

No Other Name

by Carl Armerding

The sermon emphasizes the power of the name of Jesus and the significance of the resurrection from among the dead, highlighting the importance of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation and healing.

Duration: 37:16

Scripture: Joshua 24:14, 1 Kings 18:21, Job 38:4, Acts 4:4, Acts 4:12

Topics: "Name Of The Lord"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of fearing and serving the Lord in sincerity and truth. He refers to the book of Joshua chapter 24, where Joshua gives his final words to the people he led into the promised land. The preacher emphasizes the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ, comparing it to the miraculous healing of a crippled man at the temple gate. He refutes the idea that the gospel is obsolete, stating that it is still relevant and effective in a post-Christian era. The sermon concludes with a reminder to trust in Jesus' name and rely on His unchanging grace.

Transcript

... ways in which our blessed Lord is referred to in this book. And we've already found wonderful pictures of him, the man who was taken up, the ascended man, in the first chapter. And in the second chapter, again, a very unique thing in the coming of the Holy Spirit to bear witness to his, shall I say, his welcome in heaven, and coming down here to represent him.

And then we were looking at him again in chapter three, as the Prince of Life, last night. This evening I'm skipping over the rest of chapter three, and coming into chapter four. In the presence of the people, that is, the apostles, the priests and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved or distressed that they taught the people and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

And they laid hands on them and put them in hold until the next day, for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand. And it came to pass on the morrow that their rulers and elders and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? Then Peter filled with the Holy Ghost said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole, be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him, doth this man stand here before you whole. And now we come to a fresh revelation concerning our Lord. In this eleventh verse, this is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. I suppose most of us are familiar with the fact that Christendom, as we know it, is divided into, broadly, into two schools of thought. Those who are known as conservatives or fundamentalists, and those who are known as liberals or modernists.

Sometimes we get the idea that this is something rather new, something rather recent. But as we look back in the book here, we find that they had similar divisions back in the days of our Lord and in the days of the apostles. And these Sadducees mentioned here in the first verse of our chapter tonight, they represent one of these schools of thought opposed to that of the Pharisees.

The Pharisees might be what we would call the fundamentalists of that day. They believed in the literal word of God. But the Sadducees were the rationalists.

They did not believe in a resurrection. They did not believe in an angel or spirit, as we are told later on in this same book of the Acts. They had no use for that.

My friend Sidlow Baxter has very aptly noticed that that's why they're sad, you see, because they have no hope beyond this. But these people are never content to keep their beliefs to themselves, nor to let other people believe what they want to believe. And so we find that they're out to get these people who believe in the resurrection, and not only the resurrection, but you notice it's a special kind of resurrection.

Did you notice as we were reading this in the second verse it says, and they preach through Jesus, the resurrection not merely of the dead, but from the dead. That is, from among the dead. This was something which perplexed the disciples when the Lord Jesus made reference to this in his ministry here on earth.

This is something which is still not understood by a good many people. A lot of people still have the notion that one of these days there's going to be a general resurrection when everybody that's died is going to be raised again. And they don't seem to know that the Scripture has taught us that there's going to be a special resurrection from among the dead before the great resurrection when men will stand before the great white throne.

The time when the Lord Jesus Christ will come, and the dead in Christ. And I take that to refer to all the saints. I know that a very recent edition of a very popular edition of the Bible now restricts this to New Testament saints.

But in the older note of the Schofield Reference Bible, you will find that Dr. Schofield believed that this included all the saints of the Old Testament as well as the New. And for the life of me, as I read 1 Corinthians 15, where I read that the resurrection of Christ was on this order, Christ the firstfruits, and afterward they that are Christ at his coming. Now if you can eliminate anybody from that statement, then you've got a system of hermeneutics or interpretation that I don't know about.

But to me this means that all those who are his, and he claimed them in his day when he was here, for he said, All thine are mine, and mine are thine, and I am glorified in them. These are my simple reasons for believing as I do about this. But getting back to this matter of the out-resurrection from among the dead, this is going to be tremendous.

Not every grave will be opened when the Lord Jesus Christ comes for his church. The dead in Christ shall rise first, and we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Now I'm sorry to say that there are many professing Christians, I've already noticed, who don't know about this.

