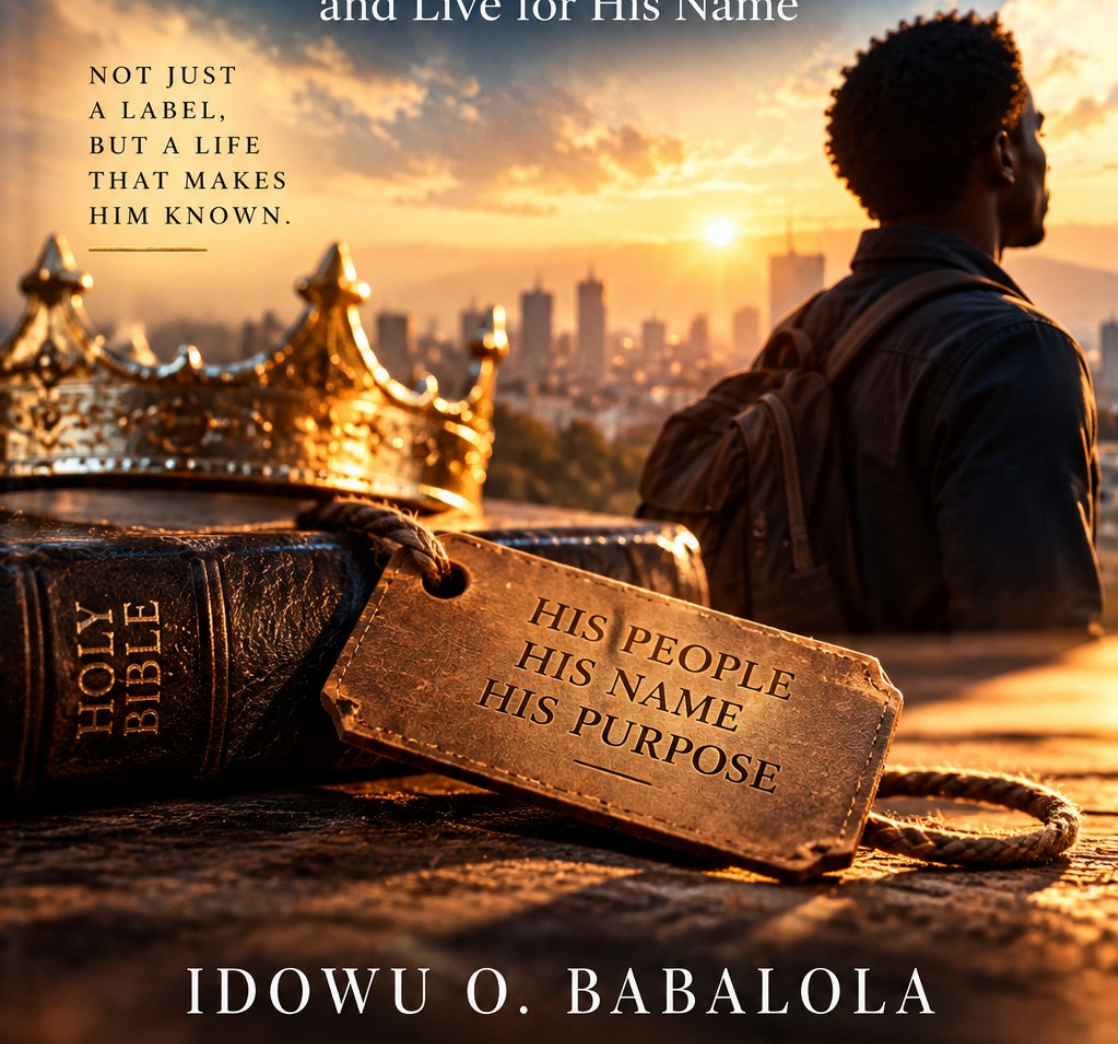


A SHORT BOOK WITH A LASTING IMPACT

# BEARING HIS NAME

What It Means to Belong to God  
and Live for His Name

NOT JUST  
A LABEL,  
BUT A LIFE  
THAT MAKES  
HIM KNOWN.



IDOWU O. BABALOLA

# BEARING HIS NAME

*What It Means to Belong to God and Live for His Name*

A concise biblical exploration of belonging to God, carrying His name,  
and living so His name is known.

**Idowu O. Babalola**

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## DEDICATION

“Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” — Colossians 3:17 (NKJV)

Above all, I dedicate this book to the glory of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. You have called us to be Your people and have given us the privilege of bearing Your name in the world. May this little book help every reader understand the weight and beauty of belonging to You, and may our lives bring honour to the name of Jesus Christ.

To my precious children, Babalola Tijesu Joshua and Babalola Eden Titoluwa, you are precious gifts from God and constant reminders of His faithfulness. My prayer is that you will grow to know the Lord, love His name, and live in a way that brings honour to Him. May your lives always point beyond yourselves to the One whose name you bear, and may you faithfully fulfil His purpose for your generation.

To my beloved wife, Babalola Adebusola Faith, thank you for your unwavering love, your prayers, your wise counsel, and your steadfast support. Your faith in God and your confidence in His calling upon my life have strengthened me throughout this journey. I am deeply grateful to the Lord for giving me a faithful partner who shares in His purpose and walks this journey beside me.

## PREFACE

I have often found that some of the most familiar words in Scripture become the most difficult to notice deeply. We read them so often that we can pass over them without asking why God chose to speak in that particular way. The phrase “His name” is one of those expressions. We know what it means to say that we belong to God, and we know what it means to call ourselves Christians. Yet Scripture repeatedly speaks of God having a people for His name, putting His name upon His people, and being concerned with what happens to His name among the nations.

