

DAVID K. BERNARD

IN THE NAME OF



JESUS

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by David K. Bernard

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All Scripture quotations in this book are from the King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise identified.

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PEOPLE OF THE NAME

God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name (Acts 15:14).

The note on the windshield of my car read, “Would you take me to your church?” I did not recognize the name and telephone number at the bottom, but I called the number and arranged transportation for the girl who had made the request.

Like me, she was a student at the University of Texas at Austin, and she was searching for God. While visiting a friend of hers at the apartment complex where I lived, she had been attracted by the bumper

sticker on my car that said: “PEOPLE OF THE NAME . . . JESUS” and in small letters, “United Pentecostal Church.” As a result of that contact, she is a member of a United Pentecostal Church today.

One day as I was driving the same car down a freeway in Houston, someone behind me began honking his horn insistently. I looked back to see the driver pointing repeatedly toward the top of his car with a big grin on his face. It took me a while to realize that he had read my bumper sticker and wanted me to know that he too was one of those “People of the Name” who served the one true God.

On another occasion, as I drove along a road that had various places of worldly entertainment—bars, a massage parlor, an “adult” bookstore, a movie theater—a temptation came to me. The devil seemed to say, “If you were to go into one of these places, no one would recognize you. You could have fun and never get caught.” Immediately I thought of my bumper sticker and a question came to mind: If people saw my car parked at one of these places what would they think of my church and, most of all, my Lord? Of course, the true motivation and power to resist temptation that day did not come from the name on the bumper sticker, but from the Bearer of that name, who dwelt in my heart by His Spirit.

On these three occasions and others like them, my bumper sticker served as a mark of identification to an inquirer, to another Christian, and to myself. Even so, the name of Jesus identifies us to the world, to fel-

low believers, and to ourselves. God's people have always been identified by His name.

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the Old Testament God established a covenant with the nation of Israel. If they would serve Him, He promised to establish them, make them a holy people, bless them greatly, and make them a witness of Him to all nations, and He expressed this plan by identifying them with His name Jehovah. (In the King James Version and New King James Version, LORD, in large and small capitals, stands for the name Yahweh in the Hebrew text, also known in English as Jehovah.)

Thus Moses proclaimed, "The LORD [Jehovah] shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee" (Deuteronomy 28:8-10).

Throughout the Old Testament, God identified His people as those who were called by His name (II Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 43:5-7; Daniel 9:19). God's name represents His character, power, authority, and presence (Exodus 3:13-14; 6:3-8; 9:16; 23:20-21; I Kings 8:27-29). To be called by His name means to be identified with Him, to know His divine character,