

No Other Name

Series on the book of Acts

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Bible Text: Acts 4:1-12

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Do take your Bibles or use the bulletin and the print out of the passage we are looking at this evening, Acts chapter four verses one to 12.

There was a shepherd in a field in England looking after his sheep when a smart BMW drew up out the gate of the field and stopped. A man in a suit got out and started questioning the shepherd about his sheep. Who do they belong to? What were they each worth? What would they be sold for? When would they be sold?

Eventually the shepherd... he said to the shepherd, "If I can tell you exactly how many sheep you have in your field, will you give one of your sheep to me?"

Well, it was a big field with lots of sheep in it, so the shepherd said, "Yes."

So the man replied, "There are 231 sheep."

So the shepherd had to let the man have his choice of animal from the field. And as the man in the suit was triumphantly bundling this animal into the back of his BMW the shepherd said, "Wait a minute, if I can tell you what your job is, can I have it back?"

The man said, "Yes."

The Shepherd, "I reckon you are a management consultant."

The man said, "How on earth did you know what?"

"Well," said the shepherd, "You came along without being invited. You asked a lot of silly questions. You told me something I already knew. Then you charged me for it. And now I discover that you don't what you are talking about. Could I please have my sheep dog back?"

We love it when the expert is made to look a fool, although we are not so happy when we ourselves are shown up to have to climb down for one reason or another.

And this is an interesting passage in that here we have the experts, the theological experts of Israel and they are exposed, really, for their inadequacies and, well, if it wasn't so tragic, it would be laughable, but the same characters appear in this passage. I don't know if you noticed that, that have appeared before in the Bible story, the same characters that you hear about in the story of Jesus' arrest and trial just a few months before, I imagine, this event has taken place.

Here they are and they have their walk on part on the stage of history once again. And they are devastated by the message that this man Peter who is not a trained theologian has to communicate. The message is succinctly captured in those words we said together earlier in verse 12.

“...salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”¹

Now the background to this and, indeed, to the events of this chapter and a bit of the next chapter and all of the third chapter has been the healing of a crippled man that you can read about in chapter three. And one of the things of this miracle and the reason why so much time is spent on it in the gospel is concerned is that it has highlighted a number of things that are going on.

First of all, it has established the apostles of Jesus as the prophetic successors of Jesus through their healing power and through their convicting proclamation.

Secondly, it has implied that the restoration of Israel which was predicted in the Old Testament as beginning in Jerusalem has now begun, a restoration of the true Israel, those who are truly believers are coming to the fruition of their faith which the New Testament apostles have said is faith in Jesus. Jesus' prediction that the apostles would rule over the 12 tribes of Israel is already in the process of fulfillment as significant numbers of Jews are being converted to Christianity.

Thirdly, the emergence of a renewed Israel, that is, an Israel that is believing, believing in the promises of God, focused on Christ, has exposed and has profoundly threatened the leaders of the old order. That is where we pick up the story today.

And you can understand why they were feeling somewhat threatened. Let me read to you from the end of chapter three just a few verses where Peter is speaking, declaring to the people. He is talking. He is going round the authorities talking to the masses of the people and here is what he says.

The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be

¹ Acts 4:12.

granted to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.²

And so Peter has not been mealy mouthed about this. He has been straightforward. I don't even know what mealy mouth means, I don't suppose. But he has been straightforward in declaring.

And now we have the fall out of the miracle and the message here in chapter four.

Two things stand out in this chapter that I want to look at. Don't get your hopes up. Just because there is two points does not mean that it will be shorter than three point sermons. It probably won't be, but you can live in that illusion for a moment.

But there are two points. First of all, the response to the gospel and then the defense of the gospel.

I am just doing this so that you know I can preach a two point sermon and not only three point ones.

So the opening verses, then of chapter four tell us that the gospel has had a two fold result. Two things are happening and they are happening side by side. On the one hand there is increasing opposition to the gospel. And on the other hand there is this expanding harvest of the gospel as more and more and people are being added to the company of the disciples.

The crucial thing here is the Word. Many of those who heard believed and the number of men came in about 5000 or added to them become 5000 all together. Three thousand already on the day of Pentecost, 2000 men now, over 5000 men plus their hangers on, women and children. It is a growing crowd of people who have come to faith in Christ.

