



Brown Community Group Discussion Guide

“Prayer” Series Lesson 4 – February 28, 2016

What is “Praying In Jesus Name”?

I. **Starter Questions:**

What is “praying in Jesus name mean?” How do we actually “pray in Jesus name?” Who are we supposed to pray to anyway?, Jesus, God or the Holy Spirit?

We will break the series into multiple lessons/subject matter:

1. Why Does God want us to Pray?
2. The Effectiveness of Prayer
 - a. Does Prayer Change the Way God Acts?
 - b. Effective Prayer made possible through Jesus
 - c. **Who are we supposed to pray too?**
 - d. Role of Holy Spirit
3. Important Considerations for Effective Prayer
 - a. Pray “According to God’s Will”
 - b. Praying with Faith and Obedience
 - c. Forgiveness and Humility
 - d. Praying Continually and Earnestly
 - e. Waiting on the Lord, What about Unanswered Prayer?
4. Praise and Thanksgiving

What does this mean “in my name”?

John 14:13-14

13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

John 16:23-24

23 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. 24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete

- Clearly does not mean just adding “In Jesus Name” after each prayer
 - Actually none of the recorded prayers in the NT have the words “In Jesus name at the end of them (Matt 6:9-13, Acts 1:24-25; 4:24-30; 7:59; 9:13-14; 10:14; Rev 6:10; 22:20)

To come in the name of someone means that another person has authorized us to come on his authority, not on our own:

- Acts 3:6; Peter speaks on the authority of Jesus, not on his own when he says “in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, walk”
- Acts 4:7; Sanhedrin asked “by what power or by what name did you do this?”
- Acts 16:18; Paul rebukes an unclean spirit “in the name of Jesus Christ”
- 1 Cor. 5:4; Paul pronounces judgement “in the name of the Lord Jesus” on a church member who is guilty of immorality
- Praying “in Jesus name” is **prayer made on his authority**

The “name” of a person in the ancient world represented the person himself and therefore all of his character

- A good name meant having a good reputation
- The name of Jesus represents all that he is and his total character
- Praying “in Jesus name” means not only praying in his authority, but also more importantly praying in a way that is consistent with his character, his manner of life and his own Holy will

Colossians 3:7

7 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

- Everything we do should be in Jesus name, in other words upholding His character, will and way

1 John 5:14-15

14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

- Close to praying in Jesus name, but not the same “according to his will”

Interesting Considerations on Prayer

Prayers of the New Testament are usually addressed to “God the Father”, not God the Son or to the Holy Spirit. But most of the New Testament prayers are actually made by Jesus himself, who would naturally address God the Father as opposed to himself. Since the Trinity was not truly revealed in the Old Testament, it is also not surprising that those prayers were to “God the Father”.

While there is a clear pattern of prayer to “God the Father”, there are indications that prayers spoken directly to Jesus are also appropriate. There is plenty of scriptural evidence to encourage us to pray not only to God the Father, but also directly to God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Both are correct.

While there are no recorded prayers in the New Testament are directly addressed to the Holy Spirit, there is nothing forbidding it. The Holy Spirit is fully God through the Trinity and worthy of our prayer. Numerous well used church hymns have been prayers to the Holy Spirit. But this is not the New Testament pattern, so we could reasonably interpret that this should not become our norm in praying to the Holy Spirit.

II. Group Questions:

1. What do we as Christians need to do to be able to “Pray in Jesus Name” as described above?
2. What does it mean for us to have the “authorization of Jesus” in our prayers?
3. Does “praying in Jesus name” mean anything different to you compared to “according to His will”?
4. Have you ever prayed to the Holy Spirit? Did you have a specific purpose or meaning?
5. Discuss who you typically pray too and why? Have you really thought of it this way as to who you pray too and why?