

Jesus: A Common Name for an Uncommon Man

Part I

In the Scriptures, someone's name had great significance, it was intended to reflect that person's character. The Bible is filled with many references to who Jesus is, His life, His Lordship, and what He came to do. We use names like Son of God, The Lamb of God, The Light of the World, The Resurrection and the Life, The Bright and Morning Star, Alpha and Omega. These are phrases that try to capture the uncapturable grandeur of God.

I want you to know the only true phrase that does justice to our feeble attempt to recognize who Jesus is a phrase most of us have used often, the phrase is, "There are no words to express." This is really the only phrase that can honestly be applied to God. No other names/titles do Him justice.

Although there are no names that do justice to the person and character of Jesus, there is one name which recalls the quality of the Master that all are familiar with. It reveals a side of Him that, when recognized, is enough to make "angels prostrate fall." It is not too small, nor is it too grand. It is a name that fits like a glove. The name is Jesus. It is used almost six hundred times. Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua, Jeshua, and Jehoshua. Those are all familiar Old Testament names. There were at least five high priests known as Jesus. The writings of the historian Josephus refer to about twenty people called Jesus. The New Testament speaks of Jesus Justus, the friend of Paul, and the sorcerer of Paphos is called Bar-Jesus.

If Jesus walked the earth today in the flesh, His name might have been John or Bob or Jim. Most likely, Jesus would have been an average "Joe." Again, were He here today, it is doubtful He would distance Himself with an elevated name like Reverend Holiness Angelic Divinity III. No, when God chose the name His Son would go by, He chose a human name. He chose a name so typical that it would appear two or three times on any given class roll. This is why the Apostle John records, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory." He was touchable, approachable, and reachable. He was an ordinary guy. If He were here today, you probably wouldn't notice Him as He walked through a shopping mall. He wouldn't turn heads by the clothes He wore or the jewelry He flashed. Those who walked with Him remembered Him not with a title or designation, but with a name, the name Jesus.