

Call Unto Me

Jeremiah 33:3

Rock Hill Baptist Church
605 Rock Hill Road
Lexington, Tennessee 38351

Pastor David Buffaloe
731-845-6104
online at bibleteacher.org



FOCAL Read In Unison Jeremiah 33:3 Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not^{KJV}.

PRAYER O God, most high and glorious, the thought of Thine infinite serenity has often cheered us, for we are toiling and moiling, troubled and distressed here below beneath the moon, but Thou sittest for ever in perfect happiness. Thy designs cause Thee no care or fear, for Thou wilt surely carry them out. Thy purposes stand fast as the eternal hills Thy power knows no bound, Thy goodness no stint. Thou bringest order out of confusion, and our defeats are but Thy victories. We sow in tears, but Thou dost see us reap in joy. Our everlasting felicity is present to Thee, even while groans and mourning are our present lot. Glory be to the Lord most high, who sitteth on the clouds, who sitteth King for ever and ever. Our hearts rejoice to hear the gladsome tidings that the Lord reigneth. Let His kingdom be established over the sons of men, for His kingdom must come, and of it there will be no end. Behold, we come to Thy throne this morning bearing about with us a body of sin and death, and consequently much of sin, and much of care, and it may be much of sorrow; but we would be unburdened at Thy mercy-seat now. As for our cares we are ashamed that we have them, seeing Thou carest for us. We have trusted Thee now for many years, and Thy faithfulness has never been under suspicion, nor Thy love a matter of question. We therefore leave every concern about our families or about ourselves, about our business, or about

our souls, entirely with our God. And as for our sin, we bless Thee for a sight of the precious blood of Jesus when Thou seest it Thou dost pass over us. No angel of justice smites where once the blood is sprinkled. Oh, let us have a sight of the blood of Jesus, too, and rest because Thou hast for ever put away our sin, because we believe in Jesus. Thus, Lord, help us to stand before Thee, entering into Thy rest as we enter into Thy presence; and may this be a time of peace wherein the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep the hearts and minds of His people through Christ Jesus¹. In Christ's Name we humbly pray. Amen.

Introduction

As we enter what we call the “Thanksgiving Season”, let us all remember the words of that old hymn:

**Count your blessings, name them one by one,
Count your blessings, see what God hath done!
Count your blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done².**

This season most of America will gather around the table, eat until they can't move, then go to the television and spend the rest of the day watching sports. Though America has been richly blessed by God, few will take the time to thank Him this holiday season. If we only realized how blessed we are in comparison to other nations we would spend most of our days in a local

¹ From *The Pastor in Prayer* by C.H. Spurgeon

² Johnson Oatman, Jr., in *Songs for Young People*, by Edwin Excell (Chicago, Illinois: 1897). Music: Edwin O. Excell (MIDI, score).

Church thanking the One Who made us. Think about it, dear friends. We choose where to shop. In many countries you need “papers” to move from one area to the next, but in America we freely travel (often at excessive speed) from state to state. Most Americans will go to bed on Thanksgiving night filled and satisfied. Our poorest people are considered rich in other parts of the world. I personally visited one country where many citizens lived in graveyards because they could afford no better place to be. Though our political system isn't perfect (for it is staffed by imperfect people) America survives transitions of power much better than most other nations. Our system of government is built on checks and balances. All people over the age of 18 are encouraged to vote – to make their voices heard in national, state, and local politics. If we do not like our government we are free to remake it at the polls every few years. Never have we experienced the terror of a military coup, or of a dictator taking over and torturing us. God has blessed us, dear friends!

Yet life is not without its pain. We read in the Holy Scripture:

Job 14:1-2 Man [that is] born of a woman [is] of few days, and full of trouble. (2) He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

If you have lived at all you have experienced trouble in your life. Perhaps you have been betrayed by a friend.

Perhaps you have been mocked or unjustly accused of something. Perhaps you have lost your job. Perhaps you are subject to poor health. Perhaps you have been visited by death, and now grieve the loss of a loved one. Even in the land of plenty suffering visits. God's prophet Jeremiah suffered at the hands of wicked men. Yet there is a vast difference between the suffering of the unbeliever and the suffering of the believer. Those who have a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ have a Friend Who will not leave them in good times or in bad. Jeremiah had been cast into a dark, dank dungeon and left to die. All had abandoned him. As he sat in the dark (and who among us has not sat in the dark?) depression loomed like a dark cloud. Where was help? Where was hope? Then he heard these words, Heavenly Sunlight, break into his consciousness. God said **“Call unto Me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not”**.

