

7 ACTS 4:1-22

The refreshment of Jesus is better than silver or gold.

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Call to Worship

God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. — Philippians 2:9-11

Songs

Cornerstone
In Christ Alone / The Solid Rock
Christ is Made Our Sure Foundation
Jesus Name Above All Names
What a Beautiful Name

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME: We are glad you are here! Be sure to grab a Welcome Packet from the Welcome Center if you are visiting with us.

GIVING: You can still give over Zelle through your bank with no fees.

Use secretary@livinghopechurch.net.

We also have a collection box on the Welcome Center

Verse: "Call unto me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things which you do not yet know."—Jeremiah 33:3

This is a promise from the Lord. "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." – Malachi 3:10

Life Group: Most meet Wednesday at 7pm. Jerry's meets in Bloomingdale at 7pm in Itasca.

Farewell Fellowship: for Pastor Garcia, May 16 after the service. We are asking you to bring a Spanish dish and a side or dessert.

March 21: Matt will be preaching at another church in the area this Sunday.

Joktans moving: Ahmed and Stephanie are moving to Florida. Stephanie's parents are already there.

Introduction

We continue our series in the book of Acts called "Life on Life Discipleship." Our title this morning is: "No Other Name".

I am deeply desirous that our church exalts the name of Jesus. There is no other name under heaven by which people are saved. There is no greater joy than for the Spirit to fill us.

Key Thought: There is no name like Jesus. Every knee will bow, but Christians today should bow their knee and confess with their tongue that Jesus Christ is Lord!

So how are there people who don't see the glory of Jesus' name? Some of it is that there are lost people among us. That's shocking, but it's something we need to face. If you do not have the Spirit moving in your life, it could be that you are knowledgeable but lost. So many that are so on fire today would confess to you that for years they were lost church members. So please know if you do not have the Spirit of God, then you do not have eternal life.

As a believer, the only reason that you would not be filled with the Spirit is that you've given place to the devil through anger or anxiety or worldliness. Is your heart cold? How can your heart be cold? Let the love of Jesus warm your heart this morning. His arms are open. His name is exalted. His love is infinite. Let us all listen to his call to come to him. There were many in the time of the book of Acts who neglected their heart, and they were hardened and cold.

1. THE GLORY JESUS' NAME (4:1-12)

The name of Jesus can melt hearts, amen? That's why we must lift up the name of Jesus always. But in the events of the story in Acts 4, we are going to see Satan blinding the eyes of people in high places. But these uneducated, poor apostles are humble and unafraid. They lift up the name of Jesus. Before we look at the glory of Jesus' name, I want us to look with pity at the blindness that people who know the Bible are in.

UNBELIEVERS CAN'T SEE JESUS' GLORY (4:1-7)

My heart is first moved with astonishment at the cold hearts of the leaders of Israel.

The Rulers' Annoyance

Acts 4:1-2a | And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, ² greatly annoyed.

They see the greatest miracles, and their response is annoyance? How cold and hard they are. They witnessed the life and miracles of the Lord of glory, and they crucified him. But he rose again. They even witness the miracle of a lame man that they were very familiar with. They had seen him day after day, but yet they can still have a cold, unmoved heart. That's terrible frightening that a human heart can be so hard. How can a heart be so hard that you could see the love of God poured out in front of you, and be annoyed and angry like these Jewish rulers?

The Rulers' Theology

Acts 4:2 | Greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

Why are they so annoyed? Because they have bad theology. The Sadducees were the main rulers in the Temple. Most of the priests are Sadducees. Most of the teachers of the law in the synagogues are Pharisees. The Sadducees administrate the Temple. Most of the high priests are Sadducees. They are annoyed at the apostles because they are teaching the resurrection of Jesus. The Sadducees are "sad you see" because they deny the resurrection.

The Sadducees were people who believed in morality, but once you die, that's it. They do not believe in any other part of the Bible or religion. They did not believe in the supernatural. They didn't believe in miracles. They didn't believe in resurrection. They didn't believe in afterlife. They didn't believe in a spiritual world at all. They're what we today would call secular people, moral rationalists. Religious liberals, you might call them.¹ There were about 5000 Sadducees at the time of Jesus, slightly less than the 7000 Pharisees.

