

In the Name Of

Recently I was thinking about how people pray. Some people seem to pray more to the Father, some more to Jesus, some just say God every time, some pray to the Spirit.....but what most believers have in common is closing out "in Jesus name".

Every been in prayer with others and it's almost weird if they didn't say "in Jesus name"? It's one of those things that is so commonly done in prayer that it can feel funny to leave it out.

So I was thinking about it, does it make a prayer more effective to close "in Jesus name"? Does it make a prayer less effective if you just close with "amen"? Sometimes in a prayer meeting where someone is praying after me I may even close with "in Jesus name" but not say amen. But amen means so be it, so in leaving that off does my prayer have less power?

Do we just say "in Jesus name" because it's how we were taught or it's how we are supposed to pray?

As I considered these things, I tried to set aside what I already "assumed" that I knew. The question that came to mind is this " do we really know that it means to do something in the name of someone else, let alone Jesus"?

Let's look at where this comes from.....

John 14:13-14 (NKJV)

13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

What an awesome scripture. WHATEVER you ask in Jesus name, He will do it! If you ask ANYTHING in Jesus name, He will do it!

Well no wonder we close every prayer in Jesus name! We want Him to do it, right? If we didn't then we probably wouldn't have prayed it. And since He doesn't lie, we will get what we want if we close in Jesus name, right?

I think that is what Christians believe to some extent. I think that we believe on some level that there is this special advantage to getting what we want if we just use the magic words.....no, not please and thank you.....but in Jesus name!

But can I tell you that adding in Jesus name does not complete the magic formula to and answered prayer. If that is our heart or reasoning we don't understand this verse and we are misusing it, possibly even hindering our prayers!

What does it mean to act “in the name of” someone or something? In the name of means by the authority of, on behalf of.....

When a cop say stop in the name of the law, he is saying “as an officer of the law I have the authority by that law to demand that you stop”. It’s an authority that has been granted to him. I can not just go around commanding people to stop. If I go and try that on route 40, I might get run over.....but an officer in uniform or holding up his badge can do the same thing and people will stop.

You can also do something in the name of another person if you represent that person. In that case you have been given authority by that person to act on their behalf. This would obviously only be given to someone that is connected to that person. VP Pence can go to a foreign country and act in the name of President Trump. He has been given that authority that what he says represents our President’s will and desire. It’s the same as the President himself being there and saying it.

I know you may be thinking “but Jesus did give us that authority” and I would say “yes, He sure did”. But the problem is not that we don’t HAVE the authority, but that we don’t understand or act WITHIN that authority.

If a police officer tells you to do something that is not within that law that gives him authority, you don’t actually have to do it. He has to operate inside the authority granted to him.

If a person tries to act on behalf of someone that has given them authority, they must act in the way that the person they represent would want them to or their promises or actions will not be backed by the authority.

What we know is that we have been granted authority to act and ask “in Jesus name”. We also know that there is POWER in the name of Jesus!

We see the power of His name throughout the NT:

- In Luke 10:17 we see the demons submit to His name, and are powerless in His name
- In Mark 16:17 we see demons are cast out in Jesus name
- In Acts 3:6 and other places we see the sick healed in His name
- In Acts 4:12 salvation comes in His name

There are many other things done in His powerful name. I wanted to mention a few but, it is praying in Jesus' name that I want to focus on. Jesus has invited, urged, and commanded us to pray in his name and has promised incredible results.

But how are we using His name? What does it mean to pray in the name of Jesus?

I want us to have a biblical understanding of what it is we are doing when we pray in His name, (other than obedience).

When we pray in Jesus' name:

1. We are admitting the emptiness of our own name.

I am not worthy to go to the throne of heaven by my name. My name doesn't have any pull in heaven. My name on it's own is not in good standing with God. I'd be on the "no entry" list.

Isaiah 64:6 (AMP)

6 For we all have become like one who is [ceremonially] unclean [like a leper],
And all our deeds of righteousness are like filthy rags;
We all wither and decay like a leaf,
And our wickedness [our sin, our injustice, our wrongdoing], like the wind, takes us away
[carrying us far from God's favor, toward destruction].

I know that my name doesn't get me to the throne room. It is not access that I have on my own. I don't have the right credentials. I'm an outsider. I'm not on the guest list! In fact my sin has separated me from God and the only thing that gives me access to Him is JESUS!

We know that Jesus is the only way to the Father. There is no other path because there is no one that is righteous, no one that is worthy or has the access the throne room of heaven on their own merit.

John 15:5 (NKJV)

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Our name is empty and void of power and access to heaven!