And the Word is their message. The Word is their Christ centered good news. And now it is extending its influence to more and more people.

Coincidentally, just throwing this in. This is a freebie. You don't pay for this bit of information tonight, but in the book of Acts the way in which the expanding mission of the Church is described over and over again it is described in terms of the spread of the Word. The Word gets out to the people. The Word grows. The Word expands. And through the Word people are more and more people are added to the number of the disciples.

So it is not surprising at one level, then, that now the officials are greatly annoyed. That is what we are told they were in verse two, greatly annoyed. Literally they were worn out in their frustration at what was going on with these Christians. And they are determined they are going to confront it head on. They bring Peter and they bring him before them, because he has been speaking to the people.

² Acts 3:13-15.

Look at verse one. He has been speaking to the people and so they bring these disciples in before them.

And we are given a list of who they were. There is the priests. There is the captain of the temple guards. He is the highest ranking priest under the high priest. He was responsible for the policing of the temple courts. And then there are the Sadducees which, although they had no distinctive role in the Sanhedrin, nonetheless, most of the priests that operated in the temple belonged to this party and they were also very influential lay people in Jewish society who were members of the Sadducean party.

They are a miserable lot, the Sadducees, that is why they are sad, you see.

Anyway, all of these people are gathered together against the apostle. I shouldn't do that, really. I just shouldn't do that. Sorry.

They are gathered together against the apostles who had really effectively usurped their teaching role. After all, that is what they were there for. They were paid to do the teaching to the people. And now there were these men who weren't paid to do this, who didn't have any official role in Israel or in the church of that day and therefore, they are... they are insinuating themselves into the people. That phrase in verse one "the people" and in verse two "teaching the people" that is a technical word for Israel, for the covenant people of God. It is rich with covenant language from the Old Testament. They are God's chosen people.

Later on in chapter five verse 17 we are told what really was driving them mad. What was really wearing them out was their frustration due to jealousy, downright jealousy. Here were these individuals who were gathering the masses and they were not.

But their biggest problem of all was this, that they were proclaiming, these men were proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

You see, there is a reason why these Sadducees are sad people, because they were made up of the chief priests and the elders and they priestly and lay nobility, but they denied that on the last day there would ever be a general resurrection from the dead.

So they had these theological problems. They did not believe, really, in the supernatural. They didn't believe in angels. They didn't believe in eternal life. They were people who were focused on the here and now. Their view of religion was that religion is about there, what we can do here. And they were particularly abusing the system politically, socially and religiously. They saw this whole movement of Christianity as destabilizing to them. Not only that, but they were making a quick buck out of religion. We know that. They found that religion paid and they were making money, wielding power, showing and having influence over the religious institutions of Israel and they were afraid that as in the case of Jesus, these Christians might destabilize the relationship with the Romans.

So we start the passage by seeing here are people who are rejecting the Christian message.

And I just want to tease out for a moment what it is people reject. Here were these people and they are rejecting the Church. That is what they are doing first of all. The Church is represented here by Peter and John. And they are doing this despite the fact that they are actually quite impressed by the fact that here are people who are untrained and unordained men, nobodies, while they're somebody's, but somehow or other their boldness has given them a credibility in the eyes of everybody which they themselves don't have in the eyes of the masses.

They had seen now 5000 people, men, at least, plus all the rest added to the number of this new religion and they would be wondering to themselves how come it is spreading so easily without force, without having a history, without having access to the levers of power within the state? How come it is spreading so much?

Remember, Christianity is brand new here. It is... nobody has heard of it before. It doesn't have any history. It has no influence. It has no church buildings. It has no sacred music. It has nothing that distinguishes it from the world.

And still today when people reject Christianity they are rejecting the Church, the Church that has given to them some of the most outstanding thinkers in all of human history. Augustine of Hippo is one of the great minds of western civilization. C S Lewis, a recent great figure in western society in culture. And there are so many others.

You cannot understand William Shakespeare, his world view, his view of the humanity, his view of the relationship between humanity and between one human and another human of human and God unless you understand that everything that is writing he is writing from not just a Christian, but a Protestant Christian worldview.

When you reject the Church, you are rejecting people who have illuminated the pages of the history of the world.