This short book grew out of a simple question: What does it actually mean to bear His name? I am not asking that question to create another definition of Christian identity. I am asking it because Scripture seems to attach a weight to belonging that we can easily miss. If God has claimed a people for His name, then our belonging to Him has consequences for the way we live.

I want this book to remain simple. It is not intended to cover every biblical teaching about the name of God, nor is it an attempt to develop every connection that can be made around the subject. Instead, I want us to follow one clear biblical line and allow Scripture to lead us. We will begin with God's people, look at the responsibility attached to His name, come to Jesus as the One who makes the Father known, and then bring the question into the ordinary places where we live.

My hope is that by the end, the words “I belong to God” will carry a little more weight for you. I hope you will see

belonging not only as the comfort of knowing whose you are, but also as the privilege of carrying His name faithfully into the world.

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## **Introduction – The Name We Carry**

Imagine meeting someone for the first time and discovering that he carries the name of a family you know well. Before you know anything about him, the name has already told you something. You may expect a certain character because of what you have seen from that family. If he acts with kindness, you may think well of the name. If he acts shamefully, the name may be mentioned in the same breath as his behaviour. The person and the name become connected in the minds of those watching.

That simple picture brings us close to something Scripture says about God and His people. God did not settle for saving individuals and leaving them without a new identity. He took a people for His name. He put His name upon them. He cared about what His name looked like among the nations through the people who belonged to Him. Suddenly, the words “I belong to God” carry more weight than we may have realized.

This is the question at the heart of this book: What does it actually mean to bear His name? It is possible to know the language of Christianity, attend Christian gatherings, and call ourselves Christians without allowing the reality of belonging to shape the way we live. Bearing His name asks us to look more closely. If His name is associated with us, what does our life say about the One whose name we carry?

The answer begins in a place that is easy to overlook: belonging comes before representation. Before God asks His people to live as His witnesses, He makes them His

people. Israel was called His people, and the church is described as “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people” (1 Peter 2:9). God does not begin by handing us a performance to complete. He gives us an identity, and then teaches us how to live from it.

But belonging does not stay inside our confession. It follows us home. It goes with us into our work, our businesses, our friendships, our marriages, our leadership, our conversations, our private decisions, and the moments when nobody is watching. The name we carry enters the places where our Christianity is easiest to separate from the rest of life.

That is where this subject becomes uncomfortable in the best possible way. We can be very familiar with God's name and still become careless about what our lives communicate. We can speak about God while treating people in ways that make His character difficult to recognize through us. We can protect a Christian appearance while something very different is happening underneath. The question is not whether God's name is worthy of honour. It is whether our lives are telling the truth about the One we say we belong to.

Yet this is not a book about trying harder to make ourselves impressive representatives of God. If that were the answer, the weight of the name would become crushing. Scripture points us somewhere better. It points us to Jesus Christ, the One who made the Father known. Before we ask what our lives should reveal, we must look at the One whose life revealed the Father perfectly.

That is the journey ahead. We will begin with the gift of being God's people and discover why belonging itself carries responsibility. We will then look at the weight attached to God's name and come to Jesus, who shows us what it means for a life to be completely ordered toward the Father. From there, the question moves into ordinary life, where our identity begins to show, and finally to the deepest issue of all: whether our lives are making much of His name or quietly building our own.

## CHAPTER ONE

# A People for His Name

We usually think of a name as something that identifies a person. But a name can do more than identify; it can tell us where someone belongs. A child carries a family name before he has done anything to earn it. He receives it. Over time, however, the way he lives becomes associated with that name. His choices do not create the family, but they can affect how others see the family he represents. Scripture gives us a much deeper picture when it speaks of God placing His name upon a people.

At the end of the blessing given through Aaron, God says, “So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them” (Numbers 6:27). Notice the order. God puts His name upon them, and then He blesses them. Their identity begins with what God has done. They are not trying to make themselves God's people. God is claiming them as His own.

The same purpose keeps appearing as Scripture unfolds. God calls Israel His people and speaks repeatedly about His holy name. Then, in Acts 15:14, James describes God's work among the nations as taking out of them “a people for His name.” Peter uses similar language when he calls believers “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people” who are called to proclaim the praises of the One who called them out of darkness (1 Peter 2:9). The story is bigger than individual salvation. God is forming a people who belong to Him.

This changes the way we think about the Christian life. God certainly knows us individually. He calls us personally, loves us personally, and deals with us personally. But He also places us within a people. We are part of something God is building. Our faith is personal, but it was never designed to become isolated. We belong to God, and we belong among the people He has claimed for His name.

Isaiah records God saying, “Everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory” (Isaiah 43:7). The connection is striking: called by His name, created for His glory. The name tells us who claims us; the glory tells us why our lives matter. We were not brought into God's family simply to carry a private religious identity. Our belonging is connected to God's purpose.

So the question becomes more searching than “Do I believe in God?” We must also ask, “What does it mean that I belong to Him?” If God has put His name upon His people, then belonging is not a label we wear when it is convenient. It becomes part of the way we understand ourselves, our choices, and the reason our lives are here.

That question will take us further than a definition of Christian identity. The name that identifies us also creates an association, and that association carries responsibility. But responsibility makes sense only when we first see the beauty of belonging. The Christian life begins with God's claim upon us, not our attempt to make a name for ourselves. Before the name becomes a weight, it is a gift: we are His.

