

BRINGING DELIVERANCE IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST

Mark 16:17, 18

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

We Christians love the name of Jesus Christ. And rightly so, for it is in that name that we have received eternal life, freedom from sin, and all of God's blessings and benefits.

As we saw in the previous article, the accomplishments and resources represented by the name of Jesus Christ are more than sufficient to bring new life to all who call upon that name. And as Christians, we continue to depend upon that name, knowing that each prayer we pray is based upon the merits of that name.

There is another vital reason why the name of Jesus Christ should be precious to us: we have been called to take his place in this world. Can you imagine trying to measure up to such a calling based on our own abilities? Thankfully, we don't need to.

The moment we believed on Jesus Christ, we did not only receive forgiveness—we received power.

Acts 1:8

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The power that is ours in the gift of holy spirit enables us to continue showing an unbelieving world the same works which Jesus did—and greater.

John 14:12

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and *greater works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

In fact, the power imparted to us is the same power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him at God's right hand.

Ephesians 1:19, 20

And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*.

Do you think that power such as this is sufficient for us to take on the task of representing our Lord in this world? Certainly. But a question remains—what good is power if I do not have the authority to use it? If I were to be given authority, but not the power to back it up, I would have no means by which to exercise that authority. Similarly, even the greatest power, with no authority to use it, remains dormant power, essentially neutralized.

Thankfully, we have been given the authority, and our authority lies in our right to use the *name* of Jesus Christ. Perhaps the clearest declaration of this truth is in Matthew 28, a record in which, shortly before his ascension, Jesus spoke to those who had believed on him.

Matthew 28:18 (*English Standard Version*)

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me [..."].

This statement is obviously true and was abundantly demonstrated in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. But how does this truth affect me?

Matthew 28:19 (*English Standard Version*)

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Sadly, this well-known verse has often been misunderstood and misapplied due to the fact that the words recorded here were not the words of the original manuscripts. Yes, it is true that even the oldest manuscripts in existence today record the "baptismal formula" as "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." However, the writings of leaders of the early church,¹ who had access to manuscripts older than those in our possession today, quoted it very differently.²

¹ These early leaders are commonly referred to as "Church Fathers."

How did they quote the verse? "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in my name."³ And it is in this statement that the authority of Jesus Christ was transferred to those who believed on Jesus Christ, those who, in a few short days would receive power commensurate with that authority. We see them utilizing the power and authority which was now theirs in the Book of Acts.⁴

Even a cursory reading of the Book of Acts reveals that the believers of the First Century consistently and confidently offered deliverance and salvation to others "in the name of Jesus Christ." One such example is in Acts 3.

Acts 3:1-9

Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being the ninth hour*.

And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

² Although it is not pertinent to this study, it is helpful to note that early in the Fourth Century, the church was fiercely divided regarding the doctrine of the trinity. By the end of the Fourth Century, this doctrine had become almost universally accepted. This could perhaps account for the fact that the manuscripts available to us, those dating later than the mid-Fourth Century, were amended in this fashion.

³ Eusebius of Caesarea, a supporter of the trinitarian doctrine, quoted Matthew 28:19 as reading "in my name" eighteen times in his writings.

⁴ It should be mentioned that if Jesus had indeed instructed his followers to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, they systematically disobeyed this command, for in the Book of Acts we read of them baptizing only "in the name of Jesus Christ."

And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

Note that Peter and John healed the man, but they, in and of themselves, were not the *source* of the healing power (see verse 12). This healing was imparted in the name of Jesus Christ.

Acts 3:16

And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Furthermore, we read that having seen the power inherent in the name of Jesus Christ, thousands chose to believe on that name for their own salvation (Acts 4:4).

Even the religious leaders recognized the importance of that name in that, when confronting Peter and John, they did not command them to stop healing, or even to stop preaching, but "they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus" (Acts 5:40).

Later in the Book of Acts, we read of a group of individuals who obviously had witnessed great works being performed in the name of Jesus Christ, and felt that by simply using that name they could achieve the same results. They were sorely disappointed! (See Acts 19:13-17.) Whether or not one *speaks* the name of Jesus Christ is relatively unimportant.⁵ The real question is – do I have the right to go out into the world, representing him, "in his name?"

I have that right. If you have believed on Jesus Christ, you, too, have that right. This world around us is bursting with need and screaming for deliverance. We are fully equipped to bring that deliverance, just as our Lord did. Let us go forth in his name.

*That name above every other name,
From age to age it stands the same.
The only name, the precious name:
The name of Jesus Christ.*

⁵ Consider John 10:25: "Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do **in my Father's name**, they bear witness of me." And yet we do not read of him saying, "in the name of the Father" preceding his healings or miracles.[Bold print added for emphasis.]