

February 8, 2015

Who is Jesus?

"Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so they may be one as we are one...My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of this world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me." John 17:11-21

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

As we have noted throughout this study, whenever Jesus used the phrase ***"I am"*** to refer to himself many among those that heard him understood that he was claiming equality with God because he was using God's name to describe himself. In his final prayer for his disciples, and through them for us, he clarifies this very point. He asks his Father to protect his followers, ***"by the power of your name..."*** and then the Master adds, ***"...the name you gave me..."***

The importance of the name of God appears over and over in the New Testament. In his letter to the church at Philippi Paul writes, ***"Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of the Father."*** (Philippians 2:9-11)

In John's Revelation the final victory over Satan and his followers belongs to the one the Apostle is revealing when he writes, ***"I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God."*** (Revelation 19:11-13)

To us a name is just a name. But God's name is supremely holy and overwhelmingly powerful. And that name has been given to Jesus. He is not and never has been just a man. He has always been God in flesh as well. In that name, the name of God, Jesus prays for his disciples both in the first century and now. We are in fact, protected by the power of the name of God, because that is what our Savior asked of his Father.

In his final words to his followers recorded in Matthew 28 our Lord says, ***"All authority (the authority that goes with God's name) in heaven and earth has been given to me"*** and then he makes his final ***"I am"*** statement. Our Lord promises us, ***"...I am with you always, to the very end of the age."***

I am afraid that we completely forget what this final prayer and final promise really mean. If I belong to Jesus then I wear his all-powerful name. In that name I am protected from the destroyer. In that name I can live with confidence knowing that no power on earth can separate me from him.



More Than
Conquerors

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Paul wrote to the Roman believers, *"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present of the future, nor any powers, neither height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus."* (Romans 8:37-39) In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, we conquer. M