SERMON: JESUS - WHAT A NAME!

Matthew 1:21

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.

Introduction

A name is important. It does more than just uniquely identify a person, place, or thing. It connotes social status, competency, value, worth, emotional response, and much, much more. Corporations spend millions on selecting the names of their new products. They perform marketing research and query focus groups to make sure the name does not have a negative connotation in any region where the product is to be sold. They also want to make sure the name rolls of the lips freely and is not a tongue twister. The name must have the right syllabic rhythm. Linguists, poets, and song writers, call this rhythm scansion. Walton Mart was changed to Walmart.

Names run in fads. There was a time when the names of corporations, ideally, had the same alphabet at the beginning and at the end of the name - Xerox and Kodak. Now it is fashionable to just use only alphabets-BMW or KFC. IBM started that trend.

A name is important. When scientists discover a new species, plant or animal, they immediately give it a Latin name, using binominal nomenclature. The name describes something about the newly-discovered species' appearance, behavior, instincts, or its environment.

I say again: A name is important. The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and gave him clear instructions. The baby's name shall be Jesus and His title shall be Emmanuel. Contrary to the popular belief of that day, the long-awaited Savior would not immediately save them from the ruthless Roman occupation, but would save them from their sins. His mission was spiritual – not political or military.

The name Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua. It means "Jehovah is salvation". There are two major Old Testaments characters with the name Joshua. One was Moses' successor and the other was a high priest. Just as Joshua, Moses' successor, led Israel to conquer the Promised Land, Jesus would lead God's people to conquer sin. Just as Joshua, the high priest who worked with Zerubbabel in rebuilding the temple and restoring pure worship, Jesus would allow believers to worship God in spirit and in truth.

The name Jesus tells of His person and His purpose. He is the sinless Lamb provided by God. What does it mean to save us from sin? What does the name Jesus save us from?

Exposition

1. The Name Saves Us From The Eternal Penalty Of Sin.
(Eternal Separation From God.)

2. The Name Saves Us From The Power And The Pain Of The Guilt And Shame Of Past Sins.
(Jesus Will Allow Your Past To Be The Past.)
(He Will Allow You To Forgive Yourself.)

3. The Name Saves Us From The Destructive Purposes Of Satan.
(Bad News-Satan Comes To Kill, Steal, And Destroy.)
(Good News: No Weapon Formed Against Us Shall Prosper.)

Closing Thoughts

I will close with portions of two old-school hymns:

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear,
And drives away his fear."

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"I've found a friend who is all to me;
His love is ever true.
I live to tell how He lifted me,
And what His grace can do for you.
Saved by His power divine,
Saved to new lift sublime!
Life now is sweet and my joy is complete,
For I'm saved, saved, saved!"

Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

Related Scriptures
Psalm 130:8
2nd Corinthians 5:21
Haggai 1:1-14

End Notes:

1. God respected the man of the house. By allowing Joseph to declare the name, He was giving him legal paternity of Mary's baby. By Joseph complying, he was accepting legal paternity. In that culture, the male that named the baby was considered the legal father. If a man died before his child was born, his brother or some other male family member would name the baby and accept legal paternity for the new born.

2. Some may be unaware that the name Jesus was a very popular name for Jews at the time Jesus walked the earth in the flesh. This popularity lasted until around the second century A.D. Then it disappeared from the Jewish community. The reason is obvious. Since they did not believe Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, they did not want to name their sons after Him or give the impression that they did. The Christians did not name their sons Jesus out of respect for the Savior and considered it to be sacrilegious. Since no one could equal Jesus, no one should bear His name. Think about it. He made a common name uncommon. Likewise, He takes common people and empowers them to do uncommon things.