

Calling on The Name of the Lord

“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: ‘Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. Jesus is “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.” Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.’”

Acts 4:8-12

There is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved. There is no other mediator between man and God but the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what we must proclaim to the world, and this is what we must pray on. ***“I urge you, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle — I am telling the truth, I am not lying — and a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles.”*** (1 Timothy 2:1-7). The apostle Paul reached out to the Gentiles with this message, and the apostle Peter also presented this truth on the day of Pentecost when they spoke in foreign languages and the nearby men commented on the possibility that they were drunk. ***“Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: ‘Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”’”*** (Acts 2:14-21). It is the name of the Lord that saves us, and that name is Jesus. The Lord poured out his spirit upon his people as prophesied by his servant Joel, and they themselves prophesied, declaring Christ to Jews and Gentiles alike. When this word comes to us, and praise the Lord that it has, we have the opportunity to believe and receive this word and call on the Lord who we’ve come to believe in for our eternal salvation. For Paul, the salvation of Israel was something that weighed heavily on his heart.

Calling for Salvation

Romans 10:1-15

1 Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. **2** For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. **3** Since they did not know about the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. **4** Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. **5** Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: “The person who does these

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things will live by them.” **6** But the righteousness that is by faith says: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) **7** “or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). **8** But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the message concerning the faith that we proclaim: **9** If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **10** For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. **11** As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.” **12** For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, **13** for, “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” **14** How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? **15** And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is when: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Once again, we see the amazing prophecy of Joel that Paul referenced in Romans: everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Now that the Lord has revealed the Messiah, Jesus the Christ, the whole world has the opportunity for salvation by calling on the name of the Lord when they believe this wonderful word. Just as Jesus declared: *“No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”* (John 3:13-18). When we believe in the name of God’s one and only son, we will be saved. The Lord has revealed himself to his people, and now that we have received the word, he has revealed himself to us. When we respond with faith, believing in our hearts that Jesus Christ is the Lord who rose again, we will be saved. To the Jews, this was an amazing revelation, because the idea that God would extend this salvation to the Gentile nations was inconceivable. Still, by the unfailing grace and mercy of God, the word has spread throughout the world, and many have come to believe and call on his name just as Joel prophesied.

Calling For Those Who Already Belong To God

1 Kings 18:16-24

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah. **17** When he saw Elijah, he said to him, “Is that you, you troubler of Israel?” **18** “I have not made trouble for Israel,” Elijah replied. “But you and your father’s family have. You have abandoned the Lord’s commands and have followed the Baals. **19** Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.” **20** So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. **21** Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.” But the people said nothing.

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22 Then Elijah said to them, “I am the only one of the Lord’s prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. **23** Get two bulls for us. Let Baal’s prophets choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. **24** Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by fire—he is God.” Then all the people said, “What you say is good.”

An age or two ago, a man of God known as Elijah was called to challenge Israel and rebuke them for their wickedness in worshiping the pagan god Baal. He boldly challenged the king of Israel, Ahab, and the prophets of Baal to see who’s god was greater. “Call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by fire — he is God.” Calling on the Lord is not simply for those who can be saved, but for those who are already God’s people.

1 Kings 18:25-29

25 Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire.” **26** So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. “Baal, answer us!” they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made. **27** At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.” **28** So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. **29** Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

The prophets of Baal were zealous and called to their god fervently over and over but having no response. They called repeatedly and fervently, but the pagan god Baal gave no answer. No one paid any attention to the calls of these people. Half of the day went by with these calls, but nothing happened.

1 Kings 18:30-38

30 Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come here to me.” They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which had been torn down. **31** Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, “Your name shall be Israel.” **32** With the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs of seed. **33** He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, “Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood.” **34** “Do it again,” he said, and they did it again. “Do it a third time,” he ordered, and they did it the third time. **35** The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench. **36** At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: “LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. **37** Answer me, LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.” **38** Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones

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and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. **39** When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The LORD — he is God! The LORD — he is God!”

Elijah called, full of faith, on the name of the Lord. He declared the name of the Lord with power and with signs, speaking plainly before the people of Israel and before the prophets of Baal. He did not need to repeat himself again and again as the pagans did, for the Lord heard his prophet and answered his prayer. The fire came down and burned up the sacrifice which was doused with water, and the fire was so intense that the wood, the stones, the soil, and even the water in the trench were consumed. Those who saw fell on their knees and confessed with fear and repentance and full faith the name of the Lord, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God Israel, the God of Jesus Christ. It is stories like this that show the power of calling on the name of the Lord. This is the power of our God who has saved us, and this is the God that we, too, may call on, for we are the sons of God.

Matthew 6:1-15

1 “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. **2** “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. **3** But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, **4** so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. **5** “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. **6** But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. **7** And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. **8** Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. **9** “This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, **10** your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. **11** Give us today our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **13** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’ **14** For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. **15** But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Calling on the Name of the Lord through Prayer

The Lord Jesus gave guidance to his apostles regarding prayer. There were men who did righteous deeds so that they would be praised by other men, and the Lord despised this. There were those who prayed on the streets so that they would be seen by others, and the Lord hated this. There were those who prayed with vain repetitions like the pagans, and the Lord denounced this. We must invoke the name of our Lord and speak to our God honestly and plainly. When we call on him, there is no need to repeat ourselves over and over and work ourselves up like the prophets of Baal did. There is no need to panic and fear, for *“Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.” (Romans 10:11)*. This verse Paul referenced is from the scriptures of old which speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ: *“So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘See, I lay a stone in Zion,*

