



The Name ... Power to Heal, Power to Save
Acts 3-4

Lake Arrowhead Church, Waleska, Georgia
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THE NAME ... POWER TO HEAL, POWER TO SAVE Acts 3-4

[Video¹] Those were the responses of people when asked, “Who is Jesus?” Some said He was just a man. Some said He taught us to love. One woman said He was a marketing genius who got people to believe in Him and the bird man said Jesus was a magician like David Copperfield. Some believe Jesus was spiritual leader like Ghandi or Mohammed. But the last woman did not believe He existed at all.

So, who is Jesus? For us, He is our Savior, the one who sacrificed His life on the cross to pay the price for our sin. For us, He is the risen Lord and is alive today.

The book of Acts records the birth of the Church and the thirty-year period following the resurrection of Jesus. The book is filled with dramatic events and incredible stories of faith. Those who were there heard His teaching and witnessed His miracles. They saw Him die and they saw Him alive again. They believed He was the Son of God. They were convinced it was true. They were compelled to talk about it. And they were courageous to take a stand. These first Christians are our mentors, and there is so much we can learn from them.

Acts 3-4 record the story of a miracle on the front steps of the temple. *The miracle proves the power of His name to heal, and the miracle points to the power of His name to save. That’s the Gospel. The power of His name to heal proves the power of His name to save.*

THE MIRACLE

The story begins in Acts 3. “One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer, at three in the afternoon. Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful,² where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, ‘Look at us!’ So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them” (Acts 3:1-5, NIV). A 40-year-old man, lame from birth, was placed in front of the temple every day to beg.³ That was his life. Disabled and dependent, helpless and hopeless.

Like every other day, and like other passersby, he hoped Peter and John would give him something. But Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth – walk!” (Acts 3:6, NIV). ***“In the name of Jesus Christ – walk!”*** “Taking him by the right hand, Peter helped him up, and instantly, the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. And went into the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God” (Acts 3:7-8, NIV). He was 40 years old, lame from birth, and had never walked in his life. Imagine his surprise. Imagine his joy, his tears, his laughter. He was “walking and leaping and praising God.”

“When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him” (Acts 3:9-10, NIV).⁴

When Peter saw a crowd gathering, he addressed the people, “Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the holy and righteous one and asked that a murderer be released to you (referring to Barabbas⁵). You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.⁶ ***By faith in the name of Jesus***, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see” (Acts 3:12-16, NIV).

Peter was saying, “Jesus did this!” The miracle proved the power of His name to heal.

The name of Jesus is powerful. His name is wonderful and beautiful. His name is special and sacred. The Bible uses over 100 titles for Jesus, and that does not include the countless phrases that describe Him.

- He is called the Son of Man⁷ and the Son of God.⁸
- He is the Word of God.⁹ He is the voice of God and the very truth of God.
- He is called the Alpha and the Omega,¹⁰ referring to the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, meaning He is eternal over all time.
- The prophet Isaiah called Him Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.¹¹
- With respect to His sacrifice on the cross, He is the Man of Sorrows¹² and the Lamb of God.¹³
- He called Himself the “I AM,” a title used only for God, thus equating Himself with God.¹⁴
- He is the Bread of Life¹⁵ and the Light of the World.¹⁶
- He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.¹⁷
- He is the Rock,¹⁸ the Living Water,¹⁹ the Author of life,²⁰ the Anchor of hope.²¹ And He is the Amen, or the final word.²²
- He is the Holy One,²³ our High Priest,²⁴ the Almighty God,²⁵ and the Cornerstone of the Church.²⁶
- He is our Advocate,²⁷ our Redeemer,²⁸ and our Savior.²⁹
- He is Immanuel, God with us.³⁰
- He is Jesus, the Messiah, the Christ.³¹

To a cripple, Peter said, ***“In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth – walk!”*** (Acts 3:6, NIV). There is power in His name. The disciples said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us *in your name*” (Luke 10:17, NIV). With respect to prayer, Jesus promised, “You can ask for anything *in my name*, and I will do it” (John 14:13, NLT). And the Bible says, “Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything *in the name* of the Lord Jesus” (Colossians 3:17, NAS). There is power in His name, and the miracle proved the power of His name to heal.

Edward Perronet was a close friend of John and Charles Wesley. All three were a part of a great spiritual movement in England in the 1700s. Like the Wesleys, Edward was a hymn writer. His most famous hymn has been called the National Anthem of the Church.