Here is something to be thankful not just at Thanksgiving, but every single day. If you, dear friend, are in the Family of God by faith in Jesus Christ, God is your Father. You never walk alone, dear Christian. The day you **received God's gift of Grace (Romans 5:17)** by believing on Jesus, the Father **received you as adopted sons (Galatians 4:5)**. If you are saved by faith in Him that day has impacted your life in a way that only other believers can understand. You are no longer your own – **you are bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20)**. Jesus Christ took your sins upon Himself and stood in your place. The wrath of God was poured out on Him so that His righteousness could be placed on you.

You are God's dear Beloved. Be thankful, dear Christian, and praise Him Who saved you. Call unto Him in your trials. He will answer you, and guide you though His Word to a place of peace. Call unto Him, dear Believer. He will show you great things even in the midst of your suffering. **“Call unto Me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things that thou knowest not”**. Our forefathers believed this, and crossed a vast ocean to found America. When hunger and cold threatened they continued to call unto Him, to ask for blessing. The relationship they had with the Lord gave them the strength to continue on in spite of apparent overwhelming odds. Do you know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? Then call unto Him. He will answer – He always answers. And He will richly bless your life.

Call Unto God: The Proof Of Salvation

FOCAL Jeremiah 33:3 **Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.**

When trials come, many are *disconcerted or frightened* almost to the point of surrender. Listen Believer, a trial should not destroy you – it should exhilarate you and bless you. Why? Because a trial is a time for you to *prove your salvation* to yourself and to all who may see you. **Salvation is a life changing experience**. There are many who think that salvation is like *inoculation* – like getting a tetanus shot from the health center. Those who are saved know that they are *saved to serve*. The calling of the Christian is to *not follow the culture, but to shape the culture by the way you live for the Lord*. Have you

been saved? Have you come to Jesus for the cleansing atonement, and cast your all upon Him? If so He is there whether your life is in trial or in triumph. It was not until Jeremiah was *unjustly bound* and imprisoned that the Lord told him, “**Call unto Me, and I will answer thee**”. The Scripture tells us in another place:

1 Peter 1:6-8 Wherein **ye greatly rejoice**, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: (7) That **the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth**, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: (8) Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

The **trial of faith is much more precious than gold**. You have not seen Jesus, but you have proved Him, dear Christian, through every valley you have walked. The Christian is not someone who just prays to God *prior to a meal or every now and then*. The Christian is not someone who thinks of God in passing. The Christian is someone who has a *real relationship with God* – to whom God knows and is known.

ILLUSTRATE I could say along with each and every one of you that *I know the President of the United States*. We do know him – we have seen him in news and on the television. We know him. But do you think any one of us could walk up to the White House and walk through the

various security points without showing identification and getting permission? No, absolutely not! If we tried this we would immediately be handcuffed and carried away. Why? Because we *know the President in passing*. The President's wife, however, can and does walk past the security points at the White House. She moves freely from one room to the next because not only does she know the President – the President knows her! She has access to his private rooms, access that no reporter can go. Hear me, believer, and hear me well. If you know God in passing that is well and good – but if you expect to enter into His Private Rooms in His Heavenly Courtyard you had better hope that *He knows you!* If He knows you when you step into the fire He says, **Call unto Me and I will answer thee**. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (the three Hebrew children) did not come face to face with the Son of God until they stepped into the fiery furnace. When they came out of that furnace *not even the smoke of the fire clung to their clothes*. Are you a Daniel, cast into a pit of hungry lions? If you have the relationship with God that Daniel had you need not fear the lions, nor any trial that comes your way.

Too often we wail and moan at the trial rather than thanking God that it gives us an opportunity to try our faith. **Call unto Me**. Do you not know that God is just as close to you in the valley as He is on the mountain? Yet, dear friends, too often we call on everyone *but God* when trials come our way. Why wait until you exhaust every resource before calling on the God Who saved you by giving His life for you?

