

GOD CALLING OUR NAME

I have called you by name. You are mine . . . because you are precious and honored in my sight . . . and I love you.
Isaiah 43:1

Have you ever had the experience of walking into the grocery store right after you've been in a meeting or other gathering, and someone cheerily says hi to you and calls you by your name? And you wonder, to yourself, how did they know my name? You smile back as you realize you are still wearing the name tag you wore back at the meeting just before. However, isn't it a wonderful feeling to be called by your name?

While Isaiah 43:1 is my most favorite Bible verse, I've always wondered how Jesus calls me by name. I've never heard my name being called.

Or have I? Or have you?

Maybe, just maybe, God is calling our names when someone has taken the time to listen to us . . . really listen. When those experiences come, we feel touched and encouraged and through that we feel as if we are being known. And also the times we reach out to another, even for a brief moment, we can have the sense of being heard and listened to and called by our name by God as well.

One little word of encouragement and affirmation can truly be a gift. And that one little gift can change us. Is that God?

And what about those moments when we feel a sense of calmness and of peace as well as moments of total wonder and awe that come in boundless places in our lives. Not only in sunrises and sunsets and glimpses of the majestic mountain

O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord. You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. Psalm 139:1-5

I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb.
Jeremiah 1:5a

The Lord replied to Moses, "I will indeed do what you have asked, for I look favorably on you and I know your name.
Exodus 33:17

I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep and they know me, just as my Father knows me and I know the Father.
John 10:14

peaks but in books, in music, while we are baking, or sitting in a quiet church, or maybe even while we are out running. God calls our names through all our ordinary life experiences.

We need to remember we can also hear God calling to us through our tears and at those times our hearts are broken. Being called by name is being totally known. Jesus knows who we are, he knows every joy and every sadness we have experienced. He is right by our side as we carry our worries and concerns as bravely as we can. God knows us. He has our number! It's because he adores us. And he is calling . . . all we have to do is listen.

So next time someone calls to ask how *you* are, be grateful for the gift they are giving to you. And when you go into the store with your nametag still on, and someone says hi to you and calls you by your name, could it be God calling? So listen carefully . . . God *is* calling your name.

Today as you become aware of the many moments in your life when something felt different . . . felt special . . . you will see how God has been calling you all along in those very experiences of your life.

You are being called by your name because you are precious and honored in God's sight, and he loves you beyond measure.

Listen with wonder and awe . . .

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me. See, on the portals he's waiting and watching, watching for you and for me.

Come home, come home. You who are weary come home. Earnestly tenderly Jesus is calling, calling, O sinner come home.

Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading, pleading for you and for me? Why should we linger and heed not his mercies, mercies for you and for me?

Come home, come home. You who are weary come home. Earnestly tenderly Jesus is calling, calling, O sinner come home.

Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised, promised for you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon, pardon for you and for me.

Come home, come home. You who are weary come home. Earnestly tenderly Jesus is calling, calling, O sinner come home.

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