Prayer In Jesus’ Name

Joe Slater

 Jesus said, *“Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son”* John 14:13). What, then, is involved in praying “in the name of Jesus”?

 Doing something “in the name of” Christ, whether it is prayer, baptism, or whatever, doesn’t mean simply intoning the words “In Jesus’ name.” One might speak those words without truly acting in His name. Seven fake exorcists in Acts 19:13-17 invoked the name of Jesus, but certainly were not acting in His name and suffered some serious (if comical) consequences.

 Jesus Himself said He is the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father but through Him (John 14:6). Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:18 that *“through Him (Jesus) we both (Jew and Gentile) have access by one Spirit to the Father.”* With Jesus as our High Priest, we may *“draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need”* (Hebrews 4:16). So then, praying in the name of Jesus is praying with the recognition that it is through Him that we can approach the Father with confidence that we will be welcomed and heard.

 Is it ok to speak the words “in Jesus’ name” in prayer? Certainly so! Is it mandatory? Certainly not! The words “in Jesus’ name” do not constitute a “formula” to be intoned in order for a prayer to be accepted. My personal practice is to say those words because it reminds me of who gave me the right to pray at all.

Racism

Racism: The belief that another human being is inferior because of their ethnicity.

 Racism’s scourge on humanity has no place in the Christian’s heart. Unfortunately, the fact remains that any person can be influenced by his fellows more than by God’s word. It only takes a casual review of brotherhood journals from a few decades ago to find blatant racism within Christ’s church.

 Racism robs others of their rights as creatures created in the image of God. It covets and steals a future hope in a brutal quest for power and supremacy. Racism begins with reviling others and frequently blossoms into murder, mayhem, and destruction.

 However, the root of racism is a deeper problem: human cruelty. Like Satan himself, humans can be experts in inflicting cruelty on our fellows. There is not a nation, or tribe, or community that has not possessed within its borders those who are cruel…whatever the motive or manifestation.

 The answer to human cruelty is not more human cruelty. The only answer is to be washed by blood of Christ (the willing victim of the greatest cruelty ever…for our sakes), be sanctified though the teaching of the Holy Spirit in his word, and to beat our swords into plowshares.

--Jared Jackson (via Fortify Your Faith)

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks” (Isaiah 2:4)

“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).

**Dogs Do Not Bark At Their Familiar Friends**

 Samuel Rutherford had a knack for expressing great truths in a few words. He told a friend, who was stung by the criticisms of worldly people, “If ye were not strangers here, the dogs of the world would not bark at you.”

 Indeed, those who are true to the Lord will often be dishonored, slandered, and treated as impostors (see 2 Corinthians 6:8). Jesus himself warned us, *“A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours”* (John 15:10).

 It is, therefore, a huge mistake to measure our success by the reaction of the world to our message. Measured by that standard, Jesus was a failure and Simon (the magician) was a success (Acts 8:9-10). We must remember that *“God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are”* (1 Corinthians1:27-28).

 Now, of course, we must be careful that when the world slanders us it is indeed slander. They must not be given any proper cause of complaint. Any laziness or dishonesty on our part will ruin our good influence (cf 1 Peter 3:1316). But if we do what is right and are criticized for it, that is what we should have expected. The dogs of this world will bark at strangers who ultimately belong to a different world. *But “it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil”* (1 Peter 3:17). So, if a dog barks at you this week, consider the matter carefully. Perhaps he is paying you a compliment. Perhaps he is acknowledging your identification with the Lord.

--Thayer Salisbury (Toledo, OH)