Just consider that you have Temple that God gave to his people to bless them with his presence through the Spirit. And here they are so blind and coldhearted that they forbid the miracles and message of Jesus. Realize that these are leaders that study the Bible for a living. You can read the Bible and be cold and hard if you don't give up your life to Jesus. Just take this as a warning and beware. Don't think just because a person is using the Bible that they are safe. Many wolves use the Bible. Be careful saints.

¹ Timothy J. Keller, *The Timothy Keller Sermon Archive*, "Unbelief" from the series on The Book of Acts—October 22, 1995, *Acts 4:1–20* (New York City: Redeemer Presbyterian Church, 2013).

The Rulers' Powerlessness

Acts 4:3-4 And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

Because it was getting late, the authorities locked up the two apostles for the night. All that night news would be coming in of rejoicing among the thousands who had been born again that day. The whole city must have been humming with the news. The story of the healing, excerpts from Peter's sermon, the joy of those who had been so deeply convicted but who were now in the family of God rang through the city. What a stir there must have been.² Ultimately, the Jewish rulers could arrest Peter and John, but **they could not stop the power of Jesus through the Holy Spirit** from changing and transforming lives.

God wants his heaven full, and no one will stop him. **Five thousand men**, likely heads of households, came to know Jesus that day. If you count the wives and children, it's **more like twenty thousand!** Give yourself to Christ. Yield to the mighty Spirit of God.

This growth of the church is something we have every right to wish to see occur again in our time. Then, as now, it must be viewed as a sovereign outpouring of the Spirit.³ The only thing stopping the church from growing is you grieving the Holy Spirit. Start yielding to the Spirit and see him touch hearts and change lives.

The Rulers' Court Case

Acts 4:5-6 On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, ⁶ with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family.

Now all the powerful people are gathered. This was a gathering of the Sanhedrin. What an impressive crowd it was that gathered there that day to intimidate two Galilean fishermen. The Sanhedrin was composed of seventy-two members—the high priest being the president of the court. The liberal Sadducees, who dominated it, didn't want to hear anything of a resurrection. A powerful minority was made up of Pharisees, a party to which most of the scribes (the professional expositors and preachers of the Bible) belonged.

Annas was the previous high priest, who had great power. Five of his sons, a grandson, and son-in-law (Caiaphas) occupied the office after him. Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas. Remember, he's the one who tried Jesus in his kangaroo court.⁴ How bad can this go? But Peter and John have no fear. They listen to the question given by these powerful people.

The Rulers' Question

Acts 4:7 And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"

² John Phillips, *Exploring Acts: An Expository Commentary*, The John Phillips Commentary Series (Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp., 2009), Ac 4:3–4.

³ Derek W. H. Thomas, *Acts*, ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2011), 95.

⁴ Phillips, *Acts*, Ac 4:5–6.

What power, what authority, what name is giving you this miraculous power? They all knew the man that had been healed. He was around forty years old, so he had been there likely since he was small. He was crippled. All were taught to give generously to the crippled and poor. God's people were the "government assistance."

And there it was, out in the open, the crux of everything: the question of the *name*. Peter could not have been asked a better leading question. Unwittingly they handed him his text on a silver platter. Thus, God makes the wrath of man to praise him. The anger of Jesus' foes is used to introduce the glory of his Name.⁵

Isn't it amazing that in persecution, we don't have to over think things? God has promised to give us the words we need at the time we need it.

BELIEVERS BOLDLY PREACH JESUS (4:8-12)

Peter, fresh from Pentecost and now fresh from a miracle is filled with the Holy Spirit. He's ready to proclaim the Name of Jesus!

The Power of Jesus

Acts 4:8-9 | Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹ if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed.

What have we done? Is it a sin to demonstrate the power of Jesus? Is it wrong to bring the power of the new creation to this crippled man that we all know? Peter asks, "Are we on trial for doing a good deed for a lame man?" They all know this man. Peter is bold. Peter is ready to answer the question. By what power was this man healed? Peter answers.

The Name of Jesus

Acts 4:10 | Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well.

Salvation has always been by grace through faith in Jesus. Some have said, "In the Old Testament they came to God through the Law." This is false. No one can draw near to God in his own works. David is clear about this.

