

Who's "Calling" Who, and For What Purpose?

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A number of statements by Jesus Christ confirm that only Almighty God, the Father, "calls" people to repent of their sins (Mt. 15:13; Jn. 15:1-2; Rom. 2:4b; Ac. 2:39; 11:18).

Following an individual's repentance of sin, that person is baptized and enters a relationship with Jesus Christ who is responsible for leading and teaching them correctly (Mt. 23:8, 10).

Return, we beseech You, O God of hosts; look down from heaven and see, and visit this vine
¹⁵*And the vineyard which Your right hand has planted, and the branch (Jesus Christ) that You made strong for Yourself* (Ps. 80:14-15; cf. Jer. 23:5-6; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

All that the Father gives me (Christ) will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will by no means cast out. ³⁸*For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.* ³⁹*This is the will of the Father who sent me, that of all He has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day* (Jn. 6:37-39; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

No one can come to me (Christ) unless the Father who sent me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day (Jn. 6:44; cf. Jn. 6:65; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this (truth) to you, but

my Father who is in heaven (Mt. 16:17; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Consequently, without our heavenly Father intervening, no one willingly acknowledges they have transgressed His law and commandments (1Jn. 3:4; 2Tim. 2:19; Ac. 2:38). Instead, they either (1) misunderstand or ignore His word on this subject, (2) creatively justify their sinful behavior, or (3) claim there is no reliable standard to measure or define sin; therefore it is not an important issue. However, in reality, it is a matter of life and death that should be taken very seriously.

In contrast to Christ's statements about his Father calling people to repentance, some sincere but misguided individuals believe it is within their power, and therefore it is their responsibility, to "call people to God". Sadly, many of these same people gain "followers" by teaching errors as we will see shortly. Others, like Simon Magus, choose to manipulate God's word in order to gain power and influence over ill-informed people.

But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery (magic) in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, ¹⁰***to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God."*** ¹¹*And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries (magic arts) for a long time.* ¹²*But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.* ¹³*Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.* ¹⁴*Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to*

them, ¹⁵who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶For as yet it had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, ¹⁹saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit." ²⁰But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!" ²¹You have neither part nor portion (lot) in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. ²²**Repent therefore of this your wickedness**, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity (sin)" (Ac. 8:9-23; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

This confirms that Simon's motives for getting baptized were self-serving because his real goal was to acquire more wealth, power, and prestige at the expense of gullible people. He had no genuine concern for God's truth, or the spiritual well-being of his followers. Consequently, anyone believing in Simon's teachings would be prevented from understanding God's truth correctly. Similarly, Jesus Christ exposed the actions and objectives of the Jewish religious leaders.

For they (the scribes and Pharisees) bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. ⁵But all their works they do to be seen by men (Mt. 23:4-5a; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

They love the best places (of honor) at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues,

'greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi' (Mt. 23:6-7; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering in to go (any further) (Mt. 23:13; Ed. notes in parenthesis; emphasis added).

These religious leaders used their power and influence to manipulate God's word in order to justify the exploitation of their followers, which included widows.

(The Jewish religious leaders) ***who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense (appearance sake) make long prayers...*** (Mk. 12:40a; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

The scribes and Pharisees spared no expense to increase the number of their followers, but Christ called them hypocrites because their teaching caused spiritual damage to those who were influenced by it.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte (SGD 4339; newcomer; sometimes from a foreign region), and when he is won (been convinced), you make him twice as much a son of hell (Gr. Gehenna; area outside Jerusalem used to burn garbage, including dead bodies of criminals) as yourselves (Mt. 23:15; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

The teachings of these religious leaders prevented people from correctly understanding what is required to inherit everlasting life. Without this truth everyone, who believed in what they said, was "as good as dead in their sins".

And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He (Almighty God) made alive together with him (Jesus Christ), having forgiven you all trespasses (Col. 2:13; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

In simple terms, the scribes and Pharisees taught that everlasting life was possible through specific acts like circumcision and the sacrifice of clean animals to cover, or atone for, specific sins. However, these "works" were not enough as the apostle Paul explained.

