

How to Handle Death

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. **—Philippians 1:21**

Honoring God's Name

I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. **—2 Corinthians 11:2**

The Power of the Holy Spirit

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit. **—Luke 4:14**

The Power of Love

Love never fails. **—1 Corinthians 13:8**

“Jesus Is Lord”

- ✘ No one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.
—1 Corinthians 12:3

Paul tells us that when the Father welcomed Jesus home, the same God who said that He would not give His glory to another has either changed His mind or has recognized Jesus to be very God of very God when He bestowed on Jesus the name that is above every name.

It is therefore a direct reference to the honor that Jesus deserved; it is a direct reference to the character of Jesus, as it was to the character of God. It is a direct reference to the reputation that Jesus deserved and to the worship that He deserved.

He, who stooped so low, now took upon Himself, from the Father, the honor above all others. He was given the name that was above every name. He who emptied Himself is now lifted up to the glorious ranks of equality with God and enjoyment of that dignity, which was ever His by right, but to which He never clung. Now it is given to Him as His personal possession. Meekness—majesty!

Paul puts it very carefully, showing that God gave the name for one reason only.

God has given this name to Jesus so that at the very name of Jesus, every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

The Holy Spirit confesses that Jesus is Lord. This is the very foundation of the Christian faith; it is the lowest common denominator. By this you may know whether or not you are a Christian. If you believe this, not in your head, but in your heart, you are a Christian, and if you do not, you are not.

And if you do, it is not because you have done anything spectacular. As the psalmist put it in Psalm 115:1, "Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory." It is all because the Holy Spirit has enabled us to see the truth that Jesus is Lord.

Excerpted from *Meekness and Majesty* (Christian Focus Publications Ltd., 1992, 2000).

Seek First the Kingdom

☒ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. **—Matthew 6:33**

There is nothing wrong with being middle class as long as the Christian who is middle class is not a snob and doesn't make somebody else feel second class. That was the danger in Corinth; there were middle-class people who treated the poor as second class, and that's why God dealt with them severely (1 Cor. 11:17-32). This warning came not because they were wealthy, but because they mistreated people. If a money problem is not your thorn in the flesh today, remember that it could be tomorrow. God can take it all away from you, just like that!

Are you greedy? Do you want to get rich? God in heaven may be folding His arms and saying, "Really?" Some Christians cannot get ahead financially. I am going to tell you why. God won't let them. He is doing them an enormous favor, because it could destroy them. They already have trouble handling money, and they think, Well, if I had a little more. Almost certainly, if they had a little more they would be deeper in debt. This is the way most of us are. We are, by nature, greedy. Very few people, truly, can handle money.

Matthew 6:33 was my father's favorite verse. He never became wealthy, but he was never really poor. Perhaps you reach out for those things that are to be added, but you have it all wrong. You may say, "If I had a little bit more, I will give more time to God. If I get this much money, then I am going to start going to church more and reading my Bible more." Wrong! You will never do it! Pursue righteousness and godliness first. Take time to be alone with Him, and then all these other things will just be there!

Excerpted from *The Thorn in the Flesh* (Charisma House, 2004).

Passing the Test

Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life. **—James 1:12**

Seeing With Eyes of the Spirit

When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. **—Matthew 28:17**

The Pain of Being Misunderstood

Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor." –Mark 6:4

Vindication

At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. –Philippians 2:10-11