The lyrics begin with “All hail the power of Jesus’ name.” “All hail” is a summons, a call for God’s people to come and worship Him. “Let angels prostrate fall.” The angels, and all the creatures in heaven, bow before Jesus. And then it says, “Bring forth the royal diadem.” The diadem is a crown. It is the king’s crown. And only Jesus is worthy to wear it. “Crown Him Lord of all.”

Long after the name of every king and queen has been forgotten, every pope and president, every billionaire and pauper, every athlete and celebrity, the name of Jesus will still be praised.

The book of Revelation declares, “On His head are many crowns ... and on His robe and on His thigh He has this name written – KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Revelation 19:12, 16, NIV). His name is the highest name, the greatest name, the most powerful name, and the most loving name. God “bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow ... and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Philippians 2:9-11, NAS).

THE MESSAGE

Acts 3 is one of 14 miracles recorded in Acts, and it is a visual demonstration of a deeper, spiritual reality. ***The miracle proves the power of His name to heal, and the miracle points to the power of His name to save. That’s the Gospel. The power of His name to heal proves the power of His name to save.***

Understand the scene. Peter is on the front steps of the temple. He just performed a miracle, which none of the priests could do. And he declared Jesus did it. As his authority, Peter referred to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He referred to Samuel, Joel, and the prophets. He referred to Moses and David. Peter preached Jesus from the Old Testament, from their own Scriptures.³²

Here’s what happened next. The religious leaders “were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. They arrested Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day” (Acts 4:1-3, NIV).

Two things happened that day that the religious leaders could not deny. One, a man was healed and everyone saw it.³³ And two, 5,000 were convinced that Jesus was the Son of God.³⁴

“The next day the religious leaders met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest’s family. They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them, ‘By what power or what name did you do this?’” (Acts 4:5-7, NIV).

When the religious leaders interrogated Peter, they did not ask him questions about the resurrection, they asked him about the healing of a lame man in front of the temple. The religious leaders were outraged because it drew attention away from what they were doing inside the temple. It would be like parking a food truck in front of a restaurant, the restaurant owner is going to get upset. So they demanded, “By what power or what name did you do this?” (Acts 4:7, NIV). On the one hand they were asking, “Who gave you permission to be in front of our temple?” And on the other hand they were asking, “How did you do that?”

“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said ...” (Acts 4:8). This is one of my favorite verses in the Bible. For years, I have mentally recited that phrase before walking on stage to preach. That’s the prayer going through my mind just before I open the Bible to preach God’s word. “Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said ...” And I ask God to do the same for me.

Peter said, “Rulers and elders of our people, are we being questioned today because we’ve done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he was healed? Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed *by the powerful name of Jesus Christ* the Nazarene, the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead. For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says, ‘The stone that you builders rejected has now become the cornerstone’ (NLT). There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name ... by which we can be saved” (Acts 4:8-12, NAS).

The power of His name to heal proves the power of His name to save.

Jesus’ name means “God saves.”³⁵ His name means salvation. An angel appeared to Joseph and Mary, and said, “She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21, NIV). John said, “To those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12, NIV). Paul said, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13, NAS).³⁶ And Peter said, “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name ... by which we can be saved.”

The password into heaven is the name of Jesus! Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6, NIV). Think about that. Without the name of Jesus, your neighbor will never know grace or forgiveness or heaven. Without the name of Jesus, your son, your daughter, your grandchildren will never know grace or forgiveness or heaven. Without the name of Jesus, those you know and love will never know grace or forgiveness or heaven. There is only one way to God and that is through His Son Jesus. The way is exclusive. There is only one way. But the offer is inclusive. The offer of grace and forgiveness and heaven is for anyone who will believe.

CONCLUSION

After reading this story of Peter and the miracle of the lame man, what is the challenge for us? To be like Peter.

Peter was *convinced* it was true. He stood on the steps of the temple and declared that Jesus rose from the dead, proving to be the Son of God and proving that everything He said is true. He was *compelled* to talk about it. “For there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name ... by which we can be saved” (Acts 4:12, NAS). And he was *courageous* to take a stand.³⁷ When the religious leaders warned them not to speak of the name of Jesus anymore, Peter and John said, “We cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19-20).

May we be like Peter. Convinced. Compelled. Courageous.

Later in the book of Acts, chapter 11 records a story of persecution and fear. It is also a story of conviction and courage. It’s a story of real people, people just like us, walking the streets of Antioch unashamed to talk about their Savior. Acts 11:26 says, “The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch.”

