Topic: Respect and Reverence for Jesus

What's In a Name?

Do you remember when you were growing up how important your name was? Or, should I say how important it was for people to use your correct name? Names were often used to taunt people. Marty McFly, the legendary character in the Back to the Future movies, would go into a rage if anyone called him "chicken." Parents and friends often used nicknames in a positive way, giving people a shortened version of their real name. Bradley was shortened to Brad; Richard became Ricky, Rick or Dick. Sometimes the choice of a nickname was based on a personality characteristic or appearance. People really didn't like being called shorty, but some nicknames were complimentary. In all of the examples the name became an important identifier.

Jesus had many names that identified a role. A recent newspaper article explained some of the names for Jesus.

- **Son of God** is used 40 times in the New Testament, referring to Jesus' special relationship with God the Father.
- **Son of Man** appears 81 times in the four Gospels. In the Old Testament book of Daniel it predicts the future by referring to the Son of Man as the judge of the world. The same theme rings true in the Gospel of Mark, where He is called the Son of Man who would come in judgement of the world. The Son of Man refers to Jesus' humanity, taking on our sins and suffering for our salvation.
- Jesus' parents were instructed to name Him **Jesus**. Philippians 2:10 said a day will come when "at the name of Jesus every knee will bend."
- In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus is equated with **Emmanuel**, which means "God is with us."
- Jesus was given the title of **Christ**, which is Greek for Messiah. Messiah means "one anointed by God." In our haste we often combine Jesus with Christ, as if Christ was His last name. If Christ is a title and not a name, we should really say "Jesus the Christ."

As we found out in our youth, names aren't always used appropriately. The third commandment is *you shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain, Exodus 20:7*. It is not OK to give mixed messages with occasional slips of the tongue. *Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? (James 3:11).* If you are a follower of Jesus, show it in everything you do. What comes out of our mouths reflects the condition of our hearts. How is your heart?

We live in a pretty ugly world, a world in need of a Savior. We have that in Jesus, who goes by the most honorable names and titles – Son of God, Son of Man, Emmanuel, the Christ. Don't drag His name down by swearing, making unholy references to Him and making jokes about God. His name is Holy and we should treat it with reverence, respect and honor.

Question: How can you treat the name of Jesus with reverence, respect and honor and avoid even occasional slips of the tongue?

Prayer: Dear Lord. We bow to you in the name of Jesus. We pray that we will treat His name with reverence, respect and honor. Empower us to do good things in your name. Amen.