Belonging is one of the first things we learn to recognize in Scripture. God calls Abraham, forms a household, makes a covenant with Israel, and continues to speak of a people who are His. The repeated language matters because it shows that God's purpose is not exhausted by individual rescue. He is creating a people whose relationship with Him is unmistakable in the world.

Deuteronomy 28:9–10 brings the idea into sharp focus: Israel is described as a holy people to the LORD, and the nations are to see that they are called by the name of the LORD. Their name is not the source of their holiness; their relationship with God is. Yet the name identifies the relationship.

That is why the Christian life should never be reduced to private spirituality. We certainly know God personally, but we also belong to something God Himself is building. Peter's language of a chosen people, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation reminds us that salvation brings us into a people who exist to proclaim God's excellencies. We receive an identity, and that identity has a purpose.

Once a name is associated with a person, the person's actions can affect how that name is regarded. We know this instinctively in ordinary life. We may trust someone because of the family name he carries, or we may become cautious because of what we have previously seen associated with that name. Scripture uses this reality to help us understand why God takes seriously the way His people live in relation to His name.

The third commandment says, “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain” (Exodus 20:7). We

often hear this only as a warning about careless speech, but the command reaches into the way God's name is treated. His name is not empty. It represents the One who has revealed Himself, entered covenant, and claimed a people for Himself. To carry that name while treating the relationship as though it means nothing is a serious contradiction.

The same concern appears when God speaks to Israel as His people. In Leviticus 22:31-33, He tells them to keep His commandments and not profane His holy name. The reason is given plainly: "I am the LORD who sanctifies you." Their obedience was connected to the honour of the God who had claimed them.

The prophets make the seriousness even clearer. In Ezekiel 36, God speaks about Israel's life among the nations and says that His holy name had been profaned because of what had happened to His people. Then God declares that He will act for the sake of His holy name among the nations. His glory does not depend on human beings protecting it, but He takes seriously the connection He has established between His name and His people.

The passage reveals something important. God is not dependent upon human beings to protect His reputation. His holiness does not become less holy because His people fail. Yet He takes seriously the association between His name and the people who belong to Him. The nations saw Israel, and what they saw was connected in their minds with the God Israel claimed to worship.

The biblical idea of bearing God's name therefore carries real weight. Belonging is a gift, but it creates an

association. When God says, “These are My people,” their lives are no longer unrelated to the name they carry. That does not make them responsible for making God great; God is already great. It makes them responsible for living truthfully as the people He has claimed.

That does not mean God's people must create an impressive public image for Him. Scripture never teaches us to manage God's reputation through appearances. The concern is deeper. God's people are called to live truthfully before Him because His name is holy and because they belong to Him.

That is what makes hypocrisy so serious in Scripture. The problem is deeper than looking bad. Hypocrisy creates a contradiction between confession and conduct. A person can publicly identify with God while deliberately living in a way that denies what that identification means. Yet there is an important difference between hypocrisy and weakness. A believer can fail, repent, receive mercy, and continue walking with God. The gospel does not demand a perfect image; it calls us to an honest life that keeps returning to Christ.

A Christian name, then, is not a decorative label. It identifies a relationship. When we call ourselves Christians, we are saying that our lives belong to Jesus Christ. People may never hear all our explanations about faith, but they will encounter the effects of what we believe through the way we speak, work, treat people, handle pressure, and respond when nobody is rewarding us.

The weight of bearing His name, then, is not that we have been appointed to make God look impressive. It is that God has called us to live truthfully as His people. His name is holy. We belong to Him. Those two truths belong together.

So where do we look to understand what a life associated with God should actually look like? We could build a long list of rules and try to measure ourselves against it. Scripture gives us something far better. It gives us a person. Before we examine our lives any further, we need to look at Jesus.

Belonging to God creates a new centre for the way we understand ourselves. We still have families, careers, responsibilities, ambitions, and ordinary identities, but none of them has the final claim on us. We have been claimed by God. That is why Scripture can speak of us as His people, called by His name and created for His glory. We do not invent an identity and then ask God to bless it. He gives us an identity, and our lives learn to grow into it.

There is a difference between carrying a name and merely knowing a name. Someone can know the name of a family without feeling any responsibility toward it. But when belonging becomes real, the name begins to affect choices. We start to ask what honours the relationship, what contradicts it, and what kind of life fits the One to whom we belong. That connection is why Scripture moves so naturally from God's claim upon His people to the way those people are called to live.

## CHAPTER TWO

# The Weight of the Name

The Bible does not treat God's name as a distant theological idea. It brings the subject close to human behaviour. Again and again, Scripture shows that God's name can be honoured among people or treated with contempt because of what those who claim Him do. This does not mean God is fragile or dependent on our reputation. It means He has chosen to make Himself known through a people who belong to Him. What happens when the people who carry His name fail to live in a way that reflects it?

Paul makes the issue painfully clear in Romans 2. He addresses people who possessed the law, knew God's will, and identified themselves with the covenant. Yet their lives contradicted what they taught. Paul concludes that because of their disobedience, “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles” (Romans 2:24). The problem was not God's truth. The problem was the contradiction between the name they claimed and the life they lived.

That is a sobering thought. Our failures do not make God less holy, and our obedience does not make Him more glorious. Yet our lives can shape what other people think about the God we claim to know. The issue, then, is not perfection but integrity. What we confess and how we live should be moving in the same direction.

