

None other name but Christ

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Date: 01 January 2000

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[0 : 00] The Acts of the Apostles, chapter 4, and at verse 12. Acts 4, 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.

This story is the aftermath of the healing of the cripple at the gate of the temple in Jerusalem.

As a result of the healing of the man with the weak ankles, Peter and John were brought before the council of the Jews.

It was indeed a notable miracle. The council thought that they had silenced Jesus of Nazareth forever and that they were rid of this threat to their vested interests.

[1 : 21] But they found now that miracles continued to be performed and so they brought the disciples before their council to admonish them and even to threaten them.

But that it spread no further among the people that has straightly threatened them that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

The name of Jesus of Nazareth. But Peter was a match for them. For there was fulfilled in his case what our Lord had promised that when they were brought before rulers they did not need to prepare beforehand what they should say because the Holy Spirit would give them utterance in that hour.

What a different Peter from the one who cravenly denied his master in the hall of the judgment of the high priest.

We cannot but admire his boldness as he stands before the council of the Jews. He has undergone a complete change of personality.

[2 : 43] What made him so courageous now? Well just that he has a better understanding of the gospel. A better understanding of the cross of Christ.

Better understanding of the power of God in the resurrection of Jesus. Because it was the resurrection of Jesus that gave the dynamic to the preaching of the early disciples.

And here he is declaring that in this Jesus of Nazareth whom they crucified whom God raised from the dead is the only saviour of the world.

Neither is there salvation he said in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

And I want to look at this declaration of Peter's with you this morning. And I want to look at two main things.

[3 : 58] First of all I think we should find out what we mean by salvation. Or rather what the Bible means by salvation when Peter says here neither is there salvation in any other.

And the second thing I want us to look at the main declaration of the text is the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as saviour.

That is stressed twice in the verse. Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

First thing what is meant by salvation? It is a word salvation that is continually used in evangelical circles.

it is a word that is continually on the lips of the preacher. And yet like all like other all embracing words it is understood differently.

[5 : 19] It is important that we should understand what it properly means. For it is a biblical word. it is a gospel word.

Indeed I can go further and say it is the very heart of the evangel. Because the gospel is about salvation. It is what the Bible is all about from Genesis to Revelation.

It is a book concerned with salvation. It is a word that is quite modern indeed and on the lips of modernists and in the writings of the modern church salvation has got to do more with politics with social matters and economic matters rather than with soul matters.

it has got to do with such things as racial equality no apartheid the equality of the sexes the right of every man for a job with the proper rate of pay of course it has got to do with the banishment of poverty and slums and class distinctions with the creation of heaven upon earth particularly with a very mundane materialistic sort of heaven it's new Jerusalem doesn't come down from God out of heaven but in the words of the poet it's built in England's green and pleasant fields or it may be upon the moors of Scotland indeed the new

Jerusalem looks uncommonly like modern suburbia now this is what is continually being put before us as the end all and be all of the Christian gospel this is what salvation consists of political equality social and economic well-being and the ironing out of all the things that estrange man from man and cause the oppression of one lot by another now granted many of these things are good we would like to see poverty done away with it would be a good thing if the inner cities had no slums no unemployment problems these are things that men ought to work for we are not downing politics or social matters and we all know what economic depression can mean but these are not the main thrust of the

[9 : 16] Christian gospel or of the biblical word of salvation but after all many of these things the evil things indeed which need to be corrected are themselves but products of another evil thing they themselves are not so much the disease but the symptoms of the disease and even if you could correct all the errors of politics social political economic you would not get paradigm you would soon find that a new disease has sprung up a new kind of tyranny and we are seeing it with our eyes in the different parts of the world today that have adopted the Marxist gospel and unfortunately the world council of churches is proving all too well the forecast of evangelicals about it it is more concerned with politics and social things and economic matters far more concerned with that than it is with a real gospel of spiritual affairs and so I want us to see what is the biblical meaning of salvation for this is what really matters and biblically salvation is centered round sin true there are other aspects in the old testament we read about the salvation of Israel from its enemies from Egypt for example later from

