

# THE KEYS TO THE ACTS

## **KEY # 2 -- THE NAME OF JESUS**

### *Acts 3:1-11*

"His name", or more accurately, through faith in His name is what made the man whole.

The name of Jesus is referred to again and again in the Acts of the Apostles. I have been in services where great preachers have preached everything from Bible characters to the Holy Spirit but have never once mentioned the name of Jesus!

### *Acts 2:22, 33, 36*

This is whom we're talking about. These are His credentials. He is Lord and Christ. That is the Jesus whose name is used by Peter and John. We often limit Jesus to some of our childhood concepts, but He is the Mighty Son of God. He is the Redeemer. He is Supreme. You cannot exalt Him too highly. **Colossians 2:9** tells us, "*For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form*".

We need to have a vision of Jesus as more than just a carpenter or a teacher, but now exalted at the majesty of God on high. We need to hear the voice of Jesus echoing through all eternity, "*All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth*". (**Matt 28:18**). The name of the mighty Son of God, living in purity, incarnate, conquering at Calvary, raised from the dead, exalted at the right hand of God. It was in His name that all that was done in the Acts of the Apostles was fulfilled.

References to the "name of Jesus": **Acts 5:41; 8:12; 9:15; 10:42; 15:26; 16:18.**

The healing of the man at the gate called beautiful is one of the outstanding miracles recorded in The Acts. Peter and John were on their way to a prayer meeting, and they were going prepared. Too often we go to church unprepared. We have to have our faith "juiced up" by the song service or the preacher.

I know of one preacher who was meticulous in planning his services. And he planned them down to the minute. Every service lasted exactly 90 minutes. This bothered one of the members, who complained to the preacher's wife. She was sweet, but deadly. He asked her, "Why does your husband stop the service just when the Holy Spirit is beginning to move? Her response was biting: Why does it take the Holy Spirit a whole hour to move you??"

Peter and John were going to prayer, but they had something. When they came across a need, they didn't have to get ready to meet that need. They didn't have to get "prayed up", or yank out a prayer book. They were ready!

I have a dream that I guess all preachers have. And it's a dream of stepping into a service where everybody in attendance wants to be there, and are ready to move into God's presence. They have left their troubles outside, they have forgotten their petty differences and problems and are united as one as they enter into fellowship with God.

Being ready means being filled with God's power and presence. If you have to get ready, it's already too late. The opportunity is gone. If we live ready, we can be ministers of the name of Jesus. The Name is Jesus is the Key. It's what was given to the man.

Peter and John spoke the name of Jesus multiplied times. It's mentioned as a phrase many, many times in Acts.

**Acts 3:6; 16; 4:7, 10, 12, 17, 30; 5:28.** There's such an emphasis on "the name" that God wants us to it.

What does "the name" mean?

Well, it does not mean simply tacking the Name of Jesus onto the end of a prayer for things we want. I remember when I was a teenager, praying for a girlfriend. I eventually got one, but I'm sure it wasn't God's idea! You cannot pray selfish prayers, stick His name to the end of the list, and say you've prayed in Jesus' Name! That's not the way it works.

Praying in the name of Jesus or doing things in the name of Jesus means much more than just adding His name to the end of a prayer full of our ideas. It involves the whole Person. When I do a thing in someone's name, I have in my mind his character, his purpose. And if I do a thing in Jesus' name, it's because it's something He wants done, and it's something in harmony with His character and His will and not just something I want done using a big name to back me up. We're involved with His person when we're talking about the name of Jesus. We're talking about submission to His authority. I can't do anything in the name of another person unless he authorized me. The name of Jesus involves authority. And I know that He has authority, all authority. He has infinite authority. And when we do things in His name, we are in harmony with Him, His will, His authority and His power. Because behind His name is all the resources of heaven!

"In his name" means counting with confidence in His commission, **Mark 16:15**. That's all part of His commission.

Ill. Jimmy Salter and Billy Burton went to the Belgian Congo in 1914 to evangelize the natives, who were headhunters. One day they were given a big bowl of roasted nuts by the village witch doctor. When they had consumed most of the nuts, a young boy came running into their tent warning them not to eat the nuts. "The witch doctor is boasting how he has killed the missionaries", the boy cried. Right away, Salter and Burton fell to their knees, prayed, and read these words in the **Mark 16:16**, "*They will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all...*" And they didn't even have a stomachache! As a result of their faith in the Word of God, the whole village converted to Christianity, and the witch doctor said, "Your God is greater than my god".

Christ who commissions us doesn't leave us as orphans when we fulfill His commission. He goes with us and backs us up. And He gives us His name to use, **Proverbs 18:10**. Jesus gave His disciples His name to use in **John 14:12 ff**.

**Philippians 2:5ff**. See the majesty of Jesus. The whole universe will confess that Jesus is Lord. That is the name that is above every name. Every force must give way to the name of Jesus as Lord. This is the name we have been given. That's why we must sing His name, and preach His name and why we must live in the shelter of His name. We can go forth in confidence in His name.

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