Something similar appears in the story of David after his sin with Bathsheba. David confessed his sin, and God forgave him, but Nathan told him that his actions had given the enemies of the LORD an opportunity to blaspheme (2 Samuel 12:13–14). Forgiveness did not erase the seriousness of what had happened. David's life had become associated with the name of the God he served.

These passages should not be used to place believers under a constant fear of failing publicly. Scripture does not present God's people as performers who must maintain an image of perfection. Instead, it calls us to integrity. The God whose name we bear deserves a life that is honest about belonging to Him.

This distinction matters because there is a difference between weakness and hypocrisy. A believer can stumble, repent, receive mercy, and continue walking with God. The gospel makes room for repentance because God knows our weakness. Hypocrisy is different. It is the deliberate separation of our public identification from the reality of our lives.

Jesus therefore tells His disciples, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Notice the destination. The light is seen, but the glory goes somewhere else. The believer is not the final point of attention. A faithful life should help people look beyond us to the Father.

This gives us a better understanding of what it means to honour God's name. It is not about becoming known as a perfect Christian. It is about living in such a way that our

claim to belong to God is not contradicted by the life we live.

There will be moments when we fail. There will be times when our conduct falls short of what we know to be true. When that happens, the answer is not to hide behind a religious image. The answer is repentance, honesty, and a return to the God whose mercy has always been greater than our failures.

The name we carry therefore calls us to integrity, but it also calls us to humility. We cannot honour God's name by pretending that we do not need His grace. We honour Him by walking honestly with Him.

This brings us to an important question: if God's name is to be honoured through His people, what does that life actually look like? We do not have to guess. Scripture gives us the clearest answer in Jesus Christ. He does not settle for teaching us principles about representing God; He shows us the Father.

Jesus did not only speak about the Father. He made the Father known. In Him, we see what it looks like when a human life is completely aligned with the One it reveals. Before we look at ourselves again, we need to look at Him.

Malachi shows how this can happen in worship itself. The priests were bringing offerings that communicated contempt for the holiness of God, even while they continued to perform religious duties. The problem was deeper than poor ritual practice. They had become careless with the honour due to God's name.

Jesus later confronted a similar separation between outward religion and inward reality. He warned against

doing righteous acts simply to be seen by people. The concern is not visibility itself; it is the heart's direction. If our Christianity becomes a way of establishing our own reputation, we have already begun to shift attention away from the name we claim to carry.

There is therefore a kind of integrity that Scripture seeks from God's people. Our lives should tell the truth about our belonging. Where we fail, we return to God in repentance. Where we are tempted to perform, we return to sincerity. Where our pride seeks attention, we remember whose name is greater than ours.

The clearest answer to what it means for the Father to be made known through a human life is found in Jesus Christ. John says that “no one has seen God at any time,” and then points us to the Son who has made Him known (John 1:18). Jesus, therefore, is not just another teacher explaining what God is like. He is the One through whom the Father is revealed.

This reshapes how we think about bearing God's name. If we only think in terms of outward behaviour, we may turn the subject into an attempt to become impressive representatives of Christianity. But Jesus shows us something deeper. His life was completely ordered toward the Father. He did not live to establish an independent identity apart from Him. He lived in perfect relationship with the One who sent Him.

In John 5:19, Jesus says that the Son can do nothing of Himself, but only what He sees the Father doing. Later He says, “I can of Myself do nothing” (John 5:30). These words

do not describe weakness or uncertainty. They reveal the complete orientation of the Son's life toward the Father.

Then Philip asks Jesus to show them the Father. Jesus answers, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). The statement is profound. Jesus does not say that He is the Father; He says that seeing Him reveals the Father. His words, His works, His compassion, His holiness, His truth, and His relationship with people all make the Father known. This is why Jesus, and not a set of principles, must remain at the centre of the subject. We are not left to invent what a life associated with God should look like. God has revealed Himself in Christ.

Look at Jesus with this question in mind. He could speak truth without cruelty. He could confront sin without becoming proud. He welcomed people who were pushed aside without compromising holiness. He served without needing applause. He forgave. He obeyed. He loved. But beneath all these outward actions was a deeper reality: His life was turned toward the Father. He did not use His life to build an independent centre around Himself. He lived so that the One who sent Him would be known.

In John 17, Jesus speaks to the Father about the work He has completed. He says, "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me" (John 17:6). Later He says, "I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it" (John 17:26). At the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus could describe His work in terms of making the Father's name known.

That language deserves careful attention. Jesus came to manifest the Father's name. He made the Father known. The name was not only spoken; the Father was revealed through the life and ministry of the Son.

This gives us the right foundation for thinking about ourselves. We do not begin with, "How can I make people think well of God because of me?" We begin with Christ. We look at the One who perfectly revealed the Father, receive life from Him, and learn to live in a way that corresponds with the One we confess.

The Christian life is therefore not an attempt to create a representation of God from our own strength. We come to Christ, receive life from Him, learn His ways, and allow our lives to correspond with the One we confess.

That is important because the responsibility of bearing God's name could easily become a burden if we separate it from God's grace. But the gospel does not call us to carry God's name while depending entirely on ourselves. The One whose name we bear is also the One who gives us life.

Jesus is therefore more than the example at the end of the argument. He is the centre of it. He reveals the Father, brings us to the Father, and shows us what it looks like for a life to be completely ordered toward God. Now the question comes back to us: if we belong to Christ, what does it mean that His name is associated with us?

