

By What Name Have Ye Done This?

Acts 4:7-20

We are reading of time of great excitement and wonder for the church. Jesus had risen from the grave and ascended back to heaven. The Holy Spirit had been poured out just as the Lord had promised. People were being saved on every hand. The Gospel was being preached and the message was being received and promoted. Peter and John were at the center of all this excitement.

Just the afternoon before, they were making their way to the temple at the hour of prayer and encountered a lame man begging for alms. Peter had no money to give, but he shared Jesus with the lame man and in Jesus' name he was healed. With that the lame man made his way to the temple walking, and leaping, and praising the Lord. A crowd began to gather with all the excitement and Peter used this as another opportunity to preach Jesus. The preaching and large gathering caught the attention of the religious elite. As they neared the scene, they heard Peter preaching and proclaiming the name of Jesus. Naturally this angered the religious crowd because they had consented to the crucifixion of Christ. Peter and John were apprehended for their preaching and placed in jail until the next day.

It was then that the rulers, elders, scribes, high priests, and many of the council brought them out to question them. They were concerned about all that had been taking place and they demanded to know by what power or what name they had done all of this. That was just the opening that Peter needed to once again share Jesus. They had asked and he was obliged to answer. I want to consider the question that the council posed: [By What Name Have Ye Done This](#). As we look at the truths associated with this name, you will find that it is a name that is above every name.

I. A Powerful Name (7-10) – These verses reveal the power that is associated with Jesus' name. There are a couple of things we can learn.

A. It Empowers the Weak (7) – Here we find that Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost. He had been preaching in the name of Jesus. He had witnessed His power in the lives of others and now he experiences that power for himself.

- Keep in mind that this is the same man that had denied the Lord. It is the same man who fled in fear. This is the man who was about to abandon his faith even after the resurrection and return to the old life of fishing.
- But here something has changed. He is filled with the Holy Ghost and empowered to stand and preach to the same religious council that cast their voice against the Lord.

- Are you weak in the journey today? Do you find it hard to live for Jesus and take a stand for Him? There is power in His name for you!

B. It Enables the Walk (10) – 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. This was the same man who lay at the temple gate beginning alms of those who came by. He was born lame, never had walked a day in his life, and was over forty years of age. He had lain there all those years, likely giving up hope that he would ever walk, but one day Peter came by and proclaimed the name of Jesus. It was the power in Jesus' name that enabled the lame man to walk.

- Jesus still has the same power today. He is well able to heal, whatever our disease. He can still touch the crippled legs and provide healing. But more importantly, He can heal those who are crippled by sin. Jesus can enable you to walk free of sin and in fellowship with Him.

I. A Powerful Name (7-10)

II. A Precious Name (10) – Peter declares that it was the precious name of Jesus that had brought healing to this man. It wasn't in their preaching or their ability; it was the name of Jesus. Peter mentions a couple of names associated with our precious Lord. He identified Him as:

Jesus – This was His earthly name, a reference to His humanity. The name Jesus literally means "Jehovah is salvation."

- This is the name that defined all of time. Jesus is the focal point of all humanity. He bears the name that still brings joy to the hearts of believers. It is the name that brings hope and deliverance to the sinful and wayward. It is a name that stirs a vivid reminder in the heart of Satan that he is forever defeated and that God is in control.

Christ – Peter also identified Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, the "Anointed One." He proclaims to the same council that desired His crucifixion, that He was the promised One of God. Jesus is the Christ!

- The name of Jesus, in whatever form it is spoken, is a precious name. Allow me to share a few of those names found in the Scriptures.
- This is the same Jesus that was crucified at the hands of sinful men. He died there upon the cross and was buried, but He didn't stay dead. After three days in the tomb, Jesus came forth victorious over death. He rose to live forever, never to die again!

I. A Powerful Name (7-10)

II. A Precious Name (10)

III. A Preeminent Name (11-12) – This is the stone which was set at nought 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. Peter further declares Jesus as the Christ. He proclaims that He is the Chief Cornerstone. He was rejected by His own, but He remains the Corner of the foundation. He is the only source and means of salvation. The religious council was looking to their good works and strict lifestyle, but Peter declares that salvation is only obtained by and through the name of Jesus. He was in essence telling them that they remained in their sin apart from Jesus.

- That is a fundamental truth that has not and will not ever change. **Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.** Jesus is not a good way to salvation; He isn't even the best way to salvation; Jesus is the only way to salvation! Apart from Him there is no way. Apart from Jesus sin remains and ultimately leads to death.
- Mankind has a hard time grasping that truth. They seek to find their own way. Many believe that there are many ways, all of which, leading to the same heaven. Consider the commentary of John MacArthur, "The exclusivism of Christianity goes against the grain of our religiously pluralistic society. A chapel built at the North Pole in February 1959 by the men of Operation Deep Freeze 4 typifies the prevalent attitude today toward religious belief. The structure contained an altar, over which was hung a picture of Jesus, a crucifix, a star of David, and a lotus leaf (representing the Buddha). On the wall of the chapel was an inscription that read "Now it can be said that the earth turns on the point of faith."¹
- This idea may bring a measure of comfort to all sorts of people, but it isn't biblical. Jesus is the only way. There is salvation in no other!

IV. A Persuasive Name (13-14) – Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. The presence and power that Peter spoke with baffled the minds of the religious elite. These men were perceived to be **unlearned**, referring to "*one who is illiterate; one who doesn't know letters.*" They were supposed to be **ignorant men**, "*just common and unskilled men.*" But there was a presence that couldn't be denied. They maybe didn't possess a seminary degree from the local Rabbinical School, but there was something different about these men. The council marveled because they understood that they had been with Jesus!

- Surely that ought to do something for our soul. Could it be said that we had been with Jesus? Does the world look at us and perceive that we know Him and that we have spent time with Him? (Share a few names from the congregation and make application.)

- Don't you want to be known as one who has been with Jesus? Don't you want our congregation to be known as a people who have been with Jesus?

I. A Powerful Name (7-10)

II. A Precious Name (10)

III. A Preeminent Name (11-12)

IV. A Persuasive Name (13-14)

V. A Persistent Name (18-20) – *And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.* They had spent a night in jail for preaching in Jesus' name. Now they are brought before the council and once again charged to refrain from speaking in Jesus' name. Peter and John declared that they had no choice but to speak the things they knew.

- There was something within that refused to be suppressed. They had witnessed the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. They believed in Him as the Christ. They were determined to preach the Gospel, even if the council and the whole world rejected the message. They had not been called to please men, but to preach Jesus!
- There is something about the name of Jesus that compels us to share Him with others. There is something deep within that longs to tell of what Jesus has done for us. I pray that we will continue to tell of the goodness of our blessed Lord. He is worthy of our praise and there is a lost and dying world that needs to hear of His loving grace and mercy.

Have you experienced the power in Jesus' name? Have you been set free from the bondage of sin so that you can walk with Jesus? What does that precious name mean to you? He is the only way of salvation. Do you know Jesus as your personal Savior?

Is it evident for the world to see that you have been with Jesus? Do you live a life that reflects and honors Him? I want to spend time with the Lord so that others will know that I have been with Him.

¹ The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Acts 1-12.