These people were also rejecting the message, of course. They were rejecting the good news message that God had raised Jesus from the dead. They weren't rejecting the message of morality as such. The gospel isn't about morality. The gospel is not about the question that I am always asked whenever I have a Q&A with a bunch of university students. Where did Cain get his wife from? The gospel is not about where Cain got his wife from. You want to know the answer to that, ask me after and I will tell you where he got his wife from. It is a very good answer. I am going to... never mind. You can get it afterwards if you want.

What are you rejecting when you reject the message of Christianity? You are rejecting the message of Jesus. What did Jesus talk about? Well, he talked about some things that might offend you, but he talked about a lot of things that wouldn't offend you. He talked about people loving their neighbors, loving their enemies, loving one another, doing good

to those who persecute them, not returning evil for evil. That means when hit, you don't hit them back, that kind of thing. He talked about that.

When anyone dismisses Christianity they are dismissing Jesus, Jesus who ate with tax collectors and sinners. In other words, he touched the untouchables. He reached the unreachable. This is what Jesus did. This is what you are rejecting.

Jesus was not like the tabloid newspapers who threw up their hands in hypocritical horror whenever they hear of something that is happening in the bedroom of some celebrity and plaster it on the front page of their newspaper. Jesus wasn't like the tabloid newspapers who acted in that way. Jesus was not like the Pharisee who pulled up the skirts of their robes whenever they were near someone who was unclean or a prostitute or whatever.

Jesus welcomed the failures, the people no one else would have anything to do with. And when you reject Christianity you reject the message.

And these men were also rejecting the healing. What was it that sparked this? What sparked this was here was a man who from birth who was born with a deformity, who had never in the 40 years of his life been able to take himself anywhere. He had to be lifted and laid wherever he had gone. And now here was this man walking, leaping, praising God. It was an obvious public miracle. It is a miracle enough to get in the pages of the Bible, because it happened publicly. It was seen by witnesses. It was a good deed. They couldn't argue against it. They couldn't do anything about this. There was the man standing there next to Peter and John. There was the evidence.

When they rejected the Christians, they were rejecting the miracle that had occurred in the life of this man.

It makes you ask the question. What is it that leads people to reject Christianity? What were they doing, really? What were they doing, these men, apart from preaching, apart from being irritating? If you don't like preaching, you know, apart from being irritating, what harm is it doing?

So what makes people do this? Well, at one level, of course, it is an expression of the powers of darkness. There is this... as you read through the book of Acts you do see this move and counter move. You see the church growing and then you see something dreadful happening both inside and outside the Church. Here it is outside persecution that is going to take place. It is going to end up with the first martyrdom, but you also read, and we are going to read about this shortly.

In chapter five you read about things happening inside the Church, great tragedies happening within the Church itself.

Whatever this movement, there is a counter movement. Wherever there is growth and progress, then there is an attack of the evil one.

But that is not the only reason. I think there is the power of unbelief. These Sadducees were sad because they were the rationalists of their day. They didn't believe in the supernatural. Theirs was the religion of ethics, no more and no less.

The found references to the supernatural uncomfortable. You wouldn't like the Sadducees, really, because all they had to talk about was how you should respect one another and behave to one another.

And by the time they had talked about respecting one another and behaving the way you should behave with one another, you saw the kind of lives they were living and the things they were doing. You would say, "Hypocrites, the lot of you."

And, I suppose, behind their reaction there was fear, not a lot of fear, that somehow or other the success of this new little movement which, after all, was only 5000 strong, against total of the population of Jerusalem. It might destabilize your life, your comfortable life.

Well, the Sadducees are still with us today. There is a vast amount of unconscious rationalism even in the church of God, people who pay lip service to the incarnation, that is God becoming man or to the virgin birth or to the resurrection. But they obscured the real meaning of these things. They really are uncomfortable with all of these supernatural elements. What they want to do is they want to focus on the here and now.

Church, Christianity is all about what we can do for the world now, how we can change society now, how we can transform the world now, here and now. It is all about what you can do, what you can do to change the world.

They load upon ordinary people such a weight of responsibility as to engender guilt of despair. What can I do to change the world?

You can do nothing to change the world in yourself. To be frank, the Bible doesn't say that is your job. Your job is not to change the world. It is to believe the gospel. The Sadducees are with us in their rationalism and in their abuse of religion.

