

You will call His name Jesus

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Well, today, this evening we are looking at another name of God in the New Testament, probably the most obvious one, the one that we hear most often. And it is the name Jesus.

In the verse that we are examining in Matthew chapter one and verse 21 it says this, “And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.”¹

The name Jesus is a very interesting one. It comes from the Old Testament name יהושע (a yeh-ho-shoo’- ah). It is actually a Greek version of יהושע (a yeh-ho-shoo’- ah).

You know when you take a name and move it into another language there are times that its pronunciation will be changed, its spelling will be changed and so on and so forth. John is John and in another language it is Johann and so on and so forth.

And so the name Jesus is actually the name Joshua. It is the exact same name. And Joshua literally means “Jehovah saves.” And it is a word that emphasizes the concept of salvation. So when it says, “You will call his name Jesus,”² everyone who heard that knew the significance of the name.

Now we have to understand. It is not that it was an uncommon name. In fact it was an extremely common name. There were many people named Jesus or יהושע (a yeh-ho-shoo’- ah) in that day. But he was called Jesus because he would save his people from their sins.

Now we’ll take a look at the meaning of that. But before we do that it is interesting to note that the name Jesus on at least two occasions is used to speak of the person Joshua from the Old Testament and it shows us that it is actually the same name.

Take a look with me, if you will, to Acts chapter seven and give you those two references. Acts chapter seven where we read in verse 45...

Now my translation, for convenience the name has been changed to Joshua because that

¹ Matthew 1:21

² See Matthew 1:21

is what it means, but if you are reading the King James it will actually have the word Jesus there. And it says, “And having received it in their turn, our fathers brought it in with...”³ Does it say Jesus in your translation? It says Joshua in which translation? What does it say in the King James? Jesus, yeah. And more modern translations translate it Joshua because that is what it means. And you have to understand that. But the word actually is the Greek word that is translated Jesus, Ἰησοῦς (ee-ay-sooce’) in Greek and it says, “with Jesus upon dispossessing the nations.”⁴ And it is actually Joshua who is being referred to there.

Then, again, we find in Hebrews chapter four we have exactly the same thing, Hebrews chapter four and verse eight, where, again, my translation uses the name Joshua. Does it say Jesus there? Jesus, ok. “For if Jesus had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that.”⁵ It is talking about Joshua there and it is talking about what happened in the days of Joshua.

So these are the same names. And that is significant for us to understand that Joshua was the name for Jesus. Jesus is the name Joshua. It means the same thing. And the word has the concept of Jehovah saves.

Now when we look back in the Old Testament we find out that names were given for a reason, weren’t they? Abraham was called Abraham because he would be the father of many nations. And that is what Abraham means.

You find that Joshua was named Joshua because, in fact, in a physical sense he was a savior. He was one who led the children of Israel across the Jordan and to the wonderful salvation of the land of Canaan which was the Promised Land.

In Joshua chapter one we read these words beginning with verse seven.

Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.⁶

And then it goes on. “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”⁷

³ Acts 7:45

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Hebrews 4:8

⁶ Joshua 1:7-8

⁷ Joshua 1:9

And then it goes on to tell us that Joshua commanded the officers of the people and here they go to move across the Jordan and here they go to, in essence, conquer the land that God had led them into.

Joshua was, in fact, one who was a savior and in that respect he is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, a picture of Christ in that he was one who led the people to the Promised Land and Jesus, of course, is the one who through his death on the cross of Calvary has given to us the great and wonderful Promised Land of heaven. “You will call his name Jesus.”⁸

Why? Why was he called Jesus? Well, we are told, “Because he will save his people from their sins.”⁹

There are three aspects of that that we have to look at. First of all he will save. That is the first point. Secondly, who is it that he will save? He will save his people. Who are his people? We need to look at that. And then, thirdly, what will he save them from? And we are told he will save them from their sins.

Now, these are three very important concepts that we have to examine. When it says that he is going to be a Savior, he will save them, the whole concept is that...that something would happen that would dramatically change the lives of a multitude of human beings. In order for someone to be saved they need to have something to be saved from.

Think of this for a moment. If I were here in this building and all of a sudden the fire trucks came up and the firemen came in and they grabbed all of us and they pulled us to the outside of the building you would look around and say, “Why in the world did they do such a thing? There is not a fire here, right? So therefore we don’t have to be saved from anything.”

But if, in fact, the building were on fire and the fire trucks came and firemen came in and they were able to get us safely out of the building, then you would say, “We have been saved,” saved from possible death, saved from burning, saved from all that is involved in a fire.

For Jesus to have saved his people there has to be a reason for salvation. And the reason for salvation is the sinful nature of man. We have to understand that when Adam sinned in the garden of Eden that sinful nature that he...that came upon him was passed to all of his descendants including us. Each one of us not only sins in our lives, but is born in sin, that the moment of our conception, as a matter of fact, is the moment in which there is sin existing in our lives because the sin nature of Adam is passed upon each one of us.