When we pray in Jesus' name:

2. We identify with Jesus

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Colossians 3:3 (NKJV)

3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Ephesians 3:12 (NKJV)

12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

When I pray in Jesus' name I come boldly before God because of the power of Jesus' name. It is only in Him that I have access. It's not my name, but my association with Jesus. It's His name!

Jesus has literally given us his name. When I use that name, I am confessing that he is mine and that I am his.

We had a wedding here yesterday, in a traditional marriage, the wife takes the husband's last name. She becomes officially associated with him. She represents him. All that he has is now hers. She has the same level of access to the home, the car, the bank account. She has been given access by that name.

Even if she was poor, or of poor reputation, or NO reputation at all, she now has all that he does. She identifies with him, as we identify with Christ.

What He has is yours. Your reputation in heaven wasn't good, your bank account was overdrawn, but as you take on the name of Jesus, all that He has is yours. Righteousness, riches, access, you name it.....in Jesus name!

When we pray in Jesus' name:

3. We pray in His authority

See because our name is empty, we need to identify with Jesus, taking on His name. And when we take on His name, we take on His authority.....and He has authority over ALL!

Matthew 28:17-18 (NKJV)

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

There was a moment on the cross, when Jesus said 3 words "IT IS FINISHED", breathed His last breath, and willingly gave up His Spirit....what happened next was amazing.....

Matthew 27:51 (NKJV)

51 Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,

The veil of the temple kept out everyone but the High Priest. The one man who could enter the holy of holies and be in God's presence. He had to go on behalf of the people. It was the only way to petition and meet with God in heaven.

But Jesus died, He was the only man that could give us access, it was through His death and resurrection. He had to go on our behalf. But then the veil was torn, and we were given authority, access, through THE High Priest, Jesus Christ!

Hebrews 4:14-16 (NKJV)

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

We are given His name....AND His authority.

It's like we pick up a police officer's hat and badge, wandered out onto a busy intersection and began to direct traffic. The people in the cars would follow your direction because they respect the position of authority. To pray in his name is to ask by his authority; and to ask by his authority is to ask in accordance to his will as revealed in his word.

When we pray in Jesus' name:

4. We submit to His will

John 5:19 (NKJV)

19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

Jesus' authority rested with his submission to the Father, so our authority rests with our submission to him. To ask in his name is to ask according to his nature, and his nature is one of submission. This, by the way, is why prayers that ask for things contrary to the Word of God will never be answered.

But we know the promises in the bible, those things are God's will....so we can claim them in faith, knowing that they are His will....but don't forget that the timing and method are also subject to His will. It will happen HOW and WHEN God wants them to. Afterall, He knows all and desires what is best for us....according to His will not our desires.

When we pray in Jesus' name:

5. We are representing Him and His interests here on earth

It is much the same as the legal arrangement known as the power of attorney. In such matters one person may represent another in his absence. They act in their behalf.

2 Corinthians 5:20 (NKJV)

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

Jesus has given every believer unlimited and general power of attorney in all matters and with the right to use his name in every situation.

We represent Jesus to this world.....consider the weight of that.....consider the importance of that. Are we making His name look good? His name IS good.....but how do people view it when they see you? Because by praying in Jesus name, and by taking that name on, you are representing Him.

If you send someone to go and represent you, to do something on your behalf, wouldn't you want them to do exactly what YOU would do? If they weren't sure, wouldn't you want them to try and remember what you told them and if that doesn't work....call you and check?

It's no different with Jesus. You represent Him, do what He would do. If you don't know what that is, try to remember what His Word says, still unsure....call Him! Ask! Represent Him well, don't misrepresent your Lord and Savior.

When we pray in Jesus' name:

6. We pray with expectancy

John 16:23-24 (NKJV)

23 "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. 24 Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father in heaven. We have access to the Father through Jesus. Our name means nothing, but we identify with Christ, taking on His name, His authority, submitting to His will, and represent Him and doing all that, we can have an expectancy....that we will receive what we ask.

When we pray in Jesus' name, we may expect the answer in accord with the value of his name. So we can pray with great and excited expectation.

Church....this is why we pray in the name of Jesus. It's the only way to pray. Without His name, your prayers get no where.

Real quick, for the religious.....I'm not saying you must say "In Jesus name" at the end of a prayer for it to get to heaven. It's so much bigger than that.

It's good to pray in Jesus name.....but quite frankly it's not a requirement, there is something that is more important. A person who is redeemed, saved by Jesus, their life reflects the "in Jesus name". Their prayers reflect their life.

If you realize your name is nothing, His is everything, if you live under His authority, subject to His will, and you represent Him on this earth, you can expect your prayers to enter the throne room.

How are you living your life? In the name of YOU? In the name of WORK? In the name of CHILDREN? In the name of MONEY?

OR in the name of JESUS?! Who is your Lord?