I want to say something to those of you who reject the gospel. You need to see from this story, see, going back 2000 years that there is nothing new in rejecting the gospel. If you are not a Christian, for example, and you feel antagonistic to Christianity, I don't want you to feel for one minute tonight sitting in this room that you are doing something really cool and contemporary in rejecting Christianity. You are not part of the cutting edge. Let me tell you that. What you are doing, people have been doing for 2000 years, rejecting Christianity.

It is not new. You need to know that from the very beginning before Christians had any clout as you might think or influence in society people were still rejecting the message, the Church and Christ.

And interestingly here we discover that unbelief brings together people who don't normally get on with one another. There is the Pharisees who hated the Sadducees and the Sadducees who hated the Pharisees, but there they are united in their opposition to the gospel.

Well, very quickly, let's look on to Peter's defense of the gospel.

Because they inquired, "By what power, by what name did you do this?"

Peter replies very quickly and straightforwardly, verse 16, that he had done this miracle in the name of Jesus. In other words, what the apostolic preaching was doing is this. These were men, the Sadducees who believed miracles do not happen.

Peter was presenting them there with this man who was an outstanding example of a miracle that had just happened. Most of those Pharisees, those Sadducees and Pharisees had walked past this man for years, perhaps for most of their teaching career in the temple. They had seen the man immobile, parked at the beautiful gate of the temple.

And there he was no standing, all smiles, every now and then doing a little jump up and down just to make sure they still worked.

There was incontrovertible evidence that miracles happened. But they couldn't accept that. These men were going right against the grain. So they put them in the dock.

"By whose name do you do this?"

He just lets it out. It is the gospel of Jesus. Jesus does it.

But he doesn't stop there. Peter now begins to turn the table on his accusers. Filled with the Holy Spirit we are told Peter delivers a three point sermon.

See, I got one on.

Peter delivers a three point sermon. Point number one, Jesus of Nazareth is responsible for the healing.

What is Peter saying to this crowd? He is saying to them. This man did not heal himself. Something happened to this man. And he doesn't let the ambiguity go unanswered. Their inquiry about how this man was healed raised a much larger question about salvation.

In fact, the word for healing and the word for salvation, the word in verse nine and the one in verse 12 are the same word in the Greek. The same verb reappears in the ... with a broader sense in verse 12. It means to... there are other words for healing, but this is the word chosen here because Peter throughout this section has been pointing to this man's physical healing as a parable or a sign of full salvation that is going to end up, not just in

the salvation of your soul, the spiritual part of you, but in the salvation of your body when you are given eternal life, raise from the dead and given a resurrection body in the new heavens and the new earth. That is what he has argued in chapter three.

And so he makes this point. He is saying Jesus of Nazareth is responsible for the salvation of this man. The same name that made this man well can make you safe for all eternity. That is the point he is making.

Point number two. Jesus is alive and in the place of all authority. Can you imagine that those who were the chief experts in the area of religion and spirituality could have made such a perverse and shocking judgment as to reject and execute their Messiah?

Peter rather daintily spells it out to them. You did it, he says. They, the Sanhedrin, all Israel had crucified Jesus. That was their judgment. Here is God's judgment of Jesus. God raised him from the dead.

And here is Peter the untrained and the unordained man. And what does he do? He takes them to their own Bible. He takes them to the Scriptures. He takes them to Psalm 118. That was the psalm the crowd had chanted when Jesus had ridden on his donkey into Jerusalem on that first triumphal entry. This is the psalm quoted by Jesus himself as a commentary on his rejection by Israel's leaders. This is a psalm that Peter himself will quote in 1 Peter to cite, to demonstrate the same principle.

And in that psalm, Psalm 118, the psalmist praises God that although people have opposed him, the Lord has helped him and strengthened him against his enemies. And in that psalm the enemies are described as builders, that is people with some authority and expertise. And in the psalm we discover where they have expertise. The psalmist talks about the gate of the Lord. He talks about the sacrifice in the temple and the house of the Lord. In other words, the language of the psalm is temple language. The builders are obviously people who are responsible for the gate of God, the sacrifices of the temple for the house of God, for the law and for everything associated with the temple.

Psalm 118 identifies the builders. It says, as Peter explains it, the psalmist is saying that one day those responsible for the temple and the law will reject the Messiah. And that is what has happened, he says. Jesus is the chief cornerstone in God's building, the one central to God's purposes. Yet he is the very one that you have rejected. This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you the builders which has become the cornerstone.