Isn’t that what it says in Psalm 51? Let’s take a look at that. In the 51st Psalm it says in the fifth verse, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.”¹⁰

⁸ See Matthew 1:21

⁹ Ibid.

Now he is not saying that his mother did anything sinful in anything...in any aspect of his conception or birth. That is not what it is talking about here. What it is saying here is that the moment that he was conceived a sin nature was passed to him. And that was the sin nature that was given to Adam and to Eve the moment that sin came into their lives. We, at the moment of conception are sinners.

You know, this is one, I think, of the greatest arguments against the concept of abortion. Now think about this for a moment. You hear many rationales for abortion and, you know, I have worked with people from a lot of different backgrounds. I work with people ever day in the hospice setting and you will hear people talking as if abortion is a perfectly normal, natural and appropriate thing to occur in the lives of people. You don't want a baby you get rid of it. Well, if I think about this clearly from the teaching of the Word of God this says that we become sinners not at birth, but at conception. Think about that for a moment. In other words, that fetus in the womb of a mother at the moment of conception is a sinful human being. Well, that means, obviously that that person is a human being. That person is a child. That person is not just a mass of substance that has some life to it that can be terminated. It is actually a human being. And for us to abort that fetus is the same as murdering a human being.

I think one of the most horrible things—and we are getting a bit off our subject—but anyway, one of the most horrible things that exists in our society today is an attitude that says that life is not as important as it really is in the sight of God. It is possible today for millions of innocent children each year to be put to death before they are actually born. And there are debates over, you know, how late in pregnancy it is ok to perform an abortion.

My opinion? Once a child is conceived, that child is a human being who deserves every bit of the same protection of the law that we receive once we are born and during the entirety of our lives. And I think we, as Christians, need to fight for that. We need to stand up for the rights of all human beings, those who have been born and those who have not.

One of the things that really concerned me and I'm sure that all of you have heard on the news the story of that 39 year old young lady about whom there has been a fight over whether to remove her G-tube. And, you know, it was removed and then put back in again, the gastro tube where she could be fed. I often think about this. You know, I have said that if I wind up in a state where I am not conscious I do not want any extraordinary means to keep me alive. But feeding to me is not an extraordinary means. If a human being can live simply by being nourished, that person ought to receive the nourishment and be allowed to live regardless of the state in which that person is living.

I cannot by myself be able to determine the value of a human life and the value of that life whether that person has great cognition or whether that person is living in a state in which I might not want to live myself.

¹⁰ Psalm 51:5

Now I can say, “I don’t want to have extraordinary means.” That means I don’t want you to resuscitate me if I am in a situation like that. But I will tell you if I live like that or if someone I love lives like that, I certainly want the person to be fed and not to be allowed to starve to death.

My fear is—and I am so happy that the ruling was changed—my fear is that if a person who is living in state like that can be denied food and water in order to live, how much longer will it be before people will walk into nursing homes and make a determination, “This person’s life, according to me, is not worth living, so we are going to starve that person to death.” What is the difference? I see none at all. Part of my work has been working in nursing home. And I have walked in and visited with people who weren’t aware that I was there, but they were alive. And they had a do not resuscitate order. If they had a heart attack no one was going to revive them, but they received food and all the nourishment the need to at least remain alive. We need to understand that life is valuable.

Well, we have gotten a wee bit off the subject. But that’s ok. I think these are important things for us to consider as Christians in the world in which we live today.

“You will call his name Jesus for he will save.”¹¹

We are all sinners from the time of conception. And so he came to save.

This concept of salvation we find not only in the New Testament, but it is mentioned over and over again in the Old Testament. Just a few verses to give you an idea. In Isaiah chapter 45 and verse 22, “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”¹²

Ezekiel chapter 36, a passage that we read this morning in our message. “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean, from all your filthiness and all your idols will I cleanse you, a new heart also will I give you.”¹³ And so on and so forth. He talks about saving people.

In Zechariah chapter nine and verse nine, Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King comes unto you: he is just, and having salvation.”¹⁴

And then we go to the New Testament and you remember the day when John looked at Jesus and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”¹⁵

¹¹ See Matthew 1:21

¹² Isaiah 45:22

¹³ See Ezekiel 36:25-26

¹⁴ Zechariah 9:9

¹⁵ John 1:29

In Acts chapter four that wonderful verse that speaks of the blessing of our salvation. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”¹⁶ We are saved and saved only on the basis of what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us.