John 12:45 gives the same pattern in another form: Jesus says that whoever sees Him sees the One who sent Him. His life directs the observer beyond Himself. He is not

competing with the Father for attention; He is making the Father known.

This also explains why Jesus could speak with such authority and such humility at the same time. He spoke the Father's words, did the Father's works, and lived in the Father's will, yet He did not use His authority to establish an independent centre around Himself. His life was transparent to the Father.

When we come to Christ, therefore, we are not only receiving a better moral example. We are coming to the One who reveals God. He teaches us what the Father is like and brings us into relationship with Him. The life that bears God's name begins with seeing Christ clearly.

The weight of God's name is not a burden placed upon us so that we can prove ourselves worthy. It is the consequence of belonging to the One whose name is holy. We are not asked to create His holiness; we are called to live in a way that agrees with what we confess about Him. When our lives fail to match our confession, the answer is not to protect an image through pretence. It is repentance, truth, and a return to Christ. Integrity is not perfection. It is refusing to make peace with a divided life.

The centre of this conversation, then, has to remain Jesus Himself. If bearing God's name were only a matter of learning rules, the Christian life would become another attempt at moral improvement. But in Jesus we see the Father made known. We see obedience under pressure, love among broken people, holiness without pride, and a life that seeks the Father's glory rather than its own. He

does not stop at telling us what this life should be; He reveals the One to whom the life belongs.

## CHAPTER THREE

# Living Under His Name

The New Testament gives the name Christian to people whose lives and confession were connected to Christ. Acts 11:26 tells us that the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. It is easy to read that as a simple historical detail, but there is something weighty in it. People began to recognize a connection between these believers and Jesus. Their association with Him was unmistakable.

Acts 15 gives us the larger picture. When the apostles discussed God's work among the nations, James described it as God visiting the nations “to take out of them a people for His name” (Acts 15:14). The language that once described Israel now appears in the unfolding purpose of God among the nations. God is gathering a people for Himself.

James later refers to believers as those who bear the “noble name” by which they are called (James 2:7). Peter also speaks of those who suffer “as a Christian,” urging them not to be ashamed but to glorify God in that name (1 Peter 4:16).

The point is not that the word Christian itself has magical power. The early believers understood their identification with Christ as meaningful. They belonged to Him. They were known by association with Him. Their lives were being lived under that name.

That should cause us to pause whenever we call ourselves Christians. We are not only naming a religious

preference. We are identifying ourselves with a person. We are saying that our lives belong to Jesus Christ. The question is whether our daily lives know what our lips are saying.

Christian identity cannot be separated from Christian living. We do not carry the name only when we are in church, reading the Bible, or speaking to other believers. The name accompanies us into every place where we go. It reaches the parts of life where nobody may think of asking what our faith is.

There is also a great comfort in this truth. The name we carry reminds us that our identity does not have to be constructed from our achievements. We do not need to make ourselves significant before God. We belong to Him because He has called us to Himself in Christ.

The Christian life begins with a received identity. We are His before we begin to live in a way that reflects that belonging. Our conduct does not purchase our place with God; it grows out of the relationship He has already given us in Christ. That order matters. We do not live faithfully so that God will accept us. We learn to live faithfully because, in Christ, we have been received.

Paul captures this connection in Colossians 3:17: "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." The statement is almost too broad for us to ignore. Whatever you do. Not only what happens in church. Not only what feels spiritual. Whatever you do.

This is where bearing His name stops being an idea and starts becoming a mirror. The name is carried through

conversations, decisions, relationships, work, money, responsibilities, conflict, leadership, and private choices. The places we are most tempted to separate from our faith may be the very places where our identity is most clearly revealed.

We may not always think about it in these terms, but our lives are constantly telling a story about what we believe. The question is whether that story is consistent with the One whose name we carry.

That does not mean every believer must become an impressive public representative. Many of the most important ways we carry His name will never be seen by crowds. A quiet act of honesty, patience in a difficult relationship, faithfulness when nobody is rewarding us, or mercy toward someone who cannot repay us can say something powerful about the One we belong to. The name we carry is both comfort and calling. It reminds us that our belonging is real, and that identity travels with us.

Our identity therefore does not depend on how well the culture receives the name of Christ. We may be misunderstood, ignored, or opposed. What matters is that we remain faithful to the One whose name we carry. The goal is not public approval. It is faithful belonging, even when nobody applauds it.

Most of life is ordinary. We wake up, go to work, care for our families, speak with people, make decisions, solve problems, handle money, respond to pressure, and deal with situations that rarely feel spiritual. Yet these ordinary

places may be where our Christianity shows most plainly, because there is usually less opportunity to perform.

Paul says, “Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Colossians 3:17). The breadth of that statement is easy to miss. Whatever you do. Word and deed. The name of Jesus reaches into the whole of life.

This means that bearing His name is tested where there may be no church service, no microphone, and no one applauding us. It is tested at home when we are tired. At work when we are under pressure. In business when dishonesty would seem profitable. In conflict when anger feels justified. In leadership when we have power over someone who cannot repay us. The absence of an audience does not mean the absence of significance.

A person's Christianity comes through most clearly in these ordinary places because our lives cannot remain disconnected from what we say we believe. If we say that we belong to Christ, then the way we speak to people matters. The way we keep our word matters. The way we handle another person's weakness matters. The way we respond when we are wronged matters. These are not side issues of Christian life. They are where Christian life happens.