Assyria or from Babylon but essentially salvation is salvation from sin this is the fundamental meaning of the word this is what the gospel declares concerning Jesus the very name Jesus means that God saves thou shall call his name Jesus said the angel to Joseph thou shall call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins from their sins sins now there are four aspects I think to this salvation because there are four departments of sin but at least there are four things which sin does for man or against man we need salvation from sin as first of all guilt the guilt of sin and then we need salvation from sin in its power in its tyranny over us enslaving the soul of the sinner and we need salvation from sin in its corruption destroying what is good perverting the spirit in man turning the moral values upside down we need to be saved from the corruption of sin corrupting our whole nature and finally we need to be saved from the punishment of sin from the judgment against sin and these four things expressed negatively have got their positive counterparts being saved from guilt we have peace with

God enter into a new relationship with him with the smile of his countenance upon us being saved from its power we enter into spiritual liberty the liberty where with Christ makes his people free being saved from its corruption we possess that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord and being delivered from the judgment and the punishment of sin we enjoy life in Jesus blessedness eternal life so shall we look at these four departments from which we need salvation we need salvation from the guilt of sin and this my friends is the fundamental aspect of sin sin is not primarily a disease that calls for the pity of

God sin is a crime against God it involves guilt which brings down upon the sinner the wrath of God for the guilty sinner is under God's wrath and curse and this needs to be emphasized today just as crime has ceased really to be considered as crime but more as a social aberration something that ought to be checked because it makes it uncomfortable for society so sin in modern theology has lost its concept of guilt by way of penalty we'll come to this later the next thing to be dealt with in salvation according to the bible is the power of sin for the guilty sinner is not a just guilty of treason before

God and free he's a slave to sin. Having renounced the authority of God, he has placed himself under the devil.

[17 : 39] For he who commits sin, says the apostle, is the slave of sin. Mesmerized by Satan, he is completely under his control, even though he may not know it.

And indeed may deny the very existence of a personal devil. When Jesus said to the Jews, if the son shall make you free, then you shall be free indeed.

They were most indignant. Free, they said. We were never in bondage to any. We're not slaves. We're the sons of the free woman. We're Abraham's seed.

We're free. Ah, they little knew that they not only were in bondage to Rome, politically, but to Satan, morally and spiritually.

Hear of your father the devil, said Jesus, and his works ye do. For as long as the sinner is guilty, he is subject to satanic control.

[18 : 48] He is a slave to his own sin and cannot go free. But sin also is corruption.

It's vile. It stinks like a decomposing corpse in the eyes of God. For sinners corrupted the whole nature of fallen man.

Every department of his being is affected, but especially the moral sphere. Does not the prophet Isaiah say? That's fallen man puts evil for good and good for evil.

He puts light for darkness and darkness for light. He puts sweet for bitter and bitter for sweet. His moral values, such as they are, are turned upside down.

Holiness is distasteful for him. And sin is his delight. Like the dog, he returns to his vomit.

[20 : 10] And like the washed pig, he wallows again in the filthy mire. Heaven is the very essence of beauty and glory.

and happiness. But an unconverted soul would not only be bored with the glory of heaven, but miserable in less than five minutes.

No good thinking that you'll go to heaven at the end if your heart is not conditioned to the glory of the place and the joy of the place and the happiness of the place.

The sinful heart would make a hell of heaven. Because it is morally correct. It's unclean.

And truly we are of ourselves men of unclean lips. We dwell among a people of unclean lips. Moral lepers in a leprosy cup.

[21 : 26] We need to be renewed in the inner man. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Without holiness shall no man see the Lord.

We need deliverance from corruption. And then there's a punishment of sin. This is what perhaps used to affect a people more than any other aspect of it.

The wages of sin is death. And it's not just physical death that perturbed men but spiritual death and eternal death.

Banish men from the presence of the God of life and of light and of joy. Consigned to the blackness of darkness forever. Sentenced with the ungodly depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

My friends, we don't think in terms of everlasting fire today. We think that the flames of hell are to be banished along with the medieval myth of fork-tailed devils with the tridents and horns above their heads.

[22 : 53] But my friend, the word of God makes it abundantly clear that there is the Gehenna of fire. That there is the place where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.