In Colossians chapter one and verse 20 we read, “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”¹⁷

And, finally, in Revelation chapter one and verse five:

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.”¹⁸

You see, Jesus is the one who saves. And the wonderful blessing is that though each one of us is sinful, there is a means of salvation. And it is important to understand that there is only one means of salvation. There are not multitudes of ways of getting to God.

I hear this all the time. People will say, “Well, you know, you to God your way and I will go to God my way and we’ll all get there.”

Well, that is not what the Scripture teaches. It doesn’t teach that some people can come to know God by trusting in Christ and other people can come to know God by trusting in Mohammed and other people can come to know God by trusting in Buddha. It says in the passage that we just read that there is salvation in no other, “For there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved.”¹⁹ Jesus is the only way to salvation.

But the passage goes on. It says, “You will call his name Jesus for he will save his people.”²⁰ Now, who are his people? It is a very interesting concept. There are those who would read that and say, “Well, maybe that refers to the Jewish people because they were originally the chosen people.”

It couldn’t be because multitudes of them are saved and multitudes are lost. It doesn’t refer to them. It says, “He will save his people.”²¹

¹⁶ Acts 4:12

¹⁷ Colossians 1:20

¹⁸ Revelation 1:5-6

¹⁹ See Acts 4:12

²⁰ See Matthew 1:21

²¹ Ibid.

Does it mean all the people on the face of the earth? Well, that can't be either because multitudes of people are not saved and many are.

So what does he mean when he says, "He will save his people from their sins"?²²

Well, in order for us to understand that we need to look at a couple of concepts that we find in Scripture. First of all in Isaiah chapter 53 where it talks about the marvelous work that the Lord Jesus Christ does to save sinners. We know it is talking about him. It says in verse six, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."²³ It is talking about the Lord Jesus Christ.

But in the 11th verse it says that, "He will see of the travail of his soul, and will be satisfied."²⁴ What does that mean? He will see that for which he labored, for that which he travailed and he will be satisfied.

In other words, his goal will be accomplished. And what is his goal? It says, "My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities."²⁵

I believe that his people are those who are the redeemed of the Lord. His people are those who are saved. His people are those who are the chosen of God.

Now as we look at Scripture we find that there are a group of people who were given by the Father to the Son, people who were his from all eternity.

Now this is a difficult concept. It really is. God, before the foundation of the world, had a multitude of people that it was his goal to save. And those people were his and he gave them to the Lord Jesus Christ and they are the ones who are called his people.

Let's take a look at some verses to see exactly what that means. In the book of John and I am going to stick in the book of John for a little while because there is a strong emphasis of this concept in there. There are a group of people who belong to the Father and were given to the Son. Let's take a look.

John chapter 17. You know that John 17 is what we would call the high priestly prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. We talk about the Lord's Prayer. Actually what we call the Lord's Prayer is a model prayer that he gave to us for us to use as a model of our prayer to him. It is not his prayer. It is not a prayer that he prayed. The Lord's Prayer is John chapter 17. That is the prayer that he prayed to his Father.

Now, let's take a look at it and look at a few verses. In verse two it says, "even as Thou gavest Him authority over all mankind, that to all whom Thou hast given Him, He may

²² Ibid.

²³ Isaiah 53:6

²⁴ Isaiah 53:11

²⁵ Ibid.

give eternal life.”²⁶ What does that mean? There are a group of people that belong to the Father, they were given to the Son and those people were given eternal life by the Son.

Going down to verse six it says, “I manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me.”²⁷ What does that mean? Again, there were a group of people that were taken out from among the multitude in the world. They were owned by the Father. They were given to the Son and he gave to them everlasting life.

Same concept we have in verse nine where we read this. “I ask on their behalf.”²⁸ In other words he is praying for this group of people that he is talking about. And then he says something that sounds a little shocking really. It says, “I do not ask on behalf of the world.”²⁹ In other words, “I’m praying, but I am not praying for the world. I am praying for the group of people that you have given me out of the world. I am praying for this group of people that were yours that you gave to me,” the Son says to the Father. And he says, “I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine.”³⁰

Well, let’s go down a little bit further to the 24th verse of this same chapter where it says, “Father, I desire that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou didst love Me before the foundation of the world.”³¹

You see, here is this whole picture, a group of people. Now, if you are saved you are among those people. You are one of those who was known by the Lord Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. This is one of those who are described in the book of Ephesians chapter one, in Ephesians chapter one where it says in the fourth verse, “Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.”³²

Now we can look at many other passages. I am going to look at just a couple because I think the emphasis is already there. But in John chapter six and verse 37, very familiar verse, one that we all know I’m sure. “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”³³ Here is, again, this group of people who belong to the Father. He gave them to the Son and it says, “All of them, they are going to come to me.” So when the gospel goes out and it is preached, the multitude of people who belong to the Father, were given to the Son, they are the ones who will come and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

They are the same ones that are referred to in John chapter 10 as the sheep. For it says,

²⁶ John 17:2

²⁷ John 17:6

²⁸ John 17:9

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ John 17:24

³² Ephesians 1:4

³³ John 6:37

“My sheep hear my voice.”³⁴ Not everybody hears his voice. In other words when we preach the gospel not everyone hears and believes. His sheep hear and they believe.