This does not mean that every decision has a complicated spiritual formula. Sometimes obedience is very simple. Tell the truth. Keep your promise. Pay what you owe. Refuse dishonest gain. Apologize when you are wrong. Forgive when you have been hurt. Treat people with dignity. Serve without demanding recognition. These

are not ways of purchasing God's approval. They are ways of living consistently with the One to whom we belong.

Paul gives another broad principle in 1 Corinthians 10:31: "Whatever you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." The Christian life is not divided into activities that matter to God and activities that do not. Even ordinary things can be done with an awareness that our lives belong to Him.

This becomes especially important in relationships. A person may speak beautifully about God in public and yet become harsh, controlling, dishonest, or selfish at home. The people closest to us often see what public settings cannot reveal. They see how we behave when our image is no longer protecting us. That is why the home can become one of the clearest places to ask whether the name we carry is shaping us.

Our families therefore become one of the places where the name we carry is tested. So does our workplace. So does our business. So does our response to people who disagree with us.

The same principle applies to leadership. Authority can reveal what is really happening inside a person. When we have power, do we use people, or do we serve them? When we can take advantage of someone without consequence, what do we do? When nobody can challenge us, do we still choose what is right? The name we carry follows us into those moments too.

This is not a call to become anxious about every action, as though God is waiting to withdraw His love whenever

we fail. The gospel gives us room to repent and grow. But grace does not make our conduct meaningless. Grace teaches us to live differently because we belong to Christ.

Consider how much of life is spent in conversations that will never be remembered. A short exchange with a colleague. A decision in a business meeting. The way a parent answers a tired child. The tone used toward a spouse. The choice made when a mistake can easily be hidden. These moments may look small, but they are not outside the life of discipleship. They are the life of discipleship.

Paul's words in Colossians 3:17 prevent us from placing these moments outside discipleship. If everything is to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, then ordinary life is not outside the reach of our Christian identity. The name is carried into the details.

This is also where consistency becomes more important than appearance. A public Christian life can be carefully managed, but ordinary life eventually reveals what we have actually allowed Christ to shape in us. We should not fear these quiet tests. They show us where we still need grace, where our character is being formed, and where the reality of belonging is taking shape.

Once we understand that our identity is received from Christ, ordinary life begins to look different. The question is no longer whether a particular moment feels spiritual enough to matter. The question is whether this moment belongs to the Lord. The kitchen, office, classroom, workshop, business meeting, family conversation, phone screen, and private decision all become places where our

identity is expressed. There is no separate Christian life reserved for church and another life reserved for everything else.

Much of Christian maturity is formed through small choices repeated over time. We tell the truth when lying would be easier. We keep our word when nobody would know if we broke it. We speak with patience when irritation feels justified. We refuse to use another person for our advantage. We repent when we have been wrong. These choices may never receive public attention, but they reveal whether the name we carry is becoming part of the way we actually live.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# **Living So His Name Is Known**

God's purpose for His people has never been limited to keeping His name private. Scripture repeatedly connects belonging to God with making Him known. Peter says that believers are a chosen people who have been called to proclaim the praises of the One who called them out of darkness (1 Peter 2:9). That means the question is not only, “How should I live because I belong to Him?” It is also, “What might someone discover about Him through the way I live?”

This gives witness a deeper meaning. Bearing God's name is not only about avoiding dishonour. It is about letting people who may not yet know Him see something of God for themselves. Our lives can become a window through which another person sees something of His character and goodness. The window is not the destination. It is valuable because of what it allows people to see.

Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Again, the destination is the Father. The believer's life is not supposed to become a monument to the believer. It is meant to direct attention to God.

This reframes how we think about good works. We do not do good things so that people will conclude that we are better Christians than everyone else. We do them

because the life we have received from Christ should be evident. Our actions can become windows through which another person sees something of God's goodness.

Often this witness is quiet. People observe how a Christian handles disappointment, responds under pressure, treats others, keeps faith when circumstances become difficult, and remains faithful when compromise would be easier. They may never tell us that they are watching. They may not even know exactly what they are looking for. Yet a life lived consistently can raise questions that words alone might not raise.

None of these things replaces the proclamation of the gospel. Our lives do not save people. Christ saves people. Yet the way we live can either support the message we proclaim or contradict it.

Peter makes a similar connection when he tells believers to keep their conduct honourable among the Gentiles so that those who speak against them may observe their good works and glorify God (1 Peter 2:12). The Christian life therefore has an outward dimension. We belong to God, but our belonging is not intended to remain invisible.

There is humility in this. We are not called to make ourselves the centre of attention. Paul describes believers as ambassadors for Christ in 2 Corinthians 5:20. An ambassador does not represent himself. He carries the interests and message of the one who sent him. The assignment is not to make the ambassador famous; it is to make the sender known.

That helps us understand the difference between Christian witness and personal branding. The world may encourage us to build our own name, increase our visibility, and make ourselves known. The gospel gives us a different centre. We can use platforms, influence, creativity, leadership, and communication, but the question remains: when people notice us, where are we directing their attention?

This is especially important in a culture where even ministry can become a way of building a personal name. A person can begin by wanting to serve God and gradually become more concerned about being known. Influence can become more important than faithfulness, reach more important than truth, and applause more important than obedience. The danger is subtle because the outward activity may still look like ministry.

Bearing His name calls us back to a simpler centre. We belong to Him. We are here because He called us. Whatever influence we have is something we received, not something we created independently of Him.

This does not mean Christians should avoid excellence, leadership, or influence. It means these things must remain under the name we carry. We can build, create, lead, teach, work, and serve without making ourselves the final object of attention. The question is not whether people know us. The question is whether our lives help them know Him.