Call Unto God: The Power of Salvation

FOCAL Jeremiah 33:3 **Call unto me, and I will answer thee**, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

There is power in salvation, dear Believer, because we serve a powerful God. The Lord has told us:

Luke 12:32 **Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.**

It pleases God to bless His saints. We belong to Him, and belong *for* Him. God knows our need before we ever ask. Jesus told us:

Matthew 6:7-8 **But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. (8) Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.**

God knows our needs – and yet requires us to ask. The very next Scripture Jesus says:

Matthew 6:9 **After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.**

God knows our needs – and yet demands that we ask Him to fulfill our needs. It is God's Will that those in need **call unto Him**. He is watching and waiting for that call. Why does God want us to **Call unto Me**? Because God *despises pride and self sufficiency*. **Proverbs 6:17** tells us that **the proud look** is one of the things that God **hates**. Neither you nor I have the right to be prideful before God. We did not save ourselves, but were saved by the shedding of the Blood of Christ. **Dr. Charles Stanley** said:

"Prayer is an act of faith. Just by praying to God, you are declaring our trust in someone other than yourself. Your faith is increased as you pray and watch how God answers your prayers."

Trust God, dear friends, trust God *especially* in the trial. Trials do not come on us because God hates us, but because God allows the trial so we can better know Him as our personal Lord and Savior. **It is His pleasure to give us the Kingdom**. If we would first seek His Face, He has promised to answer and to bless us.

We serve an Awesome God! He is able! See this illustrated in the life of Christ (**Matthew chapters 8 - 9**).

BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATIONS **The Lord of Glory, Jesus Christ** was showing the Grace of God to all who would watch. Our Master heard a **leper cry unto Him** and – wonder of wonders – He answered that cry. Jesus touched the leper and he was made clean in mere seconds. The Savior heard a **Gentile cry out for his servant**. Jesus spoke a word, and the same Voice that

created the Heavens and the earth brought new life to that suffering man. Tired, the Lord told the disciples to take Him across the Sea of Galilee to **the other side (Matthew 8:18)**. “Let's go to the other side”. Perhaps halfway across the waves became rough enough to cause these seasoned fishermen to **cry out to Jesus in the bow of the boat**. He answered – He always answers – and the same Voice that healed the Gentile servant calmed the seas.

The boat touches down near a graveyard. As Jesus steps from the boat **two madmen (Matthew 8:28)** run toward the disciples **crying “What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?”** Creation was formed with four words - “Let there be light” - but it only took *one word* - “Go” - and the demons left the poor men.

The disciples and Jesus get back in the boat and pass over once more to **Nazareth**. Here Jesus heals a man **sick of the palsy (Matthew 9:1)**. He sits down with **drunkards (Matthew 9:10)**, and is wrongly accused of being a drunkard Himself. A **woman with an issue of blood (Matthew 9:20)** speaks nothing to Jesus, **but in her heart cries out for healing**. One touch of the Master's robe heals her. Jesus passes by a **dead child** and, hearing the heart's cry of her parents **raises the dead (Matthew 9:25)**.

Do you see where we are going with this? Why should we when suffering **call unto God**? Because God alone is able. Jesus Christ is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. **He is Lord over disaster, demons, disease,**

drunkenness, destitution, dying, and death. Why wander from port to port looking for blessing when our Creator alone is the Haven of Rest?

We spend so much time seeking our own solutions when we should be seeking the Glory of God. Jeremiah focused on his suffering while trapped in that prison, but we who are Christians do exactly the same thing.

ILLUSTRATE When suffering comes we focus on the pain then, foolishly, we begin to cast the net of hope into every dead body of water in hopes that we will find a solution. In ancient Israel no fisherman ever went to the Dead Sea and cast a net because it was a known fact that the water was so salty (about 30%) that nothing lived in it. On the other hand, many fishermen worked the Sea of Galilee.

When we suffer and focus on every method of alleviating our pain *but calling unto God* we are fishing in the Dead Sea. Better to cast your net in the Living Waters that is God! He has promised **I will answer thee**. If you are one of His children He will answer you. As the Psalmist said:

Psalms 46:5 God [is] in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, [and that] right early.

God watches over His people. He was watching Jeremiah as he suffered. The question that immediately comes to most of our minds is, *Why didn't God head off Jeremiah's suffering?* The answer is quite simple. We never grow in our knowledge of God as well as we grow

in adversity. **Call unto Me and I will answer thee.** God wants to show Jeremiah that He is in control of all things. God will answer if we call.

Call Unto God: The Promise of Salvation

FOCAL Jeremiah 33:3 **Call unto me, and I will answer thee**, and shew thee great³ and mighty⁴ things, which thou knowest not.

