

GATEWAY CHURCH NORTHUMBERLAND

2.3.14

In The Name – Joss Bray

We are looking at some of the “I have come” statements of Jesus – and about what they teach us – and how that should affect our lives now.

Jesus came in his Father’s name -

JN 5:43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.

He was speaking to people who disputed what he did and who he was – and who refused to accept what he was offering them. He doesn’t rely on assertions he makes about himself – and he doesn’t accept other people’s testimony either.

JN 5:31 "If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid. ³² There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is valid.....

JN 5:33 "You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴ Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. ³⁵ John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light. ³⁶ "I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the very work that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, ³⁸ nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. ³⁹ You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

Notice that it is the Father who testifies or in other words, validates him - and that what Jesus is doing on the earth confirms it. He also points out that the scriptures testify about him as well – that’s why it is so important to study them.

Jesus says in effect, that if people understood the scriptures and what he was doing, they could have life.

Jesus said “Not my will”

In several places we read that Jesus didn't want to do his will, but the will of the Father -

JN 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

LK 22:42 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

So Jesus did not speak on his own authority or do his will – but on his Fathers' authority and to do *his* will. Actually he goes further and says he could do *nothing* by himself -

JN 5:30 By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

Jesus had the authority of the father –

MT 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.¹⁹ 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,

Jesus received all authority from God and then he passed on that baton to the disciples to go and make more disciples and told them to baptise in name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and many other things too. The name of Jesus became the stand out feature of the church and the hope for the world.

There is a changing and saving power in the name of Jesus -

AC 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

1CO 6:11..... But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Jesus's name enables sins to be forgiven and the Holy Spirit to be received. We are made right with God because of his name and by the same spirit of Jesus.

There is power in the name of Jesus for healing -

We looked at healing last week and this passage -

AC 3:6 Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."¹⁶ By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.

There is power in the name of Jesus to cast out demons –

AC 16:18 ...Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.

But it is not a “magic charm” –

AC 19:13 Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." ¹⁴ Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. ¹⁵ One day the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" ¹⁶ Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

The seven sons of Sceva had no personal faith in Jesus – and ultimately, that will be revealed and there will be a reckoning. Doing something in the name of Jesus needs actual faith in Jesus.

The name of Jesus carries authority to teach –

The disciples taught in Jesus's name – and the authorities tried to stop them. This was Peter and John -

AC 4:18 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

There was recognition even by non believers that there was something special and powerful that provoked a reaction – although the authorities would never admit that.

Paul did it – even when he had just become a Christian –

AC 9:27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus.²⁸ So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.

Paul appealed to the church on the basis of the authority Jesus gave to him to be an apostle – not on his own authority.

1CO 1:10 I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.

And sometimes the teaching has an edge –

2TH 3:6 In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.

It is not only “nice” and “safe” with Jesus – his teaching wasn’t like that – and teaching in his name won’t be either.

We meet as a body in the name of Jesus-

1CO 5:4 When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus

Paul talks about the church being together in the name of Jesus – and when we are together he says -

EPH 5: 19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So we need to recognise that all good gifts are from God, acknowledging that it is through Jesus that we can receive at all.

What does “in the name of” actually mean then?

Doing something “in the name of” implies that the person doing it will behave as the person who has given them the authority would want them to. Like an ambassador to another country. They do not have authority and status

from themselves, but from the one person or government that has sent them.

The authority that we have originates from the Father, through Jesus, to us.

Paul and Timothy understood this –

2CO 5: 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.

It is more than being just a messenger. There is authority and power that has been given to us to do those things we are called to do.

We should speak and act in the name of Jesus -

COL 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

There doesn't seem to be a distinction in the bible between "secular" and "sacred". We are in the world but not of it. While we are in it – we should do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. This does not just apply to "churchy" things but to our whole lives from the biggest to the smallest things – things that are seen and unseen by others.

But we had better make sure that we are representing Him in these things and not doing them in our own strength or from wrong motives – because that's when things start to go wrong.

Our functions (like an ambassador) will include praying or doing or teaching or healing or casting out demons or just living among people - all in the name of Jesus. Our challenge is to grasp who we are in God and that we have that delegated power and authority from Him - and to be not afraid to use it in the whole of our lives.