

## Called By Name

Here's a thought from Stephen Arterburn's book that caught my attention.

- When the angel of the Lord called Hagar, he called her by name (Gen. 16).
- When the Lord called the boy Samuel, he called him by name (1 Sam. 3).
- When the Lord appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, he called him by name (Acts 9:1-9).

When the Lord called Gideon, and Peter and John, and Nathaniel, He didn't use their name but He identified them intimately, so much so that their attention was immediately riveted on His invitation. Do you see the point? When the Lord calls someone, He calls them personally. He speaks right to that person and shows His knowledge of that person by name or by description. Sometimes, as in the case of Gideon and Nathaniel, that description even surprises the one that He's speaking to. Thirteen special judges were called in the Old Testament, but each one was called personally. Numerous prophets were called in the Old Testament and 14 special witnesses (apostles) in the New Testament, but each was called individually.

2 Thessalonians 2:14 states that Christians are called also. Congregations of Christians, nations of Christians, 2,000 years of Christians have been called. But each one was called individually by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Each one personally was touched with the message of love and identified with a Heavenly Father and Faithful Creator who really cares about us. Nobody came in as a group and no one just strolled through the door into the kingdom because it happened to be open.

Every believer that has answered the invitation to be God's child needs to understand that God spoke directly to THEIR heart with His gospel. He knows you inside and out, pros and cons, successes and failures. What He knows about you would probably even surprise you because perhaps you haven't even realized it yet in yourself. My point is God knows your name! He knows YOU. His word is not some "law" handed down by an impersonal congress or council somewhere that knows nothing of your life. Instead, His word is counsel and direction from a friend who knows you and calls you by name. He loves YOU. He watches over YOU. He listens to your prayers and wants only the best for you. Above all the advice that you will ever receive in your life, the directions of a loving God must stand the highest. There will be no strangers in heaven because when God calls someone, He calls them by name.

by Carl McMurray