



A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1)

LET this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in the form of God, ⁷ thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁸ But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁹ And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. ¹⁰ Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: ¹¹ That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; ¹² And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:5-11)

What is in a name, asked the scribe of England. “What’s in a name? that which we call a rose By any other name would smell as sweet.” Shakespeare was a the greatest writer England ever produced, but he missed the mark slightly in this quote from his play, *ROMEO AND JULIET*. If God will give us each a name in Heaven, and if that name is written in the Book of Life, I tend to believe a name is significantly important. He identifies its owner. ¹⁷ *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.* (Revelation 2:17)

Once a young soldier in the army of Alexander the Great was brought before that great commander as a result of showing cowardice in the face of the enemy. He was of a young and tender age. Alexander felt pity for the boy. He asked, “How old are you, lad?” “Eighteen years,” was the response. “And what is your name?” asked Alexander. “My name is Alexander, Sir!” responded the boy. Alexander dismissed the boy with this counsel: “Young man, either change your ways, or change your name!”

Dr. Thomas Guthrie of Edinburg wrote in 1829: *"From the days of miracles, the name of Jesus has carried with it the idea of His authority and the efficacy of His power. Uttered by the lips of faith, it has been a word of resistless might. It has healed disease, shed light on the darkness of the blind, and breathed life into the cold form of death. It has mastered devils, controlled the powers of hell, and commanded the wildest elements of nature into instant obedience. Like Pharaoh's signet on Joseph's hand, he who used that name in faith, was endowed for the time with sovereign power. Powerful as has been this sign when used by faith, yet on unbelieving lips no name was more useless. Like a residuum from which the ethereal spirit has been evaporated, or a body bereft of life, it possessed no power or virtue whatever. In mere name there was no charm either to pour light on a blind man's eye-ball, or to restore vigor to a withered limb."* It has forever been the man joined by the name that means the Lord Jesus Christ. The name is nothing when bestowed upon another. So, names represent the history, the present, and the future summation of men and women.

Charles Spurgeon said: *"I have heard of ministers who can preach a sermon without mentioning the Name of Jesus from beginning to end."*

"If you ever hear a sermon of that kind mind that you never hear another from that man. If a baker once made a loaf of bread without any flour in it, I would take good care that he should never do so again: and I say the same of a man who can preach a Christless Gospel. Let those go and hear him who do not value their souls; but dear friends, your soul and mine are too precious to be placed at the mercy of such a preacher."

Many born in western nations, and now more and more in every nation, are given Christian names by their parents at birth. – names such as John, James, Mark, Matthew, Paul, Peter, Timothy, Isaiah, Jeremiah (my own name), Adam, etc. These names all have meaning. The practice of the eastern lands (and Israel is in Asia) is to name a child some name that has meaning. For example, in Korea, a young girl may have the name of Mi-Ok which means beautiful stone. In Hebrew, the name 'Adam' means 'ruddy man; 'the name 'Eve' means 'Giver of Life;' Jeremiah means 'God will rise;' and 'Abraham' means 'Father of multitudes.'

Consider Joshua – a mighty man of war who led Israel into the Promised Land after forty years of Wilderness wanderings. The walls of Jericho fell outward before his multitudes. What does the name, Joshua, mean? It means **God has saved!** Should not our Lord Jesus Christ have a similar name? Yes, indeed, and He not only has a similar name, but the exact same name as Joshua, for the Name, Jesus, is the Hellenized name of Joshua.

Our Lord has many names which identify various characteristics of His Being; but I wish to mention only this One Name! It summarizes in my mind the whole Person of our Lord. Yes, He is the great "I Am!" Yes, He is the 'Rock of my Salvation.' Yes, He is called 'Lord of Lords' and King of Peace." He is also known as 'Emmanuel' or God with us. But that given name (by God the Father) carries the power of His Being and is so lovely on the lips of innocence. *"²¹ And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."* (Matthew 1:21) There is power in the Name of Jesus when Jesus has gained welcome in the heart. *"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

Every true Christian knows by counsel of the Holy Ghost what the name 'Jesus' means. We see His glowing face, His outstretched arm, His heart of mercy – and far more in our mind's eye at the mention of that name.

What comes to mind to others at the mention of your own name? Is your name referenced by others as an example of Christian charity, joyful labors, and wisdom; or do some points arise in their memories that compels the word 'but' to follow any compliment that they may pay your name to others? Remember the Commander of the Assyrian armies? *"¹ Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, **but he was a leper.**"* (2 Kings 5:1) How would you like to be so described? "Yes, old John Doe is a hard worker and cares much for his family . . . **BUT** he has the deadly disease of sin?"

There is a monument in the City of Port Hope, Canada, and a few American parks, to the memory of one Joseph Scriven. Scriven had left Ireland in 1845 after the loss of his betrothed fiancée and settled at Port Hope. He devoted the waning years of his life in helping widows, orphans and the poor without charge. He became known as the Good Samaritan of Port Hope. All who knew Joseph Scriven attributed nothing but charitable and loving qualities to him.

Scriven once wrote a poem to his mother in Ireland. The poem was intended to comfort his mother concerning the love and enduring friendship of her Lord Jesus Christ. Two years later, Scriven was sitting in a revival service in Canada and heard his poem sung in a hymn – *"What a Friend we Have in Jesus."* Men will surely forget our names in the process of time, but they shall never forget the reservoir of love, friendship and sovereignty of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Friend indeed! His Name is above every other.

It is good that men forget our names and the many sins attached to our names. In fact, our Lord has promised as much. *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."* (Revelation 2:17)

The White Stone represents our justification through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. But why the new name that no one knows except the recipient? It is because of the memories men have of our past sins even before salvation. God has said He will "remember them no more," but man never forgets. So, our Lord will give us a new name to which no sinful report is attached. We shall not be ashamed.

Friends, I hope and pray that each of us both reading and writing this devotion will receive a White Stone with our new name written thereon. That will be a moment of rejoicing.