God always answers prayer – this is His promise to those who love Him. Yet God is a Good Father – He does not give His children everything they ask for.

➤ **God answers prayer from a heart of True Love**

→ When God told Jeremiah, “**Call unto Me and I will answer thee**”, He answered prayer in a way that was best for Jeremiah. When Jeremiah called out to God the Lord showed him great things that were coming – but did not immediately release him from prison. God asks us to pray, to call upon Him and – in love – to believe that He knows what is best. **God is love**

3 H1419, גדול גדול, gâdôl gâdôl, gaw-dole', gaw-dole', From H1431; great (in any sense); hence *older*; also *insolent*: - + aloud, elder (-est), + exceeding (-ly), + far, (man of) great (man, matter, thing, -er, -ness), high, long, loud, mighty, more, much, noble, proud thing, X sore, (') very.

4 H1219, בצר, bâtsar, baw-tsar', A primitive root; to *clip* off; specifically (as denominative from H1210) to *gather* grapes; also to *be isolated* (that is, *inaccessible* by height or fortification): - cut off, (de-) fenced, fortify, (grape) gather (-er), mighty things, restrain, strong, wall (up), withhold.

(1 John 4:16), and certainly loves His own dear children. We must trust Him and submit no matter what the case.

➤ **God answers prayer in a way that will lead you to spiritual higher ground**

→ God has promised to answer us if we call on Him – but does that answer *always include relief from our affliction*? Not necessarily. God never answers prayer *carte blanche*. The cults and cultists on Trinity Broadcasting may spew this error out, but it is not supported by Scripture. God did not immediately free Jeremiah from prison, but the Lord did show Jeremiah the future – and give him a message to speak to the children of Israel. *This was the greater blessing*. The Apostle Paul cried out to God to relieve him from his suffering. God replied, **My Grace is sufficient for you (2 Corinthians 12:9)**. The suffering that God allowed the Apostle to go through equipped him to do greater things in his spiritual walk.

Ephesians 3:20-21 Now **unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, (21) Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.**

→ Would you be used of God as was the **Apostle**

Paul, Adrian Rogers, or C.H. Spurgeon?

Then trust God in the trial, and look toward the higher plane. God promised to lead Jeremiah toward **great and mighty things which thou knowest not**. The Christian is designed by God to be shown **great and mighty things which thou knowest not**. The Christian way of life is ever growing, ever going, ever telling others about the Lord and Savior. Look at the words **great and mighty things**. These are two Hebrew words that mean **noble** and **fortified, beyond the reach**. The New International Version translates this **great and unsearchable things**. The Holman Christian Standard Version translates this as **great and wondrous things**. In any version the intent of the text is that God will take us. If you will trust Him and obey Him even in the midst of the trial, you will be richly blessed.

Call Unto God: One Final Plea

FOCAL Jeremiah 33:3 **Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.**

God is preeminent – over all things and above all lives. He is the One and Only Source of eternal and temporal blessing. If you are a child of God, then you became His child by **entering the narrow gate that is Christ**.

Matthew 7:13-14 "Enter through the narrow gate. For **the gate is wide and the road is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who go through it. (14) How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it.**

You believed that Jesus was the Only Way to God (**John 14:6**). You trusted in Him and, on bended knee, gave your life to Him forever. You, dear friend, are no longer the same. Because God gave you life, He is prominent and preeminent in your life. The great pastor **C.H. Spurgeon** said:

“God's people will never thrive on anything less substantial than bread from heaven. Israel in Egypt might live on garlic and onions, but Israel in the wilderness must be fed with the manna that came down from heaven, and with the water that gushed out of the rock, when it was smitten by the rod of God. The child of God, while he is yet in his sins, may, like other men, revel in them, and the pleasures and follies of this world may be his delight; but when he is once brought out of Egypt, by the high hand of God's purpose, and the almighty hand of God's strength, he will never live on anything less than God's promise and God's truth.”⁵

The Christian ever seeks a closer walk with His Savior.

⁵ His sermon THINGS UNKNOWN, NO. 2664, INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, MARCH 4TH, 1900, DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON, AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL SOUTHWARK, ON A LORD'S-DAY EVENING, EARLY IN THE YEAR 1858.

The unsaved, however, rarely thinks of the Master. Our prayer is that each of you will *trust Him unto salvation* – repent of your current way of life and *surrender by faith to Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior*. May God touch your hearts with these words.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