To be rejected is to be scorned by you the builders makes it clear who his audience are in his cross hairs. These laymen, these doctors of the church would not have missed the point that what Peter was saying is, "You have lost the plot of your entire religion. You have lost the plot of what the Bible has been teaching, the very Bible that you are ordained to preach and to teach. You have lost the point of what you are doing in the office that you hold."

And now Jesus, the despised stone scorned by the leaders of Israel has been exalted by God. He is now the key figure in God's plan for the restoration of Israel and the restoration of the cosmos.

In the original psalm the stone is either Israel or Israel's king rejected by the nations, chosen by God for the accomplishment of his purpose.

Jesus is the new Israel. Jesus is Israel's king. Jesus in himself does everything the psalm speaks of.

When Jesus quotes this psalm in Luke chapter 20 he predicted that not one stone would be left upon another in Jerusalem and its temple because its contemporaries did not recognize the time of God's coming to them.

So there you have it. You see here is Jesus. Jesus has been identified and placed in the position of all authority.

Here is the third point of his sermon. Jesus is the unique Savior.

The healing of the cripple was an instance of physical salvation. But Peter now goes on to make explicit what had been implicit earlier, namely that the principles, the same principles apply to salvation in the highest sense of the Word. God had raised this one man and given him ability to walk as the one who will lead God's people to the center of God's purposes, announced forgiveness of sin and pour out the gift of the Holy Spirit.

There is salvation in no one else.

Now you have to put yourself for a moment in the place of those members of the Sanhedrin. If they read the Bible at all they would know that their Bible, the Old Testament Scriptures, the Hebrew Bible declared that Israel's God was the only Savior of humanity.

In Isaiah God says:

"I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no savior. I declared and saved and proclaimed."³

"Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other."⁴

"In the LORD all the offspring of Israel shall be justified and shall glory."⁵

These Sanhedrin people. They would have accepted that. They would have believed a strict monotheistic that God was unique, the God of Israel was unique. In face of all the

³ Isaiah 43:11.

⁴ Isaiah 45:22.

⁵ Isaiah 45:25.

absurdities and immoralities and cruelties of the pagan gods and goddesses of nature and so on.

And that is a good thing. It is a good thing that Judaism is monotheistic, that Islam is monotheistic. But I want you to see what Peter is declaring to both Judaism, Islam and anyone else who is monotheistic. What he is proclaiming is this. That what God said through Isaiah, asserting his uniqueness as the only Savior of the world, he is asserting once more by raising Jesus from the dead and exalting him to his right hand, demonstrating that he is the Messiah and Lord. Jesus is Yahweh incarnate.

Jesus is the God of the Bible. You cannot talk about God any longer and it be God if you are not talking about the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Israel has a sense of who God is. He is the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, but further revelation about this God has been given. This God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. To reject Jesus is to reject God. To talk to God apart from Jesus is to talk into thin air. To call on God for salvation without calling on God through Jesus for salvation is to find condemnation, not salvation. There is salvation in no other name. No other name. Peter is making this absolutely clear. There is a necessity involved here. If you are going to be saved, then you must call on the name of Jesus.

God's ultimate act of salvation in preparation for that coming great and glorious day of the Lord has been accomplished through Jesus. So now is the exalted Lord whom we must call upon for salvation.

Now this is the theme throughout Acts. Paul later on, for example, makes a similar challenge in chapter 17. Later still he stakes his divine commission to present Jesus as the only Savior for Jews and for Gentiles. So let neither the law of Moses, beloved by members of the Sanhedrin, or the gods of the Gentiles, served as intended means of rescue from our spiritual paralysis.

There are many claimants today for the title of the world's savior or the world's prophet or the world's guru, a spirit guide. But Peter here lays on us a divine necessity. Must, that is a very strong word in the Greek. We must communicate with everyone about calling on the name that God himself has provided. There is salvation in no other name. There are no other ways to salvation.

With one sentence the apostle Peter, Christ's apostle who has demonstrated his credentials by the healing of this man, sweeps away all of the sophisticated follies of Postmodern Relativism and religious pluralism.

There are not many paths to salvation. There is one name under heaven given to me. Whether you are secular, Atheistic, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, whatever you may be, whatever your background is, there is only one way of salvation. One way of salvation.

