be from the tribe of Levi. So how could Jesus, who is from the tribe of Judah, still be our priest now? It is because He is also a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:1, 17; Psalm 110:4). Melchizedek came to Abraham after his victory in securing Lot's release (Genesis 14:17-20). He was a man just as Jesus also was (Hebrews 7:4; 1 Timothy 2:5). He was a king and a priest, as was Jesus (Genesis 14:18; Zechariah 6:12-13; Matthew 2:2). Melchizedek was the King of Righteousness, also picturing Jesus (Isaiah 11:5) and the King of Peace, also prefiguring Jesus ("Salem" means 'peace' Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 76:2). There is no record of a beginning or end for Melchizedek, so the writer of Hebrews says that in that way, too, he is a picture of Jesus who is eternal (Hebrews 7:1). Therefore this priesthood is far superior to the Jewish priesthood for it encompasses more and continues even through today.

Thus we have a High Priest who paid the ultimate sacrifice for sin and, as our go-between with God, opened the way for us to enter His presence any time. He continues to do that for us today. He still represents God to us for His earthly life showed us what God is like. He still represents us to God for it is His sacrifice on the cross which continues even now to be the payment for sin so we can enter God's presence now and for eternity.

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

Every time you pray think of this title for Jesus, 'High Priest.' Think of the significance of it and the privilege we have of talking to God any time any where.

Read Hebrews 2:17 and 4:14-15. What difference does it make to you personally that Jesus has gone through everything you go through and knows by experience what you face? How should this affect your prayers, your worship and your obedience?

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Understanding Scripture from the viewpoint of the writer and reader is important, as can be seen by the necessity of understanding the role of a High Priest in Jewish culture. Remembering what we have learned about that, asking questions and looking at the context of a passage, read John 17:18-26 and list all the specific requests Jesus makes concerning us in this prayer. There are many things He is praying about for us right for now. List as many as you can. Then glean what you can learn about praying for others from His example. What should you be praying about for others?

ADVOCATE, INTERCESSOR

When I was in the Army I saw a sign for someone called a Judge Advocate. I didn't know what that was but soon learned it was a lawyer – someone who is an advocate for those in need. For someone with a legal problem, they were very important. The Bible says Jesus is our Advocate (I John 2:1), someone we need when we have a legal (sin) issue with God.

Satan accuses God's people to Him, pointing out sin and inferring things to get us under God's judgment. That is what he did with Job (Jon 1:6) and Peter (Luke 22:31-32). Any time we do anything wrong Satan runs and tattles to God, reminding God that His holiness demands He judge sin and punish us. He calls for the death sentence, which is what sin demands (Romans 6:23; 3:23). But our defense attorney, Jesus our Advocate, steps in and defends us by showing that the debt of sin was paid for by His work on the cross. He doesn't deny, explain away or excuse our sin – He shows when and how He paid for it so there is no punishment for us.

Several years ago in Cincinnati a lawyer was appointed by the court to defend a man accused of burglary. However when he started pursuing the case he realized he would have to ask that he be excused from it for the robbery that was committed was against his own office. Our sin is against God's holiness, so for He Himself, as Jesus, to be the one to defend us is extraordinary. He should be accusing us for what we made Him suffer, but instead He pays for our sins and then defends us! What a marvelous Savior!

A similar title is that of Intercessor (Romans 8:27, 34; Hebrew 7:25; 9:24). An Advocate defends us against accusations of sinful actions but an Intercessor helps us overcome Satan's temptations and life's difficulties. Right now, this very moment, Jesus is praying for us in heaven. To see an example of what He prays for read John 17:18-26.

Suppose you were sitting in your home tonight, worried about a problem facing you, and you hear voices coming from the next room. Quietly you open the door and peek inside. There you see Jesus kneeling praying for the very situation you are facing. How would that make you feel? The truth is that He is praying for you now – what a comfort and encouragement that is!

When you feel alone, deserted or facing life by yourself, remember that Jesus is with you. He defends you when you sin and prays for you to succeed as you seek to follow His will.

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

Pray and thank God for being your Advocate and Intercessor. Pray for yourself, remembering Jesus is also praying for you. Think of what He might pray for and pray for the same things for yourself.

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Read Revelation 22:12-13. What 3 pairs of names does Jesus call Himself here? How are they similar? How are they different? If you were the original recipient of John's book called Revelation, what questions might you have about what he wrote here? What does the context (verses before and after this verse) tell us that adds insight to the meaning of these names? What do these verses add to the information about these names (Revelation 1:8; 21:6)?

ALPHA & OMEGA

One of the few names Jesus gave to Himself after the Resurrection is Alpha and Omega. He used this of Himself several times in Revelation (1:8; 21:6; 22:13) showing His sovereign control over everything. Alpha and Omega, the first letters of the Greek alphabet like A to Z would be in English, are all inclusive. They refer not only to the start and end of all things, but also to everything in-between.

While using this title for Himself Jesus also says He is the First and Last, the Beginning and the End (Revelation 22:13). The first and Last is a name for God in Isaiah as well (41:4; 44:6; 48:12). Beginning and End is also used in Revelation 21:6. Clearly these terms refers to all things ever.

From our perspective of living in time and space we see all things from that view, but these terms aren't just talking about the beginning of time to the end of time, they refer to something far beyond that. First, they refer to that which was before God even created time, eternity past, and go through eternity future after time will be ended. God only created time to be part of our experienced. It will only exist for several thousand years. Eternity is not time without end, it is an existence where there is no such thing as time so there can be no end to time – something beyond the ability of our limited brain power to understand but something that is no problem for God.

Also, these terms refer to more than all things being encompassed under Jesus' control. 'Beginning' (arche in Greek) actually has the idea of origin or source. Jesus is not just the starting point, He is the origin, the source of all things. He wasn't just there, He was the creator or it. 'End' (telos in Greek) refers to the consummation, the goal of all things. "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things" Paul writes (Romans 116).

Jesus chooses this new name to add to the long list of names and titles used of Himself because it's important for us to always remember that He is the source and culmination of everything. He started it all, He controls it all, and He will bring it all to the conclusion He wants. It is all under His control! That means everything that happens today, in the world and in our lives, is under His total control. We may not know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future. And that's good enough!

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT

Think about all the things in your life that are not under your control, that are out of control and that you would like to change but can't. Now take each of them and write Alpha and Omega over them, Jesus knew about them, planned them, and will use them for the goal He wants to accomplish. Thank Him for this and ask Him to help your faith in Him grow through these things.

BIBLE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

We've used various methods to get more out of Bible study in this series. Go back through your notes and list some of the methods we've used. Keep a list of them in your Bible so you can use the appropriate ones when you do your own Bible study. Choose a portion of the Bible and use what you've learned as you read and study it. May God richly bless you and help you grow through the study of His Word!

If you have completed this study please let me know. I would enjoy knowing what you thought of it, what you learned, and what I can do to improve it. Thanks and may God continue to bless you as you serve Him.

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