

Calling On The Name Of The Lord

Acts 2:16-21

Introduction

- ▶ The expression, “Call on the name of the Lord” is often misunderstood and misused.
- ▶ It is found a handful of times in the New Testament [“call on” (4), “calling on” (1), “called on” (1)] and is nominally based on Joel 2:32.
- ▶ Let’s examine the Scriptures and find the true meaning of the phrase.

“Calling on the name of the Lord” implies:

Authority

- ▶ The apostles understood this - cf. Acts 4:7-12, 17-18
- ▶ Acts 25:11 - Paul appealed to Caesar
- ▶ “In the name of the Lord” implies that we are appealing to His authority for what we are doing - cf. Colossians 3:17

“Calling on the name of the Lord” implies:

A recognition of God

- ▶ One willing to “call on the name of the Lord” is acknowledging that God exists.
- ▶ While the Bible is written with the assumption that there is a God, it appeals to evidence for Him - Romans 1:20; Psalms 19:1
- ▶ Genesis 4:26 - first mention of the phrase. Abraham - Genesis 12:8; 13:4, 21:33; Isaac - Genesis 26:25

“Calling on the name of the Lord” implies:

A recognition of Jesus

- ▶ This is understood by most people when using this phrase
- ▶ It was in His name that Peter and others preached. It was His name they were ordered to stop proclaiming - Acts 5:28, 40
- ▶ Romans 10:13; Acts 2:21; 22:16 are appealing to Jesus
- ▶ Acts 10:43 - to Cornelius, “To him bear all the prophets witness, that *through his name* every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.”

“Calling on the name of the Lord” implies:

We realize we have a need

- ▶ Without Jesus, we are hopelessly lost - Romans 6:23
- ▶ We need a Savior, and Jesus is the answer - John 6:66-69; 14:6; Acts 4:12
- ▶ The theme of the Bible is - man is lost because of sin and redemption is found in Jesus.

What does “Calling on the name of the Lord” mean?

It is not a prayer

- ▶ Many see the expression as praying to the Lord for salvation (“faith only,” “pray through,” etc.).
- ▶ The “sinner’s prayer” is not found in the Bible, but often associated with the texts of Psalms 51:1-19; Psalms 116:4; Luke 18:13; Acts 2:21; and/or Romans 10:13.
- ▶ Examining each of these contexts shows prayer is not a step in the process to one’s initial salvation.

What does “Calling on the name of the Lord” mean?

It is more than just acknowledging Jesus as Lord

- ▶ It is a summary term that means we will submit to whatever He demands to be saved (cf. I Peter 3:21), or to restore one’s favor with Him (cf. David or the tax collector) or an ongoing acknowledgment of Him being Lord of our life (Abraham).

What does “Calling on the name of the Lord” mean?

It is more than just acknowledging Jesus as Lord

- ▶ Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 6:46
- ▶ Romans 10:9-10 - involves belief in the resurrection and confession “unto salvation”

What does “Calling on the name of the Lord” mean?

It follows hearing the word

- ▶ Before one can call on the name of the Lord, he/she must hear the word preached - Acts 2:14; Mark 16:15; etc. - and believe, Romans 10:13-15
- ▶ The entire context addresses this - Romans 10:8-17 - Involves belief and confession - Romans 10:9-10 - About salvation available to everyone - Verses 11-12 - Verse 13 - quotes Joel 2:28-32. This is Paul’s point and Peter’s point in Acts 2
- ▶ The expression is not a formula, but a description of the surrender required for salvation

What does “Calling on the name of the Lord” mean?

It involves obeying the gospel

- ▶ Romans 10:16
- ▶ Paul notes that some had not called on Him. They had not “obeyed the gospel.” You cannot separate the two phrases.
- ▶ Acts 2:36-41 - Peter concluded his sermon, “Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ ...”
- ▶ Acts 22:16
- ▶ This accords with other passages - Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21, etc.

What does “Calling on the name of the Lord” mean?

It involves obeying the gospel

- ▶ Note: Some have asked why Paul did not include baptism in Romans 10:8-17.
- ▶ Because it was not part of the point he was making - the expression “whoever calls on the name of the Lord” was sufficient to identify true believers versus those who rejected Jesus.
- ▶ Plus ... he has already addressed baptism in Romans 6:3-7

What does “Calling on the name of the Lord” mean?

It involves faithful living

- ▶ When one obeys the gospel that is just the beginning.
- ▶ We must continue to call on His name throughout the rest of our lives. Romans 12:1-2; Hebrews 3:12-14
- ▶ II Timothy 2:22 - pursue righteousness with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Everyone WILL
call on His name -
Philippians 2:5-11

The only question
is, WHEN?

“What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

Acts 16:30

▶ Hear the Word of God

- ▶ James 1:21 - “Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”

▶ Believe that Jesus is the Savior of the world

- ▶ Romans 10:11 - “For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame.”

“What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

Acts 16:30

▶ Repent of your sins

- ▶ Acts 3:19 - “Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out ...”

▶ Confess that Jesus is the Son of God

- ▶ Romans 10:10 - “... for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

“What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

Acts 16:30

▶ Be immersed in water (baptized)

- ▶ Acts 2:38 - “And Peter (said) unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

▶ Remain faithful

- ▶ I Corinthians 15:1-2 - “... 2 by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain.”