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a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic.” (Isaiah 28:16). What does it mean to be put to shame? It means to be confounded and stricken with panic. Those who stand on the Lord Jesus will never be stricken with panic and shamed by defeat, for we shall surely stand on our Lord. *“Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” (Isiah 40:31).* Hear the word of our God: *“Do not be afraid; you will not be put to shame. Do not fear disgrace; you will not be humiliated. You will forget the shame of your youth, and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood.” (Isiah 54:4).* And again, *“No one who trusts in you will ever be disgraced, but disgrace comes to those who try to deceive others.” (Psalm 25:3).* And again, *“Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: Let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave.” (Psalm 31:17).* Throughout the bible, we see that those who stand on the Lord will not fall in disgrace and shame like the people of Baal. Elijah, however, trusted in the Lord, and he prevailed with God’s power, love, and self-control. As Paul told Timothy: *“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” (2 Timothy 1:6-10).* We are not like the prophets of Baal, who cried louder and louder and were unheard by their false god and put to shame. We are the people of the Lord of Israel, the King of kings and Lord of lords. We call in faith and we are heard by our God, so we should *“not be anxious about everything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let our requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:5-7).*

We can see an example set by Jesus, God’s anointed, in the way he prayed at the garden of Gethsemane:

John 17:1-5

1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. **2** For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. **3** Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. **4** I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. **5** And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Here we see the Lord Jesus showing us how to call on the name of the Lord. He prayed earnestly and, just as with the prayer he taught the disciples, he called out for the sake of glorifying the one who sent him. His calling continues for the sake of the disciples who were with him on earth:

John 17:6-19

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6 “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. **7** Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. **8** For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. **9** I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. **10** All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. **11** I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. **12** While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. **13** “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. **14** I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. **15** My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. **16** They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. **17** Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. **18** As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. **19** For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

He further continues for the sake of all who would believe in his name through the message carried by his disciples:

John 17:20-26

20 “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, **21** that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **22** I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— **23** I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. **24** “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. **25** “Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. **26** I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

What do we see with these verses on prayer? We see that calling on the name of the Lord serves a specific purpose: for his will to be done and for us to make petition for the sake of others. Further still, we are exhorted to call on the name of the Lord for our own sakes:

John 16:20-24

20 Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. **21** A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. **22** So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. **23** In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in

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my name. **24** Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

As the Lord says, *“Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! (Matthew 7:9-11),* yet we are also warned that we should seek the Lord’s will first and foremost just as Jesus taught in the prayer he gave to his disciples. John speaks on this, saying, *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him. (1 John 5:14-15).* We see this as well in James’ letter, where he declares, *What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. (James 4:1-3).*

The Dangers of Vain Repetitions Like the Pagans

2 Timothy 3

1 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. **2** People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, **3** without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, **4** treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— **5** having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people. **6** They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, **7** always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. **8** Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these teachers oppose the truth. They are men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected. **9** But they will not get very far because, as in the case of those men, their folly will be clear to everyone. **10** You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, **11** persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. **12** In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, **13** while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. **14** But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, **15** and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **16** All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, **17** so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The dangers of false teachers are made clear to Timothy in the letter Paul had written to him. Earlier, Paul had warned Timothy of ungodly chatter. *“Keep reminding God’s people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins*

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those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have departed from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some. Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: 'The Lord knows those who are his,' and, 'Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.'" (2 Timothy 2:14-19). This godless chatter was the kind that subverted the message of salvation. In this case, many were told that the resurrection had already occurred and that they had missed it, thus destroying the faith that people had in their salvation. In chapter 3, Paul goes on to warn Timothy of terrible times in which people would act more and more evilly despite claiming to be believers, "having a form of godliness but denying its power." He labels them as false teachers and advises Timothy to avoid them and hold to the faith and endure as Paul has endured. The following warning found in this passage is key to the point I am trying to make: "while evildoers and imposters will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived." It is clear that we should avoid those who commit abject evil as Paul outlined in 2 Timothy 3:1-9, but he also mentions "imposters" in verse 13. The Greek word used is γόης, which is transliterated as "goēs" and is a noun that literally means "a wailer, a sorcerer, a swindler." A note in Strong's Greek says this:

*originally, a sorcerer (in ancient Greek literature); in NT times, 1114 (gōēs) is a swindler – a shameless cheat pretending to use supernatural power; an actor (cheap imposter), looking for self-gain, i.e. posing to be someone he isn't. ("a charlatan"), used only in 2 Tim 3:13, refers to a seducer (properly, a wailer) – a fraud who "sounds off" like a whining enchanter. This person uses their verbal spells and incantations to give the (false) impression they can do miracles.
Reference Link: <https://biblehub.com/greek/1114.htm>*

There are those that claim to have spiritual power and deceive people through the use of chants and incantations. These pagan practices are just like what Jesus warned his disciples against when guiding them in proper prayer, and they are like the wailings of the prophets of Baal who tried to invoke spiritual power through their vigorous calling. To anyone familiar with books or comics or shows or games that use magic, you may have noticed the use of repetitive incantations for the purpose of manipulating the elements or other spiritual forces. This is what the priests of Baal attempted to do, along with the "imposters" mentioned in Paul's letter to Timothy. It is not unlike the practices of eastern religions which focus on meditation and repetitive mantras to make use of the spiritual power, chi, chakras, or energies within themselves, or the ambient energies found around them. What we must never forget as the children of God, however, is that we do not build up any manner of spiritual power by vain repetitions. We do not become more connected to God through an abundance of words. We should absolutely invoke the name of the Lord and call out to the Lord when we pray or are in need, but this is not the same as repetitive and empty chants that serve only to stir up some spiritual power from within. This is not how the Spirit of the Lord operates.