They're greatly surprised. They think you're twisting the scripture when you show them this, but here it is. And this little difference in the preposition here is important.

We're going to see how the Apostle stresses this again a little later on in his trial the next day, in the trial before these Sadducees, this resurrection from among the dead. And so in order to keep this thing from spreading, we find that these Sadducees had these men thrown into prison for overnight. But it's wonderful to read the fourth verse of this chapter and to find that the church actually thrives on this kind of persecution.

Because in this fourth verse we read, many of them that heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand. You know, sometimes we get in such a hurry and pray to God to relieve our brethren of persecution. And of course, one says, yes, it's easy enough for you to say what you're about to say, because you're living in a land where it's comparatively easy to be a Christian.

But no, I've been in countries where it isn't easy to be a Christian. I've known what it means on two occasions to face my would-be assassins on the mission field. So I speak feelingly on this subject.

And so sometimes when I hear of persecution, and there's plenty of it, there's lots of persecution in the world today. I have repeatedly called attention to the fact that some years ago the United States Press Agency sent out a report to the effect that 175,000 Chinese had been done to death in West China for no other reason except that they were Christians. We have reason to believe that in the years that have rolled by since that report was made, that that number has grown to somewhere between two and three millions of people.

And on the basis of this, one makes the statement that we believe there are more martyrs to the Christian faith in this twentieth century in which we live than there were in all the previous nineteen centuries. Men and women are being put to death for Christ's sake. But you know, this is one of those things that proves again the old statement that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.

And wherever we see this, we find there's progress. God seems to use this very thing in bringing about growth in the Church. And here we have a sample of it right here in this fourth chapter of Acts tonight.

There are about 5,000 men who believe. This is a tremendous revival. Yes, I was looking over the report of the results of the meeting up in Montreal this last summer in the Sermons from Science.

And you know, that was quite an undertaking. And it cost a good deal of money, something like two-thirds of a million. And the Brethren are still some \$40,000 in debt, as was according to the last report I had.

And yet they're thinking growing head again next year. But so far as I can tell, they have brought out the number of about 3,500, which is 1,500 less than this. And all summer to do it.

You see, friends, we don't even begin to match what they did in those early days in the Church. They're wonderful results, these were. And so now we come to the trial the next day.

And what an array of names we have here. Here's Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and all those who were the high priestly family, were all there. It must have been a sort of a family affair as well as a political situation.

The high ecclesiastical court. I'm no doubt that this was intended to overawe these poor ignorant men as they are described later on in the chapter. You'll notice down the 13th verse, which we didn't read, it says, He and I, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men.

And you can imagine how they would try to overawe them with this great ecclesiastical power. I don't know whether they were wearing their vestments on this occasion or not, but I wouldn't put it past them. You know, to put on their doctor's hoods and what have you, in order to impress these poor fishermen with the grandeur and the glory of what you have.

And now they begin to inquire. And there are two things in this inquiry which intrigue me tonight. It's this.

You'll notice it says here in verse 7, when they had set them in the midst, they asked, by what power? Now that's interesting. And this word for power is the strong word for power that we have in the New Testament. This is the word from which we get our word, dynamite.

It wasn't this simply the authority. But this is a power. It was an impact.

This made an impact. And here they're tacitly admitting that there was something powerful about this. They couldn't deny it.

Because here's a man over forty years of age, born a cripple, lying helpless at the gate of the temple, begging day after day, and now they see him leaping and praising God. This is evidence of a power that they didn't have before. And we like to draw a parallel between that and the power of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You know, sometimes when I hear people talking about the gospel being obsolete, and that we're living in a post-Christian era and all this sort of thing, I just remind you, dear friends, of something we said the other day, that nothing is obsolete which is doing a job that nothing else can do. And the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is doing a job tonight that nothing, no other school of philosophy can even touch, can even approach. It's doing it.

And in spite of all their pretense to knowledge and all this sort of thing these days, they have to admit that with all their counseling and their psychiatry and what have they, they have not yet matched what the simple gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ can do, for it's the power of God and the salvation to everyone they believe in. The power. Then the second thing that intrigues me in this verse is the name.