For the law (of animal sacrifice), having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect (i.e. change one's attitude to a willing obedience of God's law and commandments). ²For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purged (cleansed of sin), would have had no more consciousness of sins (because of an overriding desire to avoid sin). ³But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of (one's) sins every year. ⁴For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins (Heb. 10:1-4; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Is the law (of animal sacrifice) then against the promises of God (which include everlasting life)? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life (everlasting), truly righteousness (desire to obey God's commands; cf. Ps. 119:172) would have been by the law (of animal sacrifice). ²²But Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith (trust) in Jesus Christ might be given to those who (were predestined to) believe (Gal. 3:21-22; cf. Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 1:5, 11; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Therefore, it is only by acknowledging that Jesus Christ had to shed his blood to cover our sins, that forgiveness can be extended and the promise of everlasting life offered to those who genuinely repent of sin and begin a new life of willing obedience to every word of God (Mt. 4:4; Rom. 6:1-2, 4, 15; 1Cor. 6:15).

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot (symbolic of sin) to God (Almighty), purge (cleanse) your conscience from dead works (ongoing sinful practices) to serve the living God? ¹⁵And for this reason he (Christ) is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of (his) death, for the redemption (deliverance from everlasting death) of the transgressions under the first covenant, ***that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance*** (everlasting life) (Heb. 9:14-15; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

As we saw earlier, the Jewish religious leaders went to great lengths to "call" people, but they were adding people to an erroneous belief system which could not lead to everlasting life. This is why Christ warned his disciples about the false teachings of the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees.

Then they (Christ's disciples) understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine (teaching) of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Mt. 16:12; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

This proclivity to misrepresent God's truth permeates all the religions of this present evil age (Gal. 1:4), and it was already occurring within the early church of God.

But I (Paul) fear, lest somehow, as the serpent (Satan) deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity

that is in Christ. ⁴For if he who comes preaches another Jesus (i.e. a Jesus that did away with his Father's law and commandments) whom we (Christ's apostles) have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel (good news about God's plan of salvation) which you have not accepted (previously), you may well put up with it (fall for it) (2Cor. 11:3-4; Ed. notes in parentheses).

I(Paul) **marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him** (Almighty God) **who called you in the grace** (forgiveness provided through the blood) **of Christ, to a different gospel,** ⁷which is not another (of the same kind as originally taught); **but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert** (distort) **the gospel of Christ** (Gal. 1:6-7; Ed. notes in parentheses).

For I(Paul) *know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.* ³⁰*Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse* (misleading) **things, to draw away disciples after themselves** (Ac. 20:29-30; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Sadly, the serious consequences of preaching a false doctrine about Jesus Christ, or Almighty God's plan of redeeming sinners, goes unnoticed by the majority of religious people today (Jn. 17:3). Therefore many religious people, who believe they are doing the right thing, are actually responsible for proliferating Satan's lies; just as the scribes and Pharisees did (Jn. 8:44). Those who teach these falsehoods are in serious trouble as the next scripture confirms.

But even if we (Christ's apostles), *or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you* (until now), *let him be accursed* (Gr. anathema).

⁹*As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received (until now), let him be accursed* (Gal. 1:8-9; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Therefore, when God's word states that "many are called but few are chosen", it is describing a situation where erroneous teachings are being used to attract people to a "different Jesus" (Mt. 20:16; 22:14). In most cases, this false Jesus did away with his Father's law and commandments. Thankfully, this lie is contradicted many scriptures.

Now behold, one came and said to him (Christ), *"Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"* ¹⁷*So he said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? No one is good (in the ultimate sense) but One, that is, God* (Almighty). **But if you want to enter into life** (everlasting), **keep the commandments**" (Mt. 19:16-17; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

But he (Christ) *answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'"* (Mt. 4:4; Ed. note in parenthesis).

