

How to Make a Call on God



Like a call to a Friend
the Lord refreshes our heart

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13).

Shall be *rescued*, - But I didn't know I needed to be rescued. In as much as our text talks of people being saved, it implies they *need* saving. And we will even say, that if people were as God created them in the first place, they wouldn't need to be saved.

We became lost through our representative, Adam. God said to him, "Thou shalt not eat thereof, or thou shalt surely die." When Adam went against that saying, he put, not only himself in jeopardy, but his children as well. *All that we do has an effect on our children.* For good or for bad.

However, we need not throw the blame on Adam, no person was ever ruined by Adam's sin alone.

We don't need to talk very much about Adam's sin; how about our own? Do not the ten commandments teach us something? Did not Jesus teach us that we break them in *heart* if not in *deed*?

Do we not often, when we are honest, find ourselves falling far short of the goodness of God? Even when we have the will to do our best?

The irony of our present world chaos is this: No matter what our choice for a course of action *or* inaction, it will fall far short of what we ought to be; it will be flawed; it will be human; it will be partly right and it will be partly wrong. It is the human condition. While wanting to do *nothing* we had to do *something* --and that something had its problems.

There is our anguish of soul --knowing that we will fall short, *no matter what*.
There is great confusion in the minds of people concerning what being *saved* really is.

It is two things: *First*, it is being acquitted from the sins we have surely committed. *Second*, it is a new desire to break the habit of sin, so that in the future we will not live as we have lived, or feel as we have felt, while at the same time, operating with enough humility to recognize, as Paul said, that even "when I would do good, evil is present with me" (Romans 7:21).

"For I delight in the law of God after the inward person: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The great subject this morning is a central subject of the Bible; how people may be saved by Jesus Christ.

In summing-up scripture, we could say that being saved means to have new thoughts, new minds, new hearts, and a new purpose and goal --a new future.

It does not mean perfection. It does not mean there is no more use for humility or tolerance, but the opposite.

"What must I do to be saved?" - that is the question this morning.

It is answered by our text, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Three things:

First, an explanation of the text.

Second, a refutation of errors that are so popular.

Thirdly, an exhortation, pressing the usefulness of the text.

First, an explanation of the text.

What is meant here by, "calling on the name of the Lord?"

When we call upon the *Lord*, we call *Him Lord*. We call *Him Lord*, because we believe *He is Lord*. Lord in every aspect of the word.

That is, God must be recognized as such, not simply as someone who gets you out of jams, not as a "good luck charm," not simply as someone who makes it rain or stop raining, according to whether you have a picnic planned or the garden is dry.

We could very well say, "Whoever *worships* God shall be saved." The call is directed to God, recognizing God, as God, as Lord. When we do that, we confess, as it were, our own inability to save ourselves, our world, or anything. We admit need.

In the book of Genesis, people began to call upon the Lord. That is, they sought God, they began to worship God; they built altars in His name; they bowed down in humility and prayer; they lifted up their voices in song.

If you worship in the light of the atonement that came by the cross; if you worship Him in humble prayer & sincere praise, then, your worship is a proof that you are saved.

So, I ask: Do you worship Him at all? When you come to church, do you worship? Do you *feel* the hymns? Do you *apply* the sermons; do you *pray* the prayers?

"Whosoever then, in the wide, wide world under heaven, shall worship God with a pure heart, fervently, looking for acceptance through the atonement of Christ, -shall be saved. That is the word *Lord*. It is synonymous with the word *worship*.

Now, let's look at the word Call. When you *call on the Lord*, you are praying. Mark the thought; prayer is the certain forerunner of salvation. You cannot truly pray and perish.

The prayer may be a groan, it may be a tear, a wordless prayer, an ungrammatical prayer, a mixed-up prayer. But if it is a prayer from the heart, there is "Someone there" to listen & to save.

But the word **call** signifies more than *worship* and more than *prayer*, in addition it signifies *trust*. A person does not really call upon the name of Lord unless he or she **trusts** that name. Otherwise, why would you call?