If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? — *Psalm 130:3*

Isaiah preached Christ when he said:

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. —*Isaiah* 53:6

The One who healed this lame man who is now leaping? His name is Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! What a name! The name above all names! Peter says, "You know this Jesus well, because not long ago, you crucified him. But now he is risen from the dead. You couldn't' keep him dead." Look at the boldness that comes when we are filled with the Spirit.

⁵ John Phillips, *Acts*, Ac 4:7.

This is the same Peter who a couple of months before had trembled before a slip of a girl and denied his Lord with cursing, frightened since he, too, could be arrested and crucified. This new boldness was the result of the resurrection and the filling of the Holy Spirit. **Saints, this is the boldness we need to live in.**

The Prophecy of Jesus

Acts 4:11 | This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.

Peter quotes a wonderful prophecy which we love to sing about. ⁷ Jesus is the Architect of our salvation. They knew the quote well. It was from Psalm 118:22, a recognized prophecy that God's King would come into the world and be rejected. Peter made it personal. "Jesus is the stone that was rejected *by you*, the builders." For the leaders of Israel, it was not a wonderful prophecy. They were to build the true temple in Christ, but they rejected the main foundation stone. It spoke of how they rejected their Lord and Savior. They crucified the One who is the only way of salvation.

How shocking that God the Son offers himself as the foundation of these leaders' lives. They study the Bible for a living. But they reject him over and over again: in his life (they put him to death), after his resurrection, and after he is exalted in healing. Unbelief is shocking. Peter gets to the point of why this rejection is so tragic.

The Exclusivity of Jesus

Acts 4:12 | And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Jesus is the exclusive way to heaven. Jesus said,

I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. —John 14:6

The name of Jesus, by which the lame man had been healed; the name they hated, was the only name by which they could be saved. They could be saved. They must be saved. But first they must turn to the very Jesus they had crucified and slain. God would save even them on those terms. Is there grace greater than that?

Saints, let's proclaim everywhere to everyone that Jesus is the only way of salvation.

Jesus said, "I am the Door" (Jn 10:9), insisting that "he who does not enter the sheepfold by the Door, the same is a thief and a robber" (Jn 10:1).

Consider this belief in the Roman world. In the Roman world, you would've believed certain things. First, everybody believed that there were many gods, many religions. Secondly, every god had limited sovereignty. It meant you had a god of Ephesus, but the god of Ephesus wasn't the god of Sparta. There were gods of agriculture or love or war. Finally, in Roman society, there was no one god who was *the one true God* over all the rest.⁸ That makes sense,

⁶ Phillips, *Acts*, Ac 4:8–10.

⁷ "Christ is Made the Sure Foundation", "Cornerstone", "In Christ Alone".

⁸ Keller, sermon on "Unbelief" from Acts 4.

because that's how the demonic world is. Demons are regional rulers. They are limited created beings, and all the false gods of this world are actually just demons.

People who do not know God bring gifts of animals in worship. But they have given them to demons, not to God. —1 Corinthians 10:18, NLV

Now in the Jewish world, to say Jesus is the only way, that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus, is offensive to both the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees were deceived thinking salvation was through keeping the Law of Moses. And Sadducees were deceived because they just denied that there was an afterlife or that anyone had to meet God. They were like Deists who thought God put the world into motion and just walked away from it. The god of the Sadducees was completely impersonal.

Our God is the one true and living God revealing himself as the Triune God of the Scriptures: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If you want to come to the Father, you have to go through the Son of God. There is no other way. And Jesus paid it all. It's by grace we are saved through faith in Christ. In Christ alone our hope is found! We can't say it better than the bold words of Peter:

Acts 4:12 | And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Praise the Lord for the glory of Jesus' name! There is no one like him: King of kings, Lord of lords! He's the second Person of the Trinity! He is the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. He's the Architect of our salvation, the Foundation and Cornerstone of the Church. He's my great High Priest. He's the Way, the Truth, and the Life! He's my Prophet, Priest, and King. Unto Jesus be all glory, honor and praise!

He's the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. He's the Lion of the Tribe of Judah that judges the world. He's the only Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. He's my good Shepherd. He's the Door for the sheep. He's my Living Water. He's my Bread of Life.

