

The Way- In the Name of Jesus

Sermon Notes

April 2, 2017

Mysterious power and identity. **Matthew 7:21-23**

- You can know who the Lord is, yet not know him.
 - Just saying, “Lord, Lord” does not mean you are submitted to his Lordship and his will. (21b)
 - Words can be powerful, but they are not always reflective of truth.
- Even a display of power in the name of Jesus does not necessarily mean that there is a relationship between that individual and Jesus. (22)
 - It is pretty surreal to think that someone can heal in the name of Jesus and cast out demons in the name of Jesus, maybe even speak prophetically, and yet not know him.
 - How can one come to that level of believing in the power of that name yet not surrender to him as Lord?
- You can believe in the power of his name. You can even acknowledge he is the Lord, but if you are not in relationship with him and not living by his will HE DOES NOT KNOW YOU! (21b and 23b)

Is this really possible that someone can do all of that and not be saved? If so, how common is this?

God validating his church. **Acts 19:8-12**

- Paul continues to be powerfully used in public settings in teaching persuasively a more accurate view of God’s Kingdom. (8)
- Persecution did not slow the church down, but only strengthened it. (9a)
- The Spirit empowered many different leaders to perform amazing “signs” which ultimately validated God’s approval of these leaders. (11)
 - Sometimes these signs are a bit unusual (i.e. handkerchiefs and aprons that heal).
 - Unusual things happened with Jesus too—spit and mud, or his cloak being touched).
 - The temple articles in the Holy of Holies were affected by the presence of God.
 - All of these things merely pointed to the presence of God, but in themselves nothing to be worshiped.
- Signs were used by God throughout Scripture to display his presence and offer public approval of leaders. (i.e. Moses, Joseph, Daniel, the 12, and yes the leaders of the early church)

The power is in the name. **Acts 19:13-17**

- The sons of the chief priest were going around and casting out demons in the name of Jesus—successfully. (13a)
- They knew who Jesus was, but they did not know him. (13b)
 - They could not invoke a first person relationship with Jesus, and needed to utilize a third person’s relationship with Jesus.
 - Clearly Paul had awed them.

- They were supposed to be the “shepherds” of the people, so they had an invested interest in being able to cast out demons.
- Instead of seeking answers from Paul they chose to emulate Paul from afar.
- Eventually, they ran into a more wise and powerful demon that saw through their charade. (15)
 - The demons know their enemies.
 - They are of varying power.
- A single demon possessed man overpowered and humiliated seven young priests. (16)
- The public response was that of fear—recognizing the honor and respect due the name of Jesus!
 - Jesus name now rises to the level of the third commandment:

“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.”
Exodus 20:7
 - As a result his name was honored like the name of God.
- His name is the source of the power of Paul and the church.

Take aways

1. The name of Jesus is powerful.
2. His name can be used powerfully even by those who do not know him.
3. We must revere and respect that name lest we suffer great consequences.

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Group Discussion Guide

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Context: Miracles were very common in the early church and many of them would be considered not only jaw dropping but bizarre if they were to happen today. Many questions come to mind in light of this as to the purposes of God, why some and not others, can these same things happen today and if so why are we not seeing them more often, etc...

Texts:

Matthew 7:21-23

Acts 19:8-17

Exodus 20:7

Discussion Guide:

Read **Matthew 7:21-23**. What makes it hard to understand Jesus' rejection of a person who had performed incredible miracles in his name? According to these verses are there any clues that can be discerned as to one who is saved vs. one who is not saved that performs these miracles?

Read **Acts 19:8-12**. If these same things were happening in front of you, how do you think you would react? How would you know if you could trust such a display to be from God? Do you believe these things can still happen today? Explain.

Read **Acts 19:13-17**. What do you think were the motives of these seven brothers in using the name of Jesus to cast out demons even though they were not his followers? Why do you think they were able to successfully cast out demons in Jesus' name prior to this moment? What does that tell you about Jesus name in regards to miracles? What does it tell you about the people in general who are performing miracles in Jesus' name then and now?

According to **Acts 19:17** what was the reaction of the people who observed the humiliation of these seven brothers? Why do you think this is so? How does this connect to the third commandment found in **Exodus 20:7**?

In light of this discussion, why is the name of Jesus to be carefully used and honored? Can you stand confidently and say that you know Jesus and not merely know about him? Explain. How can the name of Jesus be invoked powerfully today in your life and in the church?