You notice it says, By what power or by what name have ye done this? And already we've been looking at some of the names of our Lord, and what a unique personality he is and was when he was here on earth.

And they've had to recognize that there's some power in this name. This is different.

And we've already seen that he bears names that no one else could bear. Yes, that one we were talking about last night, the Prince of Life. He's the only one who could rightly bear that title.

And perhaps in the subsequent study we'll look at some other names which only he can bear. They're his names. By what name? Oh, the power of the name of Jesus.

The name that you and I plead every time we'll really pray. Praying in the name of Jesus, what power this has. As I speak to you about this, I'm thinking about an incident that took place on the West Coast.

A spiritist medium came into the office of Mr. Robert T. Grant, who was the originator of a little Spanish gospel paper called Las Buenas Nuevas, The Good News. And this spiritist came in and was trying to argue against Mr. Grant's simple presentation of the gospel in his little gospel paper, which is still going out in thousands and hundreds of thousands of numbers in all of Latin America and even in Spain. And finally, the question came, as to which of the two had the most powerful thing.

And this man was boasting of what he could do. He could do this and he could do that. And then he looked at Mr. Grant and said, and what have you got to say to that? And Mr. Grant says, there's one thing you can't do.

What's that? You can't say, Lord Jesus. And he couldn't. Turned on his heel and left the office.

He couldn't say it. Because the wicked spirit that was possessing him had no use for the Lord Jesus and he would never allow this man to frame that honorable title and call the Lord Jesus the Lord Jesus. There's something in this name.

And it's remarkable, isn't it, that even the ungodly today, when they really want to swear, this is the name they use. Why don't they swear by George Washington? Or a little more modern, by LBJ? Or Hubert Humphrey? No, they don't swear by them. They swear at them, but they don't swear by them.

And this is remarkable, isn't it, that men seem to feel that there's something about this name which will add to what they've got to say. That wonderful name. The name of Jesus.

Now it's time for Peter to answer. And you'll notice, friends, that Peter is here filled with the Holy Ghost. Remember we talked about that the other night, how to get filled with the Holy Ghost.

We get filled by the Holy Ghost by letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom, speaking in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs and so on. Yes, Peter was really filled with the Holy Spirit. And because he was filled with the Holy Spirit, he was more than a match for them, because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

That's a great text in 1 John 4. Greater is he that is in you. That's the Holy Spirit in the believer, is greater than he that is in the world. That's the devil.

Yes, the blessed Holy Spirit who is present in this meeting tonight, and who indwells every true believer here tonight, and who has taken every true believer in here tonight, and all other believers, and baptized them into one body, this one is greater than he that is in the world. Even though he's the prince of this world and the god of this age, the Holy Spirit is greater than he. And here's Peter filled with the Holy Spirit.

And notice how he talks. This man who was afraid to confess his Lord before a couple of women, just before our Lord was crucified, look at him now. Oh, what a different person he is now.

This always gives me a great deal of encouragement to know that even though we may have failed the Lord, how wonderful it is to be restored to him, and then to be filled with his Holy Spirit to speak as he does, when he says, ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel. You notice he doesn't say, Your Holiness, the High Priest, and say anything like that. No, he'll admit that they're rulers of the people and elders, but that's it, not giving them any flattering titles.

He could have done so, you know. We have an example of this later on in the book, haven't we? Most noble festers and so on. But Peter doesn't, he doesn't use any of this flattery.

He just acknowledges that they're in a place of superiority as far as rule is concerned. He says, if you really want to know, I can tell you. He says, if we this day be examined, and notice how he uses the adjectives.

I like adjectives used in the right place in the right way. If we be examined because of the good deed, put emphasis on that word good. The good deed done to the impotent, another adjective, a different category, isn't it? The good deed done to this impotent man.

Emphasizing on the one hand what God did for him, emphasizing on the other hand what he was. You can see that this unlearned, ignorant man is no fool. He knows how to use language, because he's filled with the Holy Spirit of God.

It's amazing what the Spirit of God can give you, dear friends, in a time like this, if you're dependent upon him, you'll do it. That's exactly what he's doing here with Peter tonight, as he uses him to put emphasis on these two adjectives here, that the deed which was done, and nobody could deny it, it was a good thing. And they couldn't deny that the man upon whom it was done was an impotent man, absolutely helpless.

Absolutely helpless. Then he says, if you want to know by what name this was done, you notice he says in the tenth verse, Be it known unto you and all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, he links this wonderful power with this name, and then he goes on to speak again of the power when he says, Whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead. Notice he's got that same phrase again, Even by him doth this man stand here before you all.

Now, that would have been enough. That would have answered their questions. And sometimes in a court of law, it's a wise thing to stop when you have satisfied the question that's been put to you.

But this is different. The apostle now is going to begin to give them a little more than they bargained for. And here's where we come to this new introduction of our Lord Jesus Christ tonight, when he's introduced here as the stone.

Now, this is an old idea. This goes way back. Yes, this really goes back to creation itself.

You turn to the 48th chapter of the book of Job, and as some of you doubtless know, the book of Job is considered to be the oldest book in the Bible, probably written by Moses, but we don't know. But generally conceded to be the oldest book in the Bible, and here we get a statement concerning the creation. God is asking one question after another of Job in that 40th chapter of Job.

He's asking one, 38th chapter of Job, rather. He's asking one question after another. And one of the questions is, Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth and the cornerstone thereof? Did you ever realize that creation had a cornerstone? And it must have been a wonderful celebration, because the next verse says, And all the sons of God shouted for joy, they sang, when God laid the cornerstone.

Well, you know what God does has significance. And I wouldn't be surprised, dear friends, that when God laid the cornerstone of this creation, He was putting down a figure at that time which was going to speak of His beloved Son. That's exactly the way Peter refers to Him later.

He says He's become the head of the corner. He's really that cornerstone. Jacob referred to Him when he spoke of Him as the stone and the shepherd of Israel.

The prophet Isaiah speaks of Him as the stone. The prophet Zechariah speaks of Him as the stone. And Peter himself enlarges on this in his epistle, in the first epistle in chapter 2, when he calls Him the living stone.

Now, that's a contradiction, a natural contradiction, isn't it? You ever see a stone alive? No? Somebody says, Come to think of it, I never have. Maybe you've seen one, but you haven't recognized it as such. I'm going to take some of you younger men back, you know, to those days when you had already, as the Scotch would say, you had her Gidwell de Promise, and you went out and you bought that ring with the solitaire in it.

And, of course, it was a great ceremony that the evening it was put on, and they had a great time to celebrate the engagement party. And after everybody's gone home, and he himself has bidden her farewell for the 33rd time, and now they come and look it over, and they're standing there under the light, and somebody says, It fairly lives. What makes it live? The light that shines in it.

And that's exactly the way the Spirit of God puts these two things together in the first chapter of John's Gospel. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. This is the living stone.

Disallowed indeed of men, as Peter tells us. Disallowed indeed of men. Or, as he puts it here in this passage of Scripture in verse 11, set it not by you builders.

You thought you could get along without him. There's a legend connected with this verse. We just referred to it for what it is worth.

The legend says that when they were building the temple, a very queer-shaped stone was sent up to the builders, and they looked at it and said, We don't know where this goes. So they just threw it out. But later on, they got on with the building, and somebody says, We need a stone of such and such a shape.

And they discovered it was the stone that they had cast out. The stone that was set at nought of you builders. And this very thing is incorporated into that classic passage in Psalm 118.

The stone which was set at nought of the builders. The same has become the head of the corner. And how Peter, who is generally referred to as the rock on which the church is built, you know.

Oh yeah, how they love to wring the changes on everyone. And here the Spirit of God uses this very man to tell us that it was not himself at all. It was the Lord Jesus Christ, the foundation upon whom these other living stones are being built.

The stone which was set at nought of you builders. But he's coming back again to this name. You know, he hasn't forgotten that in their question, they wanted to know by what power or by what name.

All right, here we have it in verse 12. Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is none other name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved.

You see, dear friends, in this matter of salvation, it's not a question of choice or option. God doesn't say, Now if you don't like this, you can have something else. God is saying to us here, dear friends, that either this or else.

And this is after the manner of scripture. I'd like to give you a couple of examples in the Old Testament. Would you like to turn back first of all to the book of Joshua, chapter 24? For an example, shall I say, of this very idea? The 24th chapter of Joshua.

Here Joshua is talking, giving his valedictory to these people at whom he has led into the land and finally got them settled in their respective places. You notice it says here in verse 14, Joshua 24, verse 14, Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and truth, and put away the gods which your father served on the other side of the flood. The flood there refers to the Euphrates River, and in Egypt, and serve ye the Lord.

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, then you have your choice. You can choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your father served were on the other side of the flood or the river, or the gods of the Amorites. If you want a choice, you can have either one of these groups of gods, these idols.

But this is only if it's evil to you to serve the Lord. You notice he doesn't make it a matter of choice here between the Lord and the idols. If you want to choose, you can choose between any of these other idols, because it won't make very much difference, they're all alike.

No, the Lord never puts himself on a level with these idols and said, now I hope you'll choose me. There is no option here, dear friends. There is no option here.

It's not this, or something you may like better. As our text of this evening says, there is no other name under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. It's imperative.

I give you another example in 1 Kings, the 18th chapter. 1 Kings, chapter 18. An incident in the life of one of the great prophets, Elijah.

How I love this passage of scripture. I think I like it mostly because of the sarcasm in it, but we're not talking about that so much tonight. But let's look at this.

1 Kings 18, verse 21. And Elijah came unto all the people and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him. But if Baal, if Baal be God, then follow him.

Notice his statement carefully. He doesn't say now you can have either God or Baal. He doesn't say that.

If the Lord is God, follow him. If Baal be God, follow him. You see, dear friends, God never puts himself on a level with these idols.

And so, coming back to our text here in Acts 4, the Lord doesn't put himself on a level with others. He doesn't now. You know, all roads lead to the same place.

You can be a Buddhist or a Confucianist or a Muslim. It doesn't make any difference, just so you're sincere. No, dear friends, that's not it.

That's not it. It's not optional. It's imperative.

And if I'm speaking here tonight to anyone who has never yet trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal Savior, remember, dear friends, this is it. There is no other name unto heaven among men whereby we must be saved but the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. And so we leave the subject tonight.

We trust, dear friends, that this answer from the Apostle Peter will stand out in your mind as something which God can give to you. These Sadducees had to admit that a mighty miracle had been wrought. If we'd read the rest of the chapter, which I hope you will, you will find that when they get behind the scenes, they talk about it.

They say, We can't deny that this has been a notable miracle. We can't deny it. But let's shut them up.

And so they tell them, Now you get out of here, but don't you talk anymore about the name of Jesus. And Peter says, You can do as you like. We're going to do what we know to be true.

And so, dear friends, God give us the courage in these days, these days of apostasy, when the name of our blessed Lord is being put on a level with other names. Let us remember, dear friends, that He's in a class by Himself. He is, as we've been saying here from night to night, He is unique.

And this is one of the things that gives one great boldness as he faces these so-called intellectuals these days who try to tell us this, that, and the other, and that Christianity has outlived its usefulness. We're living in a post-Christian era. Don't you believe it.

This name will never lose its power until all the ransomed saints of God are safe home in glory. In keeping with that, let's turn to hymn number 121. Hymn number 121.

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name. Number 121.

Shall we rise? We thank Thee for reassuring our faith tonight as we look into Thy holy word, and see what Thou couldst do with men who were counted ignorant and unlearned, and yet who were recognized as those who had been with Jesus. O our Father, we pray that we and these our day and time may also have similar courage as we stand up before those who claim to be superior to us religiously, ecclesiastically, intellectually, and so on. But we thank Thee, our Father, that there is nothing that can match the simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Nothing can match the omnipotence of Thy blessed Holy Spirit. And we just pray, O Lord, that we who claim to be Thine here tonight may go from this meeting strengthened in our hearts and souls, and determined to bear a more faithful witness to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. These things we ask as we commit ourselves now to Thy loving hand, in His most precious name.

Amen. You are dismissed.

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