For assuredly, I (Christ) *say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law* till all is fulfilled (Mt. 5:18; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Adam and Eve were "called" to a false religious system when they trusted the word of Satan, and rejected God's word. Had they trusted and obeyed the word of Almighty God, they would have inherited everlasting life (Gen. 3:4). Sadly, their sinful action not only harmed them, it also negatively affects their progeny to this day.

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned (Rom. 5:12; emphasis added).

Although “many are called”, the majority are not “chosen by God” because they believe the falsehoods of their human leaders/teachers.

*For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine**, but according to their own desires (cf. Rom. 8:5-7), because they have itching ears* (SGD 2833; wanting to hear pleasant things), ***they will heap up for themselves teachers;** ⁴and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables* (2Tim. 4:3-4; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

In contrast, those called by God will learn the importance of living in accordance with His will, which is summarized by His law and commandments. These same people will genuinely repent of their sins, and become part of God’s true church (Rev. 12:1). They are described as “the firstfruits” of Almighty God’s plan of salvation.

....we (who have repented of sin) also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body (at the first resurrection) (Rom. 8:23b; cf. Jn. 5:28-29; Rev. 20:6; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Those who are called by Almighty God will leave the darkness they previously lived in, and enter God’s light. The word “light” is used figuratively in scripture to represent His law and commandments.

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of

Him (Almighty God) who **called you out of darkness into His marvelous light** (1Pet. 2:9; Ed. note in parentheses; emphasis added).

For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light... (Prov. 6:23a; cf. Ps. 19:8; 119:105; emphasis added).

Any human leader who teaches that ignoring or breaking God’s law and commandments is acceptable, is doing exactly what Satan did to Adam and Eve. This is the main reason that “many are called but few are chosen”. Either intentionally, or through ignorance, anyone teaching against God’s law and commandments will be held accountable for the harm caused to those they influenced.

Some men’s sins are clearly evident, preceding them to judgment, but those of some men follow later (1Tim. 5:24).

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ¹⁴*And no wonder! For **Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light*** (pretends to be in agreement with God). ¹⁵*Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness* (Ps. 119:172), whose end will be according to their works (2Cor. 11:13-15; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Satan is very skillful because he gets as close to God’s truth as possible, while distracting from the most important aspect which involves a deep desire to obey to every word of God (Mt. 4:4). This is why he is so effective in deceiving the religious systems of this present evil world (Rev. 12:9; Gal. 1:4). Christ identified Satan’s deception and its serious consequence.

Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he

who does the will of my Father in heaven.
²²Many will say to me in that day (2nd resurrection), ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in your name?’ ²³And then **I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness!’** (Mt. 7:21-23; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door (at the commencement of the 2nd resurrection; Rev. 20:4-6), saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and he will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know (recognize) you, where you are from,’ ²⁶then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets,’ ²⁷But he (Christ) will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. **Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity.**’ ²⁸There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets (already resurrected) in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out (pending a genuine repentance of sin) (Lk. 13:25-28; cf. 2Pet. 3:9; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

When Almighty God calls someone to see the serious consequences of their sinful conduct, that person will repent and strive to obey every word of God; no matter how hard it is at times. This is the primary lesson of Christ’s parable involving the sower of seed.

When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one (Satan) comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰But he who received seed on stony places, this is he who

hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for awhile. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²²Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³But **he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it** (correctly), **who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty** (Mt. 13:19-23; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

So Satan and his human instruments can be involved with “calling many”, but their message will be a counterfeit gospel that accommodates lawless behavior. Consequently, only a small number of those “called” will actually be chosen by God. The rest will have an opportunity to be taught God’s truth accurately after Christ has ruled this planet for a thousand years (Isa. 2:2-4; Jer. 31:34; Rev. 20:4-6). Here is another witness of this truth.

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴Because **narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life** (everlasting), **and there are few who find it** (Mt. 7:13-14; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

And it is not a coincidence that the verses following Matthew 7:13-14 explain the dangers associated with listening to false teachers. These are the ones who will speak about things that are appealing to human nature, but obedience to every word of God is purposely omitted (cf. Isa. 30:9-11).

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