And there is salvation in no other. Mr. Good Works won't get you there. Good intentions won't get you there. Your parents' faith won't get you there. Denying the existence of God won't get you there. Can I try to fix myself or save myself? Can I do penance and punish myself enough? Well, what can wash away my sins? What can make me whole again? Nothing. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing but the blood of Jesus! Jesus is the only way. Never forget it.

Spurgeon says, Christianity must be a very narrow, negative religion, for there is clearly no other way.

A thousand errors may live in peace with one another, but truth is the hammer that breaks them all in pieces. A hundred lying religions may sleep peaceably in one bed, but wherever the Gospel of Christ goes as the truth, it is like a firebrand, and it abides nothing that is not more substantial than the wood, the hay, and the stubble of carnal error. All the gods of the heathen, and all other religions are born of hell, and therefore, they are children of the same father, the devil. ...But God, who is the author of all truth, says that whoever rejects the loving Christ shall perish without mercy.... We are not the intolerant ones, for we are but echoing the words of him that speaks from heaven, and who declares, that

cursed is the man who rejects this religion of Christ, seeing that there is no salvation out of him.

God would have his heaven full. We are not intolerant ones! "God is not willing that any should perish" (2 Pet 3:9). He "desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4). "The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people" (Titus 2:11). "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim 1:15). Jesus stretches out his hands to sinners everywhere and says:

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." —*Matthew 11:28-30*

Come to Jesus. He paid the price. There is no other Savior. No one else lived the perfect life for you. No one else satisfies God's justice perfectly for your sins. Come! The door is open wide but come to Jesus while you can! There will be a day when the door is closed. Death is coming. Christ is returning. Run to Jesus while you can!

2. THE GREATNESS JESUS' FAME (4:13-22)

Now who is it that makes Jesus famous?

THOSE WHO PROMOTE JESUS' FAME

Jesus' followers are nobodies. Jesus gets all the glory from his people, because he resists the proud and only calls the humble to speak for him.

Uneducated Men

Acts 4:13 Now when they [the Jewish rulers] saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

The rulers of Israel are astonished. The apostles' only qualification was "that they had been with Jesus." These men were bold. Why were they bold? They had been with Jesus. They had seen Christ alive, resurrected, and now Christ lives in them. And all of the forces of hell could not intimidate them. They could not shut them up, and they could not hold them back. The apostles refused to let up, shut up, or back up, because they were filled with the Spirit of God and the presence of Jesus.

The ignorant rulers of Israel notice that Peter and John are not sophisticated. They have no education. The only glory any of us have is that we boast in the Cross of Jesus Christ. Education is nothing. Sophistication is nothing. All our achievements are dung compared to the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. The rulers perceived that these men "had been with Jesus." That's the recognition I want!

Don't get me wrong: I'm glad we have education. I'm glad we have all the wonderful opportunities we have in this country that is free for now. But what does education matter if you don't know Jesus? **Our greatest achievement will not be what we accomplished on this earth**, but **what Jesus accomplished** in and through us! He saved me!

Hallelujah! And as we follow him, we are pointing others to Christ. Our greatest honor is to spread the fame of Jesus' name! So who is it that God uses to spread Jesus' fame? The nobodies. Those who do not trust in education, though we may be educated. We do not trust in riches, though God may have blessed us with financial gain. Our only boast is the One who saved me, died for me, rose from the dead for me. We really are nobodies. The Jewish rulers were shocked at who God was using!

Now here's someone else God uses: a cripple—a lame man who is now leaping!

A Healed Man

Acts 4:14-16 | But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. ¹⁵ But when they had commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another, ¹⁶ saying, "What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

Peter and John were not trained interpreters of Scripture from the rabbinic tradition. They didn't have theological book training. Their training was from the Lord himself. Forbidding lay Christians in handling and interpreting the Bible has been a frequent issue in church history. Central to the Reformation was the urgency to translate the Bible into the common language of the people. That means today, Christians with little or no formal training, using the "ordinary means" of reading the Scriptures themselves, listening to sermons, reading daily devotional guides, attending Bible studies and faithful online Web sites, may come to know God and walk with him, without the assistance of professionals. As the Westminster Confession of Faith puts it:

All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but *the unlearned*, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.⁹ — Westminster Confession of Faith

What did these men know? Well, they knew Jesus. And because of knowing Jesus, they knew the Scriptures better than the Sadducees and Pharisees. Peter and John knew the prophecy of Jesus being the chief Cornerstone and Architect of our salvation who was rejected (cf 4:11). God doesn't choose many mighty or many wise.