Our people, of course today find this exclusivism unacceptable. What we need to say to them is it is no more unacceptable to you today than it was to people back then. It was unacceptable to a strict monotheistic Jew for Peter to say there is no other name by which you can be saved.

Later on when they are moving in the Gentile world with all their many gods and goddesses, it was offensive to them because they believed, you know, one more god, add him to the pantheon of gods. Just add him on. Add them as could, you know, collect up gods here.

That is what the Romans did. It was a great way of forging unity in the empire. Peter says, "No." There is only one way of salvation. There is no other name.

Of course, we live in a society that has a very cherished value of tolerance. And so many people in the interest of tolerance condemn intolerance, kind of ironic, really. The people that are so tolerant are intolerant of intolerance.

But anyway, G K Chesterton once said, "Tolerance is the particular virtue of those who really don't believe in anything."

And it is probably true.

Don't confuse the exclusivity of the Christian message with an attempt to impose this on anyone. Nobody is going to impose... we are not going to grab you before you leave the building tonight and put you in a corner and hold you against the corner against your will until you tell us that you believe in Jesus. We are not going to do that to you. You have to make your decision yourself.

But I would be failing you and this church would be letting you down if we didn't make it absolutely clear that in terms of what the Bible teaches this is what it says. This is what Jesus said.

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."⁶

Professor James Denny, one of the great intellects of the Church once wrote this. "If God has really done something in Christ on which the salvation of the world depends and if he has made it known, then it is a Christian duty to be intolerant of everything which ignores, denies or explains it away. The man who perverts it, is the worst enemy of God and man. Intolerance like this is an essential element in true religion. It is the unforced and uncompromising defense of that on which the glory of God and the salvation of the world depends."

Let me finish by giving you an illustration until you get the message.

⁶ John 14:6.

There was a time early in the 20th century when the Ford Motor Company under the inspiration of Henry Ford started the process of mass production of cars. The first car was a model T Ford. It started in America, the assembly line thing. He was the man who thought it up.

But he famously said at that time... I know you weren't there, but and I have heard this. But he said at the time that you could have any Ford you wanted. On your model T Ford you could have any color you wanted on your model T so long as it was black.

Now why did he say that? Well, because the only color model Ts were was black. They weren't painting them any other color. Those were the only kind of model Ts you got.

So you can imagine buyers coming to a Ford Motor Company showroom back in the early 1900s. They wanted to buy a yellow car.

“Well, I am sorry sir, but we can't sell you a yellow car.”

“Well, I want a model T Ford. I have read all about them. They are the latest thing. They have got the latest gadgets, little lamps on them and they have got nice special cranks that you can use to get the engines going. And I really want a model T Ford, but I want a yellow one.”

Far from bad taste.

“Sir, I am sorry. But you cannot get a model T Ford in yellow. They come in one glorious color, black.”

Now you can imagine the frustration of this buyer. He would be thinking to himself, “Well, what freedom do I have? What choice do I have? Here I am. I am an American. I am in the land of choice. I am asked how many additions to my I am going to get from day to day. And, you know, I want this, that or the other thing. You know, do I want it latte, cappuccino? Do I want it wet? Do I want it dry? Do I want it this, that? You know, and here I am and I am not being given any choice when it comes to cars. I am so frustrated. I want a mass production car because they are cheap. I want the model T because that is my choice. And I want it yellow.”

The man at the garage says to him, “Sir, there are no other mass production cars. Fords are the only people that are doing them. The only kind of mass production car that there is in the world is a model T. And all model Ts come in black.”

Over to you.

Well, that is really what Peter is saying, isn't it? No matter how we feel about this issue, what he is saying is there is only one way of salvation for people. There is only one way that God has provided for men and women to have a relationship with him and to be part

of that great triumphant day of resurrection that is coming at the end of history. There is only one way and it comes Jesus shaped and it comes in no other way.

You do have a choice, don't you? You do have a choice. You could say, "I don't want it."

That is fine. That is your choice. You take the consequences. But it is... you need to be clear about what God is saying here. Peter makes it absolutely clear to us. There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which it is absolutely necessary by which we must be saved.

Let us pray together.

Father, we pray that you would please write your Word on our hearts that the joy of knowing the Lord Jesus, having a relationship with him might so grip us that we would overcome some of our resentment or resistance, rebellion or rejection and embrace him and find joy in knowing him we pray. Amen.