And I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.³⁵

Let's look at just a couple more verses very, very quickly in the book of John.

In John chapter 10 verse 29, “My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.”³⁶

John chapter 15 and verse 19. “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”³⁷

John 18 and verse nine. “That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.”³⁸

And we could go on. I mean there are probably another 100 verses that I could have picked out. I think I already chose too many. But anyway that is the picture. The idea is when it says he will save his people, he is going to save those whom the Father has known, gave to the Son.

Now this is a difficult concept, I think, for many of us to understand. And we don't really understand it. I have no idea why I am one of those who belong to the Father that before the foundation of the world he knew me and loved me. I don't know. But I am happy he did. I am thankful for it and I am blessed that that love came to me personally in a very special way.

“You will call his name Jesus for he will save his people.”³⁹ But that is not the end. It says, “He will save his people from their sins.”⁴⁰

Now I love that. I have met many people who talk about being saved, but if you explore their lives they would have to say that there has been no change in their life. They are exactly the same as they were before they were supposedly saved. Jesus said that is not the purpose of his work on Calvary. “He will save his people from their sins.”⁴¹ He doesn't save his people in their sins. Now, notice the difference. If you were saved in your sins, in other words if you were saved and the fact that you are a sinner was not a

³⁴ John 10:27

³⁵ John 10:27-28

³⁶ John 20:29

³⁷ John 15:19

³⁸ John 18:9

³⁹ See Matthew 1:21

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

significant factor in all of this, it would be possible for you to just continue in your sins and be saved.

That is not what it says. It says he would save his people from their sins.

Now think about it for a moment. I don't think that people who are happy in their sins would be at all happy in heaven, do you? No. It is a place where there is no sin. It is a place where there is complete righteousness. People who are centered in sin, they don't want to be there. That is a place where life is beautiful, marvellous and sinless.

But the Lord Jesus Christ saved us from our sins. In other words, he gave to us a new heart. He made us different. If we are truly believers we have a desire to serve him. We want to serve him.

Now we don't do it perfectly, but if we love the Lord Jesus Christ and are truly saved it is going to be demonstrated in a different quality of life.

Some people have asked and I have been asked this many times, "How dose a person know that he or she is really a Christian?"

Well, there are many answers to that. There are some who will say, "Well, you know, I made a profession of faith."

I often thing of that. The word "profession." I am not always sure that a profession means a possession. I am not always sure that just because someone says something means that they really have it.

How do I know that I am really a Christian? I'll be saved from my sin. In other words, I will have a desire to live a life that is godly. I will have a desire to see a change come into my life to make me different from what I was before I became a believer. If there is no desire to serve the Lord, there probably is no real faith and no real salvation.

I think that is a very important concept. I really do. We live in a world of what I would call easy beleivism, a world in which people are told, "Well, just pray a prayer and you can know that you are saved."

Well, the Word of God does not say that. It tells us that we will know that we are saved because God will do a work in our lives and make a change in our lives. That is what he says in 1 John chapter five.

And I am going to close with a couple of verses in that wonderful book of the Bible. In 1 John chapter five it says in verse 13, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life."⁴²

⁴² 1 John 5:13

Now, what are these things? Well, if you read the book of John it talks about several evidences of salvation. It says, for instance, in chapter five and verse two, “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.”⁴³

In chapter three and verse 14, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.”⁴⁴ If there is no love of the brethren, then there is no evidence of real salvation.

It says in chapter two and verse three, “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.”⁴⁵

Now we are not going to be perfect at these things, but the evidence of salvation is the fact that God has worked something special in the lives of his people and made a difference in their lives. Our job is to make that manifest, in other words to live our lives in such a way that people can look at us and see the wonderful evidence of the grace of God in our lives.

“You will call his name Jesus, יהושע (a yeh-ho-shoo’- ah), salvation.”⁴⁶ Why was he given that name? Because he would save. He saved those who were sinners. Who did he save? He saved his people, those who were given to him by the Father. And what did he save them from? He saved them from their sins so that there would be a dramatic and wonderful difference in their lives.

May it be that each one of us will continue to manifest that difference in the lives that we live so that people can see us and glorify our Father who is heaven.

Let’s pray.

Thank you, Lord, for the blessings you give to us and the joy of our salvation we pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

⁴³ 1 John 5:2

⁴⁴ 1 John 3:14

⁴⁵ 1 John 2:3

⁴⁶ See Matthew 1:21