Peter's language of proclamation is important because witness begins with what God has done. We are people

who have been called out of darkness. We do not make God known by presenting ourselves as the source of light. We make Him known by telling the truth about the mercy we have received and by living consistently with that mercy.

A faithful witness is both spoken and embodied. We tell people about Christ, while our conduct gives credibility to what we say. Neither replaces the other. The gospel must be proclaimed, and the life carrying that message should not contradict it. We are not the message, but the way we carry the message matters.

There is freedom in remembering that the purpose is God's glory. We do not need to turn every interaction into a performance. Sometimes faithfulness is a conversation. Sometimes it is refusing to compromise. Sometimes it is serving quietly. Sometimes it is admitting that we were wrong. The point is not to manufacture an impressive Christian image but to live truthfully before the One whose name we carry.

Witness begins with remembering what God has done for us. We are not sent into the world as people who have achieved spiritual greatness; we are people who have received mercy. That changes the tone of our witness. We can speak about Christ without pretending to have everything together, because our testimony is ultimately about what He has done and what He is still doing in us.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# His Name, Not Ours

There is an old human desire that appears very early in Scripture: the desire to make a name for ourselves. At Babel, the people said, “Let us make a name for ourselves” (Genesis 11:4). They wanted to establish their own significance. The impulse is still with us. We may not build a tower, but we can spend our lives building a reputation, seeking recognition, protecting our image, or quietly asking, “Will people remember me?”

The desire to be known is not automatically sinful. God gives people gifts, responsibilities, influence, and opportunities to do meaningful work. The deeper question is what becomes the centre of our lives. Are we using what God has given us for His purposes, or has our calling quietly become a way of making our own name important?

Psalms 115 gives a very different posture: “Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but to Your name give glory.” This is not a rejection of human dignity. It is a restoration of proper order. God is God, and we are His people. His glory is greater than our need to be noticed. When His name becomes the centre, we are freed from making our own name carry a weight it was never designed to carry.

John the Baptist expressed the same posture in another way: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). John understood that his calling was not to become the destination of people's attention. His role was to point to

Christ. His greatness was not diminished by Christ becoming greater. It was fulfilled.

This is where the subject of bearing His name finally brings us. We began with belonging. We discovered that God's name creates responsibility. We looked to Jesus, who perfectly made the Father known. We brought the name into ordinary life and then into witness. Now we reach the question underneath all of it: whose name are we really living to make great?

Our achievements will eventually belong to the past. Positions change. Influence rises and falls. People who are widely known in one generation can become unknown in another. Even things we worked hard to build may eventually pass into other hands. None of this makes our work meaningless. It simply reminds us that a life built entirely around being remembered cannot provide lasting security.

This gives freedom to the believer. We do not have to build a life around preserving our own importance. We can serve without being celebrated. We can obey without being noticed. We can love people who cannot repay us. We can do what is right even when someone else receives the credit. The name of Christ gives us a centre more stable than public recognition.

A life that bears His name can therefore become wonderfully simple. We belong to Him. We want to know Him. We want to honour Him. We want our lives to point toward Him. We want the people around us to encounter

something true about the One we confess. The simplicity is not shallow. It is the result of having settled the question of who the centre is.

This does not mean we will always represent Him perfectly. We will still need grace. We will still repent. We will still grow. There will be moments when our conduct falls short and moments when our own desires compete for the centre. But the direction of our lives matters.

Christian identity therefore becomes a way of seeing the whole of life. Our homes, work, words, relationships, decisions, and private lives matter—not because they earn us a place with God, but because the name we carry is associated with how we live. And the more clearly we understand that the name is His, the less we need to make our own name the centre.

So perhaps the most important question is not, “What will people remember about me?” It is, “What will my life have made known about Him?” Our own names may be forgotten. Our accomplishments may disappear from memory. But the privilege of belonging to God is not wasted when His name is honoured through a life that points beyond itself.

## **A FINAL WORD**

At the end of this short journey, perhaps the simplest question to carry with you is this: What does my life say about the One whose name I bear? The answer will not always be comfortable. There may be places where our words and conduct still need to come into agreement. There may be habits that need repentance, relationships that need repair, attitudes that need surrender, or ambitions that need to be brought back under God's rule. But the purpose of asking the question is not condemnation. It is honest discipleship.

We belong to God before we represent Him. That is the grace beneath the calling. We do not live faithfully to purchase His love or prove that we deserve our place with Him. We live from the belonging He has already given us, allowing that belonging to shape the way we speak, work, love, forgive, lead, serve, and respond when life becomes difficult.

There will also be moments when our own names are overlooked. We may serve without recognition, do what is right without being thanked, or watch someone else receive the credit. In those moments, we can remember that our lives do not become meaningful because people notice us. We belong to Someone whose name does not depend on public attention. That frees us to keep serving when applause is absent.

So remember whose you are. Remember the name you carry. Let your life point beyond itself to Jesus Christ, until the people who encounter you can see something true about the One you belong to. May the name you carry

become a constant reminder of belonging, a call to faithfulness, and a reason to point beyond yourself to the God who called you.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Idowu O. Babalola is a bondservant and an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ with a deep passion for Bible teaching, revealing the realities of the Kingdom of God, and raising believers who faithfully reflect the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. As a Christian author, his ministry is devoted to teaching the Scriptures with clarity, depth, and practical application, helping people move beyond religious profession into genuine spiritual transformation.

