

"Jesus Who Is Called Christ"

Our Lord was called many things. He called Himself the Son of Man (Matt. 8:20). His enemies called Him "Beelzebub" and "that deceiver" (Matt. 10:25; 27:63). Let's notice what He was called by a messenger of heaven and inspired men.

The angel Gabriel announced to Mary and Joseph that the Son born to Mary would be called Jesus (Lk. 1:31; Matt. 1:21). Jesus is Greek and means "Jehovah is Salvation" or "Salvation is of Jehovah." The Hebrew equivalent is Joshua. Thus, "Jesus conveys" the idea of Savior. Truly, He is the Savior of the world.

Gabriel also said, "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest...called the Son of God" (Lk. 1:32, 35). Matthew records, "'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us'" (1:23). All these reveal the nature of Jesus, deity. Thomas confessed, "My Lord and my God" (Jn. 20:28). Indeed, Jesus was human and divine.

In the genealogy given by Matthew, it says, "And Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ" (1:16). Christ is the Greek form of Messiah, or "anointed one." In the Old Testament, prophets, priests and kings were anointed for their positions (1 Kgs. 19:15-16; Ex. 30:30). Of course, Jesus was all three (Acts 3:22-23; Heb. 3:1; 1 Tim. 6:15).

Matthew also says, "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, 'He shall be called a Nazarene'" (Matt. 2:23). Being a Nazarene was not well regarded by the religious elite. Even Nathaniel questioned whether anything good could come from Nazareth (Jn. 1:46). Yet, we see the Creator of the universe came from such a lowly place (cf. Jn. 1:1-3).

By inspiration, David called Him "Lord" (Matt. 22:43-45; cf. Psa. 110:1). The appellation of "Lord" tells us He is our Master. Hence, we see Jesus is superior to us and has the authority to command us (Heb. 5:9). Indeed, He is "Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; 19:16).

Jesus was "called" many things. He was slandered by what His enemies called Him, but He was honored by Gabriel and inspired men. The question is, what do you call Him?

Steven F. Deaton