A picture taken, a figure taken from the dump outside Jerusalem where the carrion was committed and the worms, the maggots devoured it for the refuge of the city that was combustible was consigned to the flames and fires were forever burning in the valley of Gehenna and it became the symbol of the spiritual moral hell awaiting the ungodly.

No, we have not got rid of the judgment of sin. If people do not believe in hell it doesn't matter.

It exists and we need to have a wholesome fear again awakened in our hearts against the righteous judgment of God.

Of thy righteous judgments Lord, said the psalmist, my soul is much afraid. That's what salvation means. Deliverance from the guilt of sin, from the power of sin, from the corruption of sin, from the judgment of sin, leading to peace with God, leading to spiritual and moral liberty, leading to holiness of life and that sanctification that we do need and leading eventually to what in one word we can express as heaven itself.

[24 : 42] The life that is life indeed. A place in the new Jerusalem, in the glorious city, to know that eternal life which is with the Father.

And so I want us now to look at the uniqueness of Christ as Savior. neither is there salvation in any other, the salvation of which we've been speaking, neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

There is salvation in no one else, says the apostle, and in no other name. the uniqueness of Christ as Savior.

Here is a glorious intolerance. And we must be intolerant in things that really matter. there is a new approach nowadays to missions.

There was a reference to it in a discussion on the radio just last week. No longer does a missionary go out with a message proclaiming the uniqueness of Christ as Savior.

[26 : 05] He recognizes that there are good things in every religion. there are different ways to God. The Jew goes his own way, repudiating Jesus of Nazareth.

The Muslim goes his way, guided by the Quran and by Muhammad. The Buddhist too, with his own religio-philosophy, and the Hindu in his own way.

Besides all the modern aberrations of the faith, the Jehovah Witnesses, and the Mormons with their works righteousness, the divine light of the East with his gurus, and the mummies in their own way.

And Peter would sweep them all aside. He would denounce the modern approach to missions and declare that there is no salvation in anyone else.

There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. And we must proclaim this intolerance of the Christian faith of any of the other faiths or philosophy in the world to save a sinner from the guilt of his sin, from the power of his sin, from the corruption of his sin, and from the damnation that sin brings upon the sinner.

[27 : 41] And why do we say this of Jesus? Why do we claim the uniqueness of the Christ? Well, it's set before us here, for one thing, because Jesus Christ is the only God appointed saviour.

there is none other name under heaven given among men. Given by whom? Given by God himself.

Given by the God of heaven. Jesus is the only God appointed saviour. For salvation from sin is not something that men can achieve of themselves.

It's not for us to choose out the champion who is going to represent us in this matter and to deliver us. It's against God that we have sinned, and it is for God to say whether salvation is possible, and if it is possible by whom.

There is no free love saviour whom we can engage. there is no soldier of fortune that we can put as captain of our souls.

[29 : 04] There is no mercenary that we can hire to deliver us from our sin. It must be one heaven sent. It must be one given of God.

It must be one who is officially and authoritatively recognised by Jehovah. And there is only one name under heaven given among men, and that is the name of Jesus, God's appointed saviour.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. God sent his son into this world. Jesus didn't come voluntarily, simply of his own will, to work out on his own.

He came as the father's servant, as the father gave me commandment, even so I do. Buddha will not save men. Muhammad, the false prophet, cannot save men.

None of these were appointed by God. The only one appointed by God is his son, Jesus Christ. And that is one good reason.

[30 : 19] why there is only this saviour, the one and only God appointed redeemer. But there's another good reason for it, a very good reason, because only Jesus Christ is able to save.

There is no other name among men who could possibly come as a candidate for saviourhood. for all of them are sinners of themselves.

As we were singing, none of these his brother can redeem in any way, nor can he unto God for him sufficient ransom pay, that so he should forever live a Nazi death.

sin. No, there is no man who can save his own soul because he starts with two strikes against him. He starts as a sinner and cannot be accepted even as a saviour for himself, far less for others.

None can save his brother man, nor pay a ransom to God for him. only Jesus Christ can atone for sin.

