

In Jesus' Name We Pray

Customarily, we end our public prayers with “in the name of Jesus we pray.” Why?

1. John 14:13 – 14 “And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.”
2. John 15:16 (15:7) You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.
3. John 16:23 – 26 ...Whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give to you. Until now, you have asked nothing in My name...In that day you will ask in My name...

The context of John 14 – 16

1. Only eleven men were with Jesus. Some of Jesus' statements are generalizations. Some are specific. The context allows us to separate them.
2. Some of the statements obviously are intended just for the eleven:
 - a. 14:17 The Spirit is not “with” all Christians, as in the working of miracles.
 - b. 14:26, 16:13 The Spirit does not bring all of Jesus' words to mind for all Christians, nor does the Spirit reveal the future to all Christians.
 - c. 15:16 Jesus' reference is to His choosing of His apostles, not the choosing of all the faithful.
 - d. 15:27 Obviously, all Christians have not been with Jesus on earth from the beginning of His ministry.
 - e. 16:2 All Christians are not put out of synagogues.
 - f. 16:4, 12, 13 Jesus has not limited His message for all Christians, but only during His earthly ministry
3. If the promises in John 14 – 16 concerning prayer are to be applied to all Christians, some of the details concerning “asking in My name” must be watered down to the point of making them meaningless.
 - a. 14:12 Greater works than these he will do.
 - b. 14:14 If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.
 - c. 15:7 Ask what you desire and it will be done for you.
 - d. 15:16 Whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. (Note: the “may” is not conditional in that God may or may not give what they ask, but is conditional on their asking and their fruit remaining.)
 - e. 16:23 Whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.
4. If some of the parts of Jesus' discussion with the eleven were directed only to them, how can we differentiate the parts that apply to all?
 - a. Is it mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament and applied to all Christians?
 - b. Does the immediate context in John 14 – 16 include details that are not true for all Christians?

Other passages concerning “in the name of Jesus” that have been used to prescribe the customary prayer formula.

1. Ephesians 5:20 (Hebrews 13:15) “Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” The context refers to being filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another through song, giving thanks to God, and submitting to one

another. To be consistent, every song must end with “in the name of Jesus we sing.” The point of “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” in this passage is to thank God for what Jesus has done or made possible.

2. Philippians 2:9 – 10 “Therefore, God has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...” The reference to the “name of Jesus” looks forward to Judgment when all will confess that Jesus is Lord.
3. Colossians 3:17 “Whatever you do in word of deed, do all in the name of the Lord” The immediate context begins with verse 12, although even that section begins with “therefore,” so the previous paragraphs were included by Paul in the conclusions drawn. The point of the context is Christian behavior. To be consistent, each activity must include speaking the phrase “in the name of Jesus.”
4. 2 Thessalonians 1:12 (1 Timothy 6:1, 2 Timothy 2:19, James 2:7) That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you. The point of “name of Jesus” is that unbelievers will see the behavior of Christians and know that ordinary people cannot live that way, so they glorify God and not the Christians.

Other passages that use the phrase “in the name of Jesus,” or variations thereon:

1. Matthew 7:22 Prophesied in Thy name
2. Matthew 18:5 (Mark 9:37, Luke 9:48)) He who receives one little child in My name receives me
3. Matthew 18:20 Where two or three are gathered in My name, I am there in the midst of them.
4. Matthew 24:5 (Mark 13:6, Luke 21:8) For many will come in My name and will deceive many
5. Matthew 28:19 Baptizing them in the name of the Father...
6. Mark 9:38 – 41 (Luke 9:49, 10:17) Casting out demons in Your name
7. Mark 16:17 In My name they will cast out demons
8. Luke 24:47 (Romans 1:5, 1 Corinthians 1:2) Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations
9. John 1:12 (John 2:23, 3:18) As many as receive Him, to them He has given the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.
10. Acts 2:38 (Acts 8:12, 16, 9:14 – 15, 21, 27, 29, 10:43, 48, 19:5, 22:16, 1 Corinthians 6:11, 1 John 3:23, 5:13, Revelation 2:13) ...Let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ
11. Acts 3:6 (Acts 3:16, 4:7 – 30, 5:28, 40 – 41, 16:18, 19:13, 17, James 5:14) In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk
12. Acts 15:26 (Acts 21:13, 26:9) Men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ
13. 1 Corinthians 1:10 (1 Corinthians 5:4 – 5, 2 Thessalonians 3:6) Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing