**Calling On The Name Of The Lord**

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I am sure that our readers have heard people say words to the effect, “If you are not a Christian, all you need to do is call upon the name of the Lord, and you can be saved.” Some will teach that in order to be saved, you must say, “Lord, be merciful to me a sinner,” or similar things. Such teaching is a misapplication of what is said in Romans 10:13. There, the apostle Paul wrote, “For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” What does it mean to call on the name of the Lord? Let us read the context of Romans 10 and find out.

 “For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?’ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:13-17).

Please notice that after the apostle Paul says we must call upon the name of the Lord to be saved, he asks a series of questions that point out what it means to call upon the name of the Lord. In order to call upon the name of the Lord, we must: 1) hear the gospel, 2) believe the gospel, and 3) obey the gospel! Therefore, calling upon the name of the Lord is a comprehensive thing, not simply saying the name, “Lord.” In Acts 2:21 we read the same phrase. Here, Peter quotes Joel 2:28-32. Peter shows that the events happening at this time on the day of Pentecost were a fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy (v. 16). At this time, he said, “And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21).

What did he mean? Were they commanded to simply say, “Lord”? No! They were told to “hear these words” (Acts 2:22). Peter then proves that Jesus truly is the Son of God (v. 23-35), and said, “Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36). To “know for certain” is to believe. When the people asked what they needed to do to be forgiven of murdering the Son of God, Peter said, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins .... Then they that gladly received his word were baptized...” (Acts 2:38-41).

Therefore, when one calls upon the name of the Lord, he is simply obeying God’s plan of salvation to hear God’s word, believe that Jesus is the Son of God, repent and be baptized! Is this not simple? Of course, it is! Let this article be an encouragement to people to call upon the name of the Lord as the Bible directs before it is too late (II Pet. 3:9)!

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