

# “THAT WORTHY NAME”

(James 2:7)

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“Yours in the name of **Jesus.**” How many who owe their all, both for time and eternity, to the peerless One, refer thus to Him who was “**God** manifest in the flesh” (1 Tim. 3:16). It is “Jesus” this, and “Jesus” that. But is it becoming for worms of the dust, for sinners, even for sinners saved by grace, to thus speak of Him?

Jesus is the Lord of Glory, and surely it is due the dignity and majesty of His person that this be recognized and owned, even in our reference to Him in common speech. Those who despise and reject the Savior, speak of Him as “The Carpenter,” “The Nazarene,” as “Jesus.” But should those who have been given an “understanding, that we may know Him that is true” (1 John 5:20), ignore His Lordship? In a word, can we who have been redeemed by His precious blood do less than confess Him as the **Lord Jesus Christ**? “In John 13:13 we find Him saying, “Ye call Me **Master** and **Lord**: and ye say well; for so I am.” Surely this is enough for the believer. If our blessed Redeemer declares we “say well” when we call Him “Master and Lord,” can we afford to speak of Him in terms on which His approval is *not* stamped?

Never **once** do we find any of the apostles addressing Him as “Jesus” while He was with them on the earth. When He exhorted them to make request for an increase of labourers, He bade them “Pray ye therefore **the Lord** of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest” (Matt. 9:38). When He sent forth the disciples to secure the ass on which He was to ride into Jerusalem, He ordered them to say: “**The Lord** hath need of him” (Luke 19:31). And again when He required the use of the upper room, it was, “**The Master** saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with My disciples” (Matt. 26:18).

It may be objected to what we have contended for above that the Gospel narratives commonly refer to our Lord simply as “Jesus.” It was “Jesus” who was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. It was “Jesus” who was moved with compassion as He beheld the sufferings and sorrows of humanity. It was “Jesus” who cleansed the leper, healed the sick, and raised the dead. This is true, and the explanation is not far to seek. It was the **Holy Spirit** of God who, through the pens of the evangelists, thus refers to Him, and this makes all the difference.

Let us illustrate. What would be thought of one of the subjects of King George the fifth, referring to the reigning monarch of Great Britain and saying, “I saw **George** pass through the city this morning”? If then it would be entirely incongruous for one of his subjects to speak thus of the King of England, how much more is it to refer to the **King of kings** simply as “Jesus”? But now, King George's wife could refer to and speak of her husband as “George” with perfect propriety. Thus it is that the Holy Spirit in the Gospel narrative refers to our Lord by His personal name.

Once more “Jesus” was the name of our Lord in **humiliation**. Said the angel to Joseph, “Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21), and in order to save His people from their sins He had to die the death of the cross. But it is to be noted that when Peter addressed the Jews on the day of Pentecost, he said, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, **both Lord and Christ**” (Acts 2:36). Hence it is that the Savior is referred to as Christ, Christ Jesus, Jesus Christ, or Lord Jesus Christ, and never simply as “Jesus” except when reference is made (either direct, by way of implication, or in contrast) to His humiliation and suffering.

Our modern hymns are largely responsible for the dishonor that is now so generally cast upon “That Worthy Name.” And we cannot but raise our voice in loud protest against much of the trash (for that is the correct term) that today masquerades under the name of hymns and religious songs. It is sad and shocking to find professing Christians singing, “A little talk with Jesus makes it right.” Fancy saying, “A little talk with **God** makes it right!” and yet Jesus was and is “God blessed forever” (Rom. 9:5). Such unseemly **familiarity** as “a little talk” with “The mighty God” is horrible. “There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus” is utterly erroneous, and nigh akin to blasphemy. There is no “lowly” Jesus today, except the one created by the

imagination and sentimentality of the moderns. Instead of being “lowly,” the Lord Jesus Christ is seated “on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3), from whence He will shortly descend in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not His Gospel (2 Thess. 1:7,8).

Above we have said that the apostles never once addressed our Lord simply as “Jesus.” Mark, now, how they **did** refer to the Blessed One. “And Peter answered Him, and said, **Lord** , how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?” (Matt. 18:21). “And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto Him, **Lord** , is it I?” (Matt. 26:22). “And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, **Lord** , wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?” (Luke 9:54). “And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, **the Lord** is risen indeed” (Luke 24:33,34). “Thomas said unto Him, **Lord**, we know not whither Thou goest” (John 14:5). “Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, “It is **the Lord** “ (John 21:7).

In marked contrast with the manner in which the apostles referred to and spoke of their Lord, note how others, particularly His **enemies** , referred to Him: “And **the multitude** said, This is **Jesus** the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee” (Matt. 21:11). “And hearing **the multitude** pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that **Jesus** of Nazareth passeth by” (Luke 18:36,37). “And there was in their synagogue a man with an **unclean spirit** ; and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou **Jesus** of Nazareth” (Mark 1:23,24). “And when he was gone out into the porch, another **maid** saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with **Jesus of Nazareth**” (Matt. 26:71).

Christian reader: Will you refer to and speak of the Son of God as did His enemies and the demons, namely, as “Jesus,” or will you call Him “Master and Lord” as did the apostles, concerning whom He said: “Ye say well?” Let us ask God to deliver us from this flippant, careless, irreverent manner of confessing His Son. Let us own our Savior as “Lord” during the time of His rejection by the world. Let us remember His words, “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, **even as** they honor the Father” (John 5:22,23). Let us remember it is written, “For by thy **words** thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matt. 12:37).