

WHAT IT MEANS TO PRAY IN THE NAME OF JESUS

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“If you ask anything in my name,” Jesus promised, “I will do it.” (John 14:14). What incredible confidence this should infuse into our prayers! But do we tap the power and potency of heaven simply by tacking the words “in Jesus’ name” onto the end of our prayers? No. There’s more involved.



Let me explain from personal experience.

Years ago a man named Bill Cavanaugh put me in charge of a large construction project. “I’m counting on you to get this job finished on time and within budget,” he admonished. “I trust you to do whatever the situation requires, and I’ll back you up in your decisions. But come to me quickly if you encounter trouble you can’t handle.”

As difficult and knotty problems arose, I exerted my influence as project manager to effect the necessary resolutions. When my name and title weren’t sufficient, I used the name of the one who had sent me. I would say something like, “Bill Cavanaugh wants this done, and if you can’t help or won’t help, I’ll have to report that back to him.”

Invariably, roadblocks suddenly melted away. But why? Because I had invoked the name of one who had both the authority and power to make things happen. I didn’t do this lightly. I could legitimately use his name because I was carrying out his express will. I clearly understood his plan and purpose, and I had his promise to back me up in the commission he had given me. In my confident use of that name, the individuals on the other side of the problem knew I was assured of the outcome. Bill Cavanaugh had said so, and I believed him.

When we ask of the Father in the name of Jesus (John 15:16), it’s much the same concept. We do so with a firm and clear

understanding of the will of Jesus, of His plan and purpose, with the assurance that He will back us up as we seek to carry out His commission.

I like to visualize what might be happening in heaven whenever I boldly go before the throne of grace to obtain mercy and help in time of need (Heb. 4:16). When I make my petition to the Father in the name of Jesus, I envision my Intercessor and Advocate, seated at the Father’s right hand, making an appeal on my behalf. “Father, this request is in My will and My plan, and this child of Mine is endeavoring to do what I’ve asked him to do. I back him up in this matter and ask that You grant his request.”

Then, with the Father’s speedy and resolute “So be it!” the answer is dispatched, and I have what I requested. I understand from Daniel’s experience (cf. Dan. 10:12-13) that there may be stern resistance from evil but unseen principalities and powers in the heavenly realms who seek to prevent a timely delivery of that answer. Nevertheless, just as the name of Jesus gives me access to the Father, it also affords me authority over these invisible enemies against whom the Apostle Paul assured me I would wrestle (cf. Eph. 6:12). Then persist I must, as Daniel did, until the answer shows up.

I can be confident that the Father will grant any petition according to His will (1 John 5:14-15). And when I properly invoke the name of Jesus in prayer, I announce to the unseen spiritual world that I am not only assured of the outcome, but also that the One whom the Father exalted far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named (Eph. 1:21) will back me up with the power, authority and influence embodied in His name.

Jesus said so, and I believe Him.

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