

NO ONE ELSE

By Rev. Will Nelken

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It was an amazing prayer meeting! The truly devoted were accustomed to showing up to pray, like clockwork, because it was their link to the presence and purpose of God. But this meeting was off the charts!

When Peter and John walked in, they brought with them a new friend, a new face... and yet, he seemed somehow familiar. His face was glowing and he was shouting for joy! Then, it dawned on them... this was the crippled man who begged for their help each day as he lay next to the gate called Beautiful. But he was walking, and leaping, and praising God! They were absolutely astounded! Leaving their prayers for the moment, the Christians rushed over to greet him. Many others, also, came to see what the commotion was all about.

Is there anything more exciting than seeing an answer to prayer with your own eyes?! How many had prayed, and how many times, for that poor beggar. And there he stood, on his own healed legs, aglow with the Spirit of God!

Jesus had just recently been killed on a cross and then raised by God from the dead. But as Peter explained how the name of Jesus Christ had made the man completely whole, the priests and Temple leaders, wishing to silence their speeches, had Peter and John arrested and removed from the area. Nevertheless, thousands more put their faith in Jesus Christ that day!

Open a Bible to Acts 4, and let's peek into the courtroom for a few moments and observe the proceedings.

Acts 4:7-12

⁷ *They brought in the two disciples and demanded, "By what power, or in whose name, have you done this?"*

⁸ *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of our people, ⁹ 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? ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says,*

'The stone that you builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.'

¹² *There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved."*

"By what power have you done this?" the leaders asked. They were seeking to understand, or perhaps simply to contend with, the source of healing energy that made the man well.

"In whose name have you done this?" they asked, meaning, "By whose authority, or, who are you representing?"

Peter clearly told them the source of the power: Jesus of Nazareth, whom they crucified and whom God raised from the dead— that was his authorization!

There is Holy Spirit irony in this story. Peter had been known as Simon, until he met Jesus.

Acts 1:42

Jesus took one look up and said, "You're John's son, Simon? From now on your name is Cephas" (or Peter, which means "Rock").

Peter's given name was Simon, meaning "hearing." In Hebrew, his new name was *Kefa*, transliterated in Greek as *Cephas*. As Jesus said, it means "rock." Having met Jesus for himself, Peter went from "hearing" to "representing"!

Peter, or *Kefa* (the Little Rock), was now representing Jesus, the Chief Rock, or in Greek, *Kephale* (do you see the similarity of these names?)—the Cornerstone, the One to whom all others subordinate, on whom all others become dependent.

There is no one else like Him!

The final verse (12) of the passage we read is so potent. I found it even more so as I read it in several other translations.

(MSG) Salvation comes no other way; no other name has been or will be given to us by which we can be saved, only this one.

(GNB) Salvation is to be found through him alone; in all the world there is no one else whom God has given who can save us.

(NJB) For of all the names in the world given to men, this is the only one by which we can be saved.

(WNT) And in no other is the great salvation to be found; for, in fact, there is no second name under Heaven that has been given among men through which we are to be saved.

This was not news to the faithful. Jesus had asserted the same.

John 14:6

⁶ *Jesus told [Thomas], "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.*

No other way (path).

Some say there are many paths to God, but this is true only in this sense: that each individual follows a unique path of genetics, culture, upbringing, education, circumstance, and experience on his or her journey toward God. But in the end, if they are indeed to find God, the one final turn they must take leads through only one door—there are not many doors—and that Door is Jesus Christ.

Buddha offered an eight-fold path to enlightenment. But Jesus plainly said, "There is only one path, and it is narrow—the broad path leads to destruction. I am the Light of the world. I am the Gate. I am the Way, and there is no other."

No other truth (teaching).

We all have many teachers over a lifetime, and many suggestions of what is best for us. Many of those already have proven to be "shoes that do not fit" us. Many have concluded that no one else can know what is best for us, but us. Yet, we trip over ourselves too often on this solo journey, for we do *not* know—we only guess, as we grope our way in the dark.

Jesus Christ knows the very number of hairs on your head. He knows your thoughts. He knows where you are at this very moment. And He loves you with an “everlasting love.” That’s right—He knows you *and* He loves you. *You* cannot even say that about yourself!

Jesus said, “I am the truth that will set you free. I speak the words of God.” His words are a light for our feet and a lamp for our path. There are none to compare!

No other life (energy).

Energy is intoxicating! That’s why we drink coffee, or Redbull, or Rockstar. That’s why we love adrenaline. The tragedy is that we are also tempted to think that our energy is the source of our prowess, productivity, and provision. But that’s an illusion!

Moses spelled out a similar truth for the Israelites, on the verge of their entry to the Promise Land...

Deuteronomy 8:7-18

⁷ For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land of flowing streams and pools of water, with fountains and springs that gush out in the valleys and hills. ⁸ It is a land of wheat and barley; of grapevines, fig trees, and pomegranates; of olive oil and honey. ⁹ It is a land where food is plentiful and nothing is lacking. It is a land where iron is as common as stone, and copper is abundant in the hills. ¹⁰ When you have eaten your fill, be sure to praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.

¹¹ “But that is the time to be careful! Beware that in your plenty you do not forget the Lord your God and disobey his commands, regulations, and decrees that I am giving you today. ¹² For when you have become full and prosperous and have built fine homes to live in, ¹³ and when your flocks and herds have become very large and your silver and gold have multiplied along with everything else, be careful!

¹⁴ Do not become proud at that time and forget the Lord your God, who rescued you from slavery in the land of Egypt. ¹⁵ Do not forget that he led you through the great and terrifying wilderness with its poisonous snakes and scorpions, where it was so hot and dry. He gave you water from the rock! ¹⁶ He fed you with manna in the wilderness, a food unknown to your ancestors. He did this to humble you and test you for your own good. ¹⁷ He did all this so you would never say to yourself, ‘I have achieved this wealth with my own strength and energy.’ ¹⁸ Remember the Lord your God. He is the one who gives you power to be successful, in order to fulfill the covenant he confirmed to your ancestors with an oath.

The danger of self-righteousness and self-approbation always stands at our door. The more God blesses, the greater the danger of forgetting Him. Oh, the twist of sin in us!

I will ask you the questions God asked Job (38):

⁴ “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, if you know so much. ⁵ Who determined its dimensions and stretched out the surveying line? ⁶ What supports its foundations, and who laid its cornerstone ⁷ as the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?

⁸ “Who kept the sea inside its boundaries as it burst from the womb, ⁹ and as I clothed it with clouds and wrapped it in thick darkness? ¹⁰ For I locked it behind barred gates, limiting its shores. ¹¹ I said, ‘This far and no farther will you come. Here your proud waves must stop!’

¹² *"Have you ever commanded the morning to appear and caused the dawn to rise in the east?"*

¹³ *"Have you made daylight spread to the ends of the earth, to bring an end to the night's wickedness?"*

¹⁹ *"Where does light come from, and where does darkness go?"* ²⁰ *"Can you take each to its home? Do you know how to get there?"*

²¹ *"But of course you know all this! For you were born before it was all created, and you are so very experienced!"*

The divine sarcasm is not wasted on us. We are all familiar with such uninformed pride. Yet there is only One who can answer all of those questions authoritatively. And He has offered you and I life in His Son, Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:12

Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God's Son does not have life.

There is no other Savior; God has given no other name with authority to save humankind.

Do you know Him today? Does He know you?