For over a decade, Apostle Babalola has been actively engaged in cross-cultural missions, proclaiming the gospel in diverse communities and ministering extensively across Nigeria, particularly in the Northern and Eastern regions. He has served faithfully alongside the United Missionary Church of Africa (UMCA), headquartered in Ilorin, Kwara State, as well as with other mission organizations, preaching Christ, strengthening believers, planting biblical foundations, and advancing the work of God's Kingdom.

His ministry is marked by a steadfast commitment to sound biblical doctrine, discipleship, and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Through the preaching and teaching of God's Word, the Lord has graciously drawn many into His Kingdom, confirming His truth through transformed lives, divine healing, deliverance, and the manifestation of His power.

His writing explores biblical truth, spiritual maturity, the Kingdom of God, and the believer's life in Christ, with a particular emphasis on knowing Christ, understanding Scripture, and being transformed into His likeness. His books are written to help readers see God more clearly,

understand His Word more deeply, and respond faithfully to what He reveals.

Apostle Babalola is joyfully married to Mrs. Babalola Adebisola Faith, and they are blessed with two children, Babalola Tijesu Joshua and Babalola Eden Titoluwa.

His earnest desire is to know Christ more deeply, make Him known among the nations, and see believers established in the truth of God's Word, growing into spiritual maturity, faithfully following Jesus, and living for the glory of God alone.

## **OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR**

If this book has opened a question in your heart, the books below offer places to continue the journey. They are not repetitions of this book. Each follows a different biblical question, but together they reflect a larger burden: to help us know Christ, understand Scripture, and live more deeply under the truth of God's Word.

### **Beyond Songs – The Worshipper God Seeks**

What does worship look like when music is no longer the centre? This book follows worship into the life of the worshipper and asks what kind of person God is actually seeking.

### **The Other Wisdom**

What happens when the wisdom we trust most is not the wisdom God gives? This book examines the difference between human wisdom and the wisdom that comes from above.

### **The Gates: A Journey Into Spiritual Maturity**

How does a believer move from new birth toward spiritual maturity? This book explores the stages and dimensions of that journey and the formation God desires in His people.

### **When Prayer Becomes Communion**

What if prayer is more than asking God for answers? This book explores prayer as living fellowship with God and the transformation that happens when prayer becomes communion.

## **The Tabernacle and the Light by Which We See**

What does the tabernacle teach us about the way we see God and understand His presence? This book follows its biblical patterns and the light they bring to the life of faith.

## **Faith, Hope, and Love — The Things That Remain**

What remains when many of the things we call important have passed away? This book explores faith, hope, and love as the enduring realities that draw the believer toward what truly lasts.

## **Unveiling the Sons of God**

What does it mean to grow from spiritual infancy toward the fullness of Christ? This book examines the formation of the sons of God and the call to mature into what God intends His people to become.

## **The Ultimate Father**

What changes when we truly understand God as Father? This book explores God's fatherhood and the restoration of a healthy, biblical understanding of our relationship with Him.

## **The Mandate of Transformation**

What does God actually mean when He calls us to be transformed? This book follows the biblical movement from salvation into transformation and the believer's journey into the likeness of Christ.

## **The Beast and the Lamb**

What happens when two kingdoms compete for the allegiance and worship of humanity? This book follows the

conflict between the Beast and the Lamb and shows why the victory of Christ changes the way we understand worship, allegiance, and the world around us.

### **Foundations of Christ**

What truths must be established before a believer can grow strong and mature? This book explores the foundational truths of Christ that give the Christian life a firm foundation.

### **The Gospel of the Kingdom**

What does it mean for the Kingdom of God to become more than a message we believe? This book explores the Gospel of the Kingdom and what it means to receive Christ and learn to live under His rule.

### **The Soul Under God**

What happens when the inner life is brought under the rule of God? This book explores the soul—its formation, desires, thoughts, and direction—and what it means for the soul to come under God's government.

### **The New Testament Secret**

What is the difference between knowing about the New Covenant and actually living from it? This book uncovers the secret of receiving the life God has given us in Christ, moving from self-effort into a life sustained by His grace.

### **Law, Sin, and Righteousness**

What is the real difference between living a good life and possessing the righteousness God requires? This book traces the relationship between law, sin, and

righteousness, and calls the reader back to a righteousness that is received by faith, not earned by performance.

### **What Happened to Us? (The Search: Why Nothing Ever Seems Enough)**

Why does nothing in this world ever seem to satisfy the ache within us? This book explores the human search for meaning and traces it back to its answer in the God who never stopped searching for us.

### **A Life Worth Living**

What does it mean to live a life that actually matters in light of eternity? This book explores what gives a life true weight and worth, and calls the reader to build on what will last rather than what will fade.

### **The Disciple Jesus Makes**

What kind of follower is Jesus actually forming when He calls someone to Himself? This book explores the shape of true discipleship and what it means to be made into the kind of disciple Jesus intended all along.

## CONNECT WITH THE AUTHOR

Thank you for reading Bearing His Name. It is my sincere prayer that this short book has helped you see the weight and beauty of belonging to God, understand what it means to carry the name of Christ, and consider afresh what your life communicates about the One you confess.

This book is part of a larger burden God has entrusted to me: to teach His Word clearly, help people know Christ, understand Scripture, and grow in their faith and calling. I would be glad to hear how this book has encouraged you, challenged you, or helped you see something in Scripture more clearly.

You are also invited to connect with me for future books, biblical teachings, ministry resources, speaking engagements, and other updates from the ministry.

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May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always.