You've got to call like you're calling the fire department! You cannot put out the fire, but they can. When a person comes to you for advice, it shows that they have at least some degree of confidence in you. It is the asking itself, that indicates the trust. That is what God wants --an indication of our trust. This is confirmed when we *call on* His name. Our very call is an indication of our inability to do something about our human condition. It is a yell for help, knowing that the life guard will come.

Then, calling His name is a **Profession of His Name**.

God requires that every person who trusts the Savior, confess him before people. "If any person be ashamed of me, and My words in this generation; of him or her will I be ashamed, when I come."

Secondly, we will refute some popular errors.

The text: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." There are some popular errors, with regard to salvation, that need to be refuted.

One idea which conflicts with the text is that a minister is absolutely necessary to assist people in salvation. If you had never seen a minister in your life, and called upon the name of the Lord, your salvation would be just as sure!

The necessity of the minister lies in telling what the way of salvation is (Romans 10:14). The minister's office goes no farther than telling the message. It is God's Spirit that must apply it.

It comes to this: Every person must go to Christ for him or herself.

Another common error is that a good dream is a most splendid thing in saving people. "If you see the Lord in the night, you will be saved." Or, if you see the shape of the cross in the clouds, you will be saved. Or, if the moon shines through a window screen and makes a reflection in the shape of a cross, you will be saved.

I know a Christian leader who embezzled great sums of money and had a years long affair with his secretary, who preached for years how he had seen the Lord in the sky. When I was a young person, I heard him preach this dramatic sermon many times --made a lot of people want to see the Lord in the sky --made a lot of people think this fellow was quite extraordinary. He wasn't; yet, he could do a great "Christian show."

If that is what it takes to be saved, few of us are, or will be.

It is nice to have good dreams, but most people like to see how folk act when they are awake. Don't be fooled by all the drama in Christianity; it won't get you to heaven. Some dreams awaken people to their senses; but, that is

about all they are good for.

Another common error is that you must have some kind of wonderful feeling. All that is required by our text is that as a poor, weak, flawed person, I should come to Christ, -that done, the soul is safe.

Another common error is that you can call upon God without Christ. You cannot really call on the name of the Lord without calling upon Christ. "He that does not honor the Son, does not honor the Father" (John 5:23). Since Jesus "IS GOD" -that's who you call on.

Yet another error is that you can believe Christ, but not the Bible. Now we don't understand the entire Bible, and certainly we have interpreted parts of it incorrectly, we have misused it and abused it, we have used it to abuse others. Still, in spite of our abuses, it is God's book to us. Jesus said, "If they won't believe Moses (the Bible), how shall they believe me?" (John 5:47).

Another common error is to connect salvation *itself* with some church ritual; in our age, in many churches, it could be walking down a church aisle. If it is true, that one cannot not be saved without doing that, then, there are nearly two millenniums of Christians who have perished; for, the practice is quite new & has never been universal in the church. What is needed is that one come to Christ, not to some particular *location*.

Just think about the scriptures on this:

Nicodemus came to the Lord in a private conversation. The Samaritan woman came to the Lord in a private conversation. Andrew led his brother to Christ. Lydia came to Christ in a private conversation. The Philippian jailor came to Christ in a private conversation. The Ethiopian Eunuch came to the Lord in a private conversation. Even when folk come to Christ in a crowd, they do so in a private prayer. The deal is between you and God and no one else --and where you pray is not important.

Don't think for a minute that one is saved by church ritual. Being saved is a matter of you making a personal call to Christ. The truth is, everyone accepts Christ privately. You cannot get much more private than the human heart. You come to Christ alone; but, you are never alone after you come. Yet, to begin with, it is a *one-to-one* thing --a *one-to-one* experience.

Thirdly, an encouragement.

I encourage *you* to call. "Whosoever" is a great wide door. There was never a person yet who called upon the name of the Lord and was turned away. Those who call *are saved*. There is no one who does not need to call.

If you are not a Christian, I certainly urge you to call now.

It is not hard to make a call on God. He is always home, He doesn't have an answering machine; He doesn't put you on hold; He always "picks up" --and because He is God, He is always free. He is never "tied-up." The most important thing God has to do is listen to you. Talk to God --He is sure to listen.