For or you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: ²⁷ But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; ²⁸ And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nothing things that are: ²⁹ That no flesh should glory in his presence... ³¹ That, according

⁹ Westminster Assembly, *The Westminster Confession of Faith: Edinburgh Edition* (Philadelphia: William S. Young, 1851), 19.

as it is written, "He that glories, let him glory in the Lord."—1 Corinthians 1:26-31

THOSE WHO OPPOSE JESUS' FAME

In the midst of the power of Jesus being demonstrated in the lame man, and the power of the prophecy of Scripture being displayed in the humility of Peter and John, it's an amazing display of God: his power and his Word! But the blind can't see. The deaf can't hear. The truly crippled ones were not the ones lying outside the temple, but it was the ones running the temple and the leaders who were supposed to be teaching the Word of God. But they were deaf and blind. That's why they warn the apostles to stop preaching Jesus.

The Leaders' Decree

Acts 4:17-18 | But in order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name." ¹⁸ So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

Astonishing! They see the power of God in the leaping man who was once lame. This is the name, that likely 20,000 people in the Temple were flocking to. And they think they can stop the spread of Jesus' fame with a mere warning?

The Leaders' Defiance

Acts 4:19-20 | But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, ²⁰ for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."

Peter and John want to be respectful. They are not there to rebel against their authorities. But what do Christians do when our authorities are asking us to sin? What do we do when the government tells us to stop talking about Jesus? I love what R.C. Sproul says about this.

Only a few weeks had gone by since the Apostles had heard the words of Jesus that we call the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19). Jesus gave to Peter and to John and to the entire church of the first century a mandate. It is our mandate too. If any authority under heaven comes to the Christian and tells him he may not pray, or preach, or gather for worship, or tithe, or do any of the things God commands, that Christian not only may disobey, but he must disobey. -R.C. Sproul

The Leaders' Dilemma

At the end of the day, the dilemma and great difficulty was not on Peter and John and the now more than 23,000 followers of Jesus. The dilemma is on the unbelieving religious leaders at the Temple. They are lost in their sin. The power of God is breaking out through

¹⁰ R. C. Sproul, *Acts*, St. Andrew's Expositional Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 100–101.

the Spirit and the Word. Revival is happening. And the leaders can't disprove it. God is working. Everyone is praising God. How sad and so ironic are the leaders' actions.

Acts 4:21-22 | And when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened. ²² For the man on whom this sign of healing was performed was more than forty years old.

The leaders threatened the Christians. That's all they could do because it's not a crime to praise God, Amen! At least it wasn't at that moment. The man who was healed was more than forty years old. Imagine the one who they saw all those years. They knew him. He's leaping and jumping and praising God. Why won't these leaders join and rejoice in God for what he has done. That's the frightening thing about hardness of heart. It ignores the great work of God.

Conclusion

So my conclusion today is: don't harden your heart. No matter what you are going through, it's not to fix your job of fix your marriage. The answer is to fix your eyes on Jesus. The "baseball" evangelist Billy Sunday, who was saved at Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago said:

There are two hundred and fifty-six names given in the Bible for the Lord Jesus Christ, and I suppose this was because He was infinitely beyond all that any one name could express.¹¹ —Evangelist Billy Sunday

Great names come and go, but the name of Jesus remains. The devil still hates it, the world still opposes it, but God still blesses it, and we can still claim it! It is "at the Name of Jesus" that every knee will bow, and every tongue confess the Lordship and Deity of Jesus Christ. If God is your Abba, Father, then you know that his Son Jesus is the only way, the truth and the life. There's no other way to know God the Father. There's no one like Jesus. Drop everything and come to him. Follow him. His arms are open. There is no other name under heaven whereby people can be saved.

¹¹ Billy Sunday in Elijah P. Brown. *The Real Billy Sunday: The Life and Work of Rev. William Ashley Sunday, The Baseball Evangelist* (Dayton, OH: Otterbein Press, 1914), 272.