[31 : 41] And he can do it because he is the sinless, the only sinless man. Which of you convicts me of sin?

He asked and none could. He is holy and harmless and undefiled and separate from sinners. so he does not need to pay any ransom for his own sin because he has none.

Ah, but if he were even the purest of men and merely a man, if he could atone for sin, it would be just for one person's sin.

But then Jesus Christ is more than man. While he is man of very man, he is God of very God. So that in his atonement there is an infinite efficacy.

It's the blood of the God-man with all the value of deity in it. It is the person Jesus, the Son of God, who was the Son of Man, died upon the cross and there offered that sacrifice to God.

[32 : 59] that alone can take away sin. In the Old Testament there was no remission of sin except by the shedding of blood.

The blood of the animal victim took the place of that of the sinner, the worshipper, the offerer. It was by blood sacrifice that sin was symbolically removed.

pointing to Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God who should take away the sin of the world. Oh my friends, he is the only one whose blood atones for sin.

The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, alone cleanses from sin, from all sin. He alone is a propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

He is the Lamb of God who takes away, as John the Baptist said, the sin of the world. He only was good enough to pay the price of sin.

[34 : 06] He only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in, and for that very good reason, he alone is a saviour God provided, and he alone is a saviour we need.

But then there's another reason. He is the saviour, not just because he paid the price of sin, that is fundamental, that is essential at the very heart of the gospel, but he is the living and reigning Christ.

This is what made Peter so bold. He is not dead. You crucify him, you took him by wicked hands and slew him, but he is risen.

God raised him from the dead. He is the living Christ. He is ascended to the right hand of God. He is the reigning redeemer. And so he is able, because he ever lives, to save to the uttermost all who come unto God through him.

my friends, we have a saviour who is living today. A saviour who said, all power is given to me in heaven and on earth.

[35 : 28] And said to his disciples, go ye into all the world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. I am able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by me.

my friends, that's the saviour we need. And that's the saviour you need. And that's the only saviour that will deal with the world's problems.

Others are but tinkering with them. They're changing the pattern as in a kaleidoscope. Shake the kaleidoscope, get a different pattern, the same bits of coloured glass or coloured paper or whatever it is.

They're changing the patterns, but they're not dealing with the problem. The problem is sin. Deep-seated spiritual and moral.

But Christ has dealt with it. The spirit of Christ can deal with it. He is a saviour proclaimed. And one last thing before we close. Notice what Peter said here.

[36 : 33] Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name unto heaven given among men, whereby we may be saved. No, that's not what Peter said.

It's whereby we must be saved. We must be saved or we shall be lost forever. We must be saved because God has provided his salvation.

And if we refuse it, we are guilty not only of breaking the law of God, but rejecting the mercy of God. And those who hear the gospel are under a double responsibility.

You must be saved, my friend, or you're throwing back in God's teeth the gift of life. And he is a saviour for you.

You don't need another. There isn't anyone else set forth, and there's no one else who is able. But Christ is able to save the deepest died sinner.

[37 : 45] This is a faithful saying, says Paul, who experienced it, that Jesus Christ has come into the world to save sinners. A faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance.

What has been your response? God? Well, Peter proclaimed this saviour, but he proclaimed it to those who rejected him. He is the stone which the builders rejected.

God made it at the head of the corner, but still they will not accept it. what is your response? Acceptance or rejection? There is no neutral position.

What is your response to the gospel offer in the word of God? Let us pray.

O Lord, we give thee thanks that there is salvation from sin.

[38 : 49] We give thee thanks that there is a saviour who is able to save all who come unto thee through him. That there is a saviour who said, him who comes unto me, I will in no wise cast out.

We pray thy blessing upon us and upon our meditation this day. We seek thy blessing as we go into the work of day week with its contacts, with its problems, with its concerns, with its opportunities.

We pray for grace that we may show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, that we may be thy witnesses in very truth, and that our lives may be effective forgive us, we pray thee, for all thou seest amiss in us, cleanse us from all the corruption of the sin within us, deliver us from the powerlessness which sin causes in the heart and life of a sinner, deliver us from the paralysis of sin.

And do thou bless us now, we pray thee, in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.