“Christian” was an insult. So strange were these followers of Jesus that the people of Antioch would ask, “Who are these people? Oh, they are ones who are always talking about Christos,” and with a demeaning sneer, “the Christians.”³⁸ Peter turned the insult into a compliment. “If you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name” (1 Peter 4:16, NIV).

One historian writes about these first century brothers and sisters, “They continually talked about Christ ... They were constantly sharing the good news ... They were filled and flooded with Christ. His name was on their lips and his character was being formed in them. They were making visible the invisible Christ.”³⁹

That’s our mission too. To make visible the invisible Christ. To bear His name. Because there is no greater privilege or greater responsibility than bearing the name of Jesus.

We bear the name of the one who bore our sins on the cross. As the hammer was raised to drive the first nail into His hand, Jesus could have stopped everything. But He didn’t.⁴⁰ Why? Because He cared more about saving us than saving Himself.

We bear the name of the one who, right now, is preparing a place in heaven for us, the one who promises to return and take us home to live with Him forever.⁴¹

We bear the name of the one before whom, one day, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord.⁴²

We bear the name of the one whom all of heaven is praising at this very moment. “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain ... To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen” (Revelation 5:12-13, NAS).

*There is no greater privilege or greater responsibility than bearing the name of Jesus.
Because the power of His name to heal proves the power of His name to save.*

NOTES

¹ Video of street interviews asking people, “Who is Jesus?”

² The Nicanor Gate was called “Beautiful.” The doors were 75 feet tall and made of Corinthian brass, a brilliant bronze that shined like gold. The gates were donated by Nicanor, a wealthy man from Alexandria, Egypt. The Jewish historian Josephus described the gate as grander and more elaborately adorned than all the other gates leading into the Temple. [See Darrell L. Bock, *Acts – Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), page 160]

³ Acts 4:22 reports his age.

⁴ “They recognized him.” People knew who he was. They saw him on the temple steps every day. And Luke writes, “the man who used to sit.” But no more. He had been healed.

⁵ Barabbas was a 1st century Jewish prisoner, a notorious bandit, insurrectionist, and murderer, whom the crowd demanded that Pilate release instead of Jesus. See Luke 23:17-21.

⁶ On “witnesses,” see Luke 24:48, Acts 1:8, 1:22, 2:24, 2:32, 3:15, 4:33, 5:32, 10:39, 10:41, 13:31.

⁷ See Mark 10:45.

⁸ See Luke 1:35.

⁹ See John 1:1.

¹⁰ See Revelation 1:8.

¹¹ See Isaiah 9:6.

¹² See Isaiah 53:3.

¹³ See John 1:29.

¹⁴ See John 8:58.

¹⁵ See John 6:35.

¹⁶ See John 8:12.

¹⁷ See John 14:6.

¹⁸ See 1 Corinthians 10:4.

¹⁹ See John 4:10.

²⁰ See Acts 3:15.

²¹ See Hebrews 6:19.

²² See Revelation 3:14.

²³ See Acts 3:14.

²⁴ See Hebrews 8:1.

²⁵ See Revelation 1:8.

²⁶ See Acts 4:11.

²⁷ See 1 John 2:1.

²⁸ See Titus 2:14.

²⁹ See Luke 2:11.

³⁰ See Matthew 1:23.

³¹ See John 1:41.

³² Jesus said, “You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me!” (John 5:39, NLT). Peter preached Jesus from the Old Testament, from their own scriptures. That was the authority upon which he said, “Repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away” (Acts 3:19, NAS).

³³ See Acts 4:14, 16.

³⁴ See Acts 4:4.

³⁵ The Hebrew name is Joshua, also pronounced Yeshua, also means “God saves.”

³⁶ After explaining the Gospel in one of his letters, the Apostle John said, “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13, NIV).

³⁷ The religious leaders could not deny Peter’s conviction and courage. Acts 4:13 says, “When they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.” Annoyed, the religious leaders intimidated them and ordered Peter and John to stop preaching about Jesus (See Acts 4:17-18). To which, Peter and John said, “We cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20). When they were released, they went right on preaching, and more and more people believed (Acts 5:14).

³⁸ F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), page 228.

³⁹ Gary Vanderet, “The First Christians: Acts 11:19-30,” Peninsula Bible Church Cupertino, January 2, 2005.

⁴⁰ Max Lucado beautifully writes, “Since He couldn’t bear the thought of eternity without you, He choose the nails.” [Max Lucado, *He Choose the Nails*, (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 2000), page 34.]

⁴¹ See John 14:2-3.

⁴² See Philippians 2:9-11.