



Called by Name
ISAIAH 43:1

He fell to the ground. He heard a voice speak to him. "Saul! Saul!" the voice said. "Why are you opposing me?"

—Acts 9:4 NIV

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New Testament Devotion

Saul: Called to Proclaim

Think about your name.

- **Were you named after someone or is there a reason you have the name you have?**
- **Do you like your name? Why or why not?**

We each have been given a name. It is used when others want our attention or when we want to let others know something belongs to us. Some people use a shortened version of their name and others use a nickname. In any case, you are called something by others.

There are many different ways our name can be called out loud. There are nice, loving tones; for example, "I like you, Joshua." There are also mean ways or protective ways to use names; for example, "Joshua! Stop that!"

- **Can you think of times when it may be really important to get someone's attention by shouting?**

In today's Bible verse, God is shouting Saul's name. (Reread the Bible verse.) God is trying to get Saul's attention because Saul did not believe Jesus was God's Son. God was unhappy with Saul and wanted him to change his life. God wanted Saul to tell others about Jesus and how he died on the cross to save us from our sins. God wanted Saul to tell others about forgiveness and heaven. God wanted Saul to stop hurting Christians in God's name and proclaim Jesus' story to everyone he met.

God had a plan for Saul and God has a plan for us. God calls us by name to help others know his Son Jesus. God wants us to proclaim Jesus' story. God wants us to tell others we are forgiven because Jesus died to save us. God wants us to proclaim to others that when we believe in Jesus as God's Son, we can live in heaven some day.

- **Do you know anyone who needs to hear about Jesus and forgiveness?**
- **Do you know anyone who needs to hear about Jesus and heaven?**
- **What could you tell someone who needs to hear about Jesus?**
- **How could you learn more about Jesus and his story?**

When we pray and ask God to guide us, when we study God's Word in the Bible, and when we serve others, we learn more about Jesus and his love. God has called us to proclaim Jesus' story and God has called us by name to belong to his family.

Let's say Isaiah 43, verse 1 together three times. Before each time say your own name twice at the beginning. For example, I would say, "Name, name, I have called you by name, you are mine. Isaiah 43:1." (Note: Have group say the verse three times, adding their own name at the beginning of each line.)

Prayer: Dear God our Father, thank you for calling us to be in your family. Help us proclaim Jesus' story to others so they may also come to you. Forgive us when we are afraid to tell others about you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.