

# Call Upon the Name of the Lord

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Our loving and merciful God wants “all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4). Since God desires that all men be saved, He provides for us His plan to save man (Rom. 1:16-17). How comforting it is to know that God loves us and sent His only begotten Son into the world that through Him we might be saved (John 3:16-17). It is also extremely comforting to know that we can know what God requires of us regarding salvation (John 8:31-32).

The Bible teaches that, “whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13). What does it mean to “call upon the name of the Lord”? Many have defined calling on the name of the Lord as a prayer for salvation and for Jesus to come and abide in one’s heart. However, this definition contradicts the words of Jesus who said, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Mat. 7:21). Any interpretation of a verse in the Bible that contradicts another verse is, of necessity, deemed to be false. The inspired James writes, “be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves...Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” (Jam. 1:22; 2:17). Additionally, there is no example anywhere in the New Testament of an individual praying for salvation. Therefore, calling upon the name of the Lord does not refer to a prayer or to any spoken act.

It is important to understand how to “call upon the name of the Lord” since it is necessary for salvation. To understand the meaning, we must study the statement in the context of the

book and chapter in which it is found as well as the whole of the New Testament. In the immediate context, we find that there are prerequisites to calling upon the name of the Lord—Romans 10:14-15 teaches that one must hear and believe. Also, in the immediate context, verse 16 in particular, we find a phrase that is used in substitute for “calling upon the name of the Lord.” The inspired writer uses “obeyed the gospel” interchangeably with “call upon the name of the Lord.” To be saved, one must obey the Gospel of Christ—i.e., “call upon the name of the Lord.”

The apostle Paul further defines what it means to call upon the name of the Lord when he recalls the words spoken to him by Ananias, “arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). Here, calling on the name of the Lord is defined as arising and being baptized to have one’s sins washed away. This is in harmony with Paul’s letter to the Romans seeing that Paul told them:

*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4).*

It is also in harmony with the first Gospel sermon recorded in Acts 2. Peter and the other apostles preached, “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21). Later, when the audience was convinced of their sins and asked what they must do to be forgiven and thus saved, “Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). The New Testament teaches that, following faith (Heb. 11:6), repentance (Luke 13:3), and confessing that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 8:37), baptism is the culminating act of God’s plan to save man (Mat. 28:19-20).

The act of calling upon the name of the Lord is inseparable from obedience to the Gospel of Christ and baptism. The Gospel of Christ "is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16) and obeying the Gospel is used interchangeably with calling upon the name of the Lord (Rom. 10:13, 16). Being baptized is an act of obedience commanded by the Gospel of Christ and is eternally connected to calling upon the name of the Lord by God, Himself, in such verses as Acts 2:21, 38 and 22:16. The Gospel is God's power unto salvation and baptism is the act at which the Bible teaches one is saved from past sins. According to the apostle Peter, "baptism doth also now save us" (1 Pet. 3:21) and Jesus proclaims, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16:16).

Calling upon the name of the Lord, therefore, is not something that is spoken; it is an act of humility and submission to the Word of God in simple obedience. Those who obey God's plan of salvation, which culminates with water baptism, and remain faithful to God's Word until they depart this life (Rev. 2:10) are they who are calling upon the name of the Lord and will be saved.

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# **Thou Shalt Worship the Lord Thy God Matthew 4:10**

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# What Is Worship?

Poetically, worship has been defined as “Man climbing the altar stairs to God.” The dictionary defines worship as: “Worthiness, repute, respect, reverence paid to a divine being.” Others have defined worship as: “Profound respect mingled with fear and affection; veneration. A token of respect or veneration; an obeisance.”

In the New Testament the most common word translated worship is *proskuneo* which has the basic meaning of “to kiss toward.” It appears sixty times and is defined as follows: “to do obeisance to, to prostrate oneself, do reverence to.”

## Acceptable Worship Involves a Conscious Effort

Worship is not an act that one engages in accidentally, neither is it a spectator activity, rather it is an activity in which the worshiper puts forth a conscious effort to accomplish God’s will. Moses writes the account of Cain and Able worshiping God (Gen. 4:3-4). He wrote that God had respect for Abel’s offering but no respect for Cain’s. The Hebrews writer tells us: “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain” (Heb. 11:4). Abel’s sacrifice was by faith and since faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17), Abel made a conscious effort and followed God’s instructions.

When Abraham was obeying God’s instructions concerning Isaac (Gen. 22:2; cf. Gen. 22:11-12; Heb. 11:17-18), he told his young men: “Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you” (Gen. 22:5). Abraham made a conscious effort to go to the place designated by God for the purpose of worshiping. God’s children also assemble at designated places for the purpose of worshiping

Him.

Jesus, in conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, instructed her that under the Jewish law Jerusalem was the proper place to worship (John 4:20-22). The Ethiopian eunuch traveled from his homeland to Jerusalem for the purpose of worshipping (Acts 8:28).

## Acceptable Worship Involves Several Characteristics

**Obedience**—In the days of Malachi the prophet the priests were accused of despising the name of Jehovah because they were not following God's instructions concerning sacrifices. Instead of offering Jehovah sacrifices which met His specifications, they were offering polluted bread, blind, lame, and sick animals (Mal. 1:6-8). Because of this disobedience their sacrifices were rejected. In the New Testament, Jesus declared that worship was to be in spirit (from the heart) and truth (John 4:24). To worship in truth is to worship according to God's instructions (John 17:17).

**Attitude**—Jesus spoke a parable to certain men who trusted in themselves (not God) that they were righteous and set all others at naught (Luke 18:9). A Pharisee and a Publican (tax collector) went up to worship (pray). The Pharisee's worship was rejected because of his ungodly attitude. The Publican's worship was accepted because he worshiped with an acceptable attitude (Luke 18:9-14).

**A Pure Life**—God told the Jews in the time of Amos that He despised their worship and emphatically told them that He would not accept it. The reason? The Jews were walking in disobedience to God's Word (Amos 5:21-24). Jehovah spoke to the Jews through Isaiah and told them that He considered their worship as nothing more than trampling His courts and that He would hide His eyes from them (Isa. 1:11-17). The reason

Jehovah would not accept their worship is vividly described earlier in the same chapter (Isa. 1:2-9). Christians are to offer their spiritual sacrifices as **holy** priests (1 Pet. 2:5). **Pure worship cannot come from an impure life.**

## Five Types of Worship

God's Word informs us that there are five types of worship which man can engage in but only one is acceptable to God.

1. False worship—(Jer. 19:5). Israel's worship to Baal was false worship and an abomination unto God.
2. Ignorant worship (Acts 17:23).
3. Will worship—(Col. 2:18-23, especially v. 23).
4. Vain worship—(Mat. 15:7-9).
5. True worship—(John 4:23).

This is the only one that God will accept. Worship is an opportunity of a lifetime. May God help us to worship Him in spirit and truth, that He may be glorified and that we as Christians may benefit from the fellowship with Him and our fellow Christians.

*Deceased*