

Seizing Gospel Opportunities

Is Jesus the Only Way, the Only Truth, and the Only Life

Jeff Rogers

Acts 4:1-21

Peter now delivers his third “teaching” or “proclamation” (Acts 4:2), this time before the rulers of the day, the Sanhedrin. This proclamation, recorded by Luke in summary form (Acts 2:40), carries the weight of Peter's conviction and the profound significance of its message.

The question of being saved is the supreme question of the Bible. The Bible's subject matter is the salvation found in Jesus Christ. At His conception in the womb of Mary, He is announced as the Savior. Saviorhood and salvation are inseparable. It is the unique role of the Lord Jesus Christ to seek and save His lost sheep.

What are we saved from? What is the meaning of “salvation”? In its simplest form, it means “*to rescue from a dangerous situation.*” An example would be Israel escaping defeat. Another is when people recover from a life-threatening illness, they experience salvation. When a harvest is rescued from drought, it is saved.

Salvation means to be rescued from some calamity. The Bible uses the term salvation specifically to refer to our redemption and reconciliation to God. In this sense, salvation is from the ultimate calamity – the judgment and wrath of God. The ultimate salvation is accomplished by Christ, *who delivers us from the wrath to come.* (1 Thessalonians 1:10)

I. The Proclamation of Christ for Salvation (Acts 4:8-10)

1. Proclamation is best made in fullness of the Spirit (Acts 4:8a) (Eph 5:18-21)
2. Proclamation in the certainty of salvation (Act 4:8b-9)
 - a) The man's healing was NOT in question; what was in question was by Whom or by what Power or Authority was the man healed (Acts 4:7, 16; **Deuteronomy 13:1-5**)
3. Proclamation in the truth of the message (Acts 4:10)

II. The Scoffing of Christ for Salvation (Acts 4:11; Isaiah 28:14)

1. Peter addressed the scoffers [rejected out of utter disdain, completely worthless; despicable] [mocking, speaking boastfully, bragging, flaunting, arrogance] with an OT text addressed to the scoffing rulers of Jerusalem.
 - a) Scoffers are not wise (**Proverbs 29:8**, *Scoffers set a city aflame, but the wise turn away wrath.*) (Foolishly reject the Gospel)
 - b) Scoffers refuse correction (**Proverbs 13:1**, *A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.*) (Refuse to hear the correction of the Gospel).
 - c) Scoffers reject repentance (**Proverbs 14:9**, *Fools mock at the guilt offering, but the upright enjoy acceptance.* (Justify their behavior as “not that bad,” or “just damaged.”))
 - d) Scoffers are arrogant (**Proverbs 21:24** “*Scoffer*” *is the name of the arrogant, haughty man who acts with arrogant pride.*) (Pridefully reject God and His Gospel as unneeded)
2. Scoffers are more than misled; they delight in misleading others. (**Isaiah 28:15**)
 - a) Promote an alliance that leads to certain death.
 - b) Promote protection from determined judgment.
 - c) Promote false assurance in the face of certain truth
3. The Stone of Offense (Builders rejected the Stone for imperfection, misalignment, instability, weakness, or lack of beauty). **Acts 4:11; Isaiah 28:16**
 - a) It was a tested stone (Lord - Jesus was tested and proven as the righteous Son of God)
 - b) It was a precious stone (Jesus - Jesus bore our sin on the cross, was buried, and resurrected)
 - c) It was a sure foundation. (Christ - Jesus is our Christ (High Priest) making intercession for us)
 - d) **See 1 Peter 2:1-9**

III. The Exclusivity of Christ in Salvation (Acts 4:12)

- A. Because the Son of God is God's chosen Savior
 - 1. **1 Peter 2:4**, *As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious,*
- B. Because Jesus is the only sinless person to have ever lived.
 - 1. **Hebrews 4:15**, *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*
 - 2. **Matthew 5:17**, *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."*
- C. Because Jesus is the only sacrifice for sin
 - 1. **1 John 2:2**, *He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*
- D. Because Jesus is the only mediator between God and man.
 - 1. **1 Timothy 2:5**, *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,*
- E. Because of the testimony of Jesus
 - 1. **John 14:6**, *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*
 - 2. **John 10:7-10**, *So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."*
- F. For further discussion, see Romans 1; esp. vss. 18-23; Ecc 3:11

IV. The Determined Boldness for Christ proclaiming Salvation (Acts 4:13-21; esp. vss. 13, 19-20)

- A. Recognizing the disciples' association with Christ (Acts 4:13).
- B. The rulers' acknowledgment of the miracle by silence (Acts 4:14)
- C. The Rulers' inability to deny. (Acts 4:15-17)
 - 1. No explanation for the empty tomb.
 - 2. They could not produce the dead body of Jesus.
 - 3. They could not deny the eye-witness testimony (1 Cor 15)
 - 4. They could not deny the present miracle.
- D. The effort to silence and the promise of boldness (Acts 4:18-21).

- **Romans 1:16-17**, *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."*

- We must not be Ashamed of the Gospel
- We must have confidence in the Gospel
- We must be indiscriminate in spreading the Gospel
- We must be rooted and grounded in the gospel

“According to Cornelius a Lapide, Thomas Aquinas once called on Pope Innocent II when the latter was counting out a large sum of money, “You see Thomas,” said the Pope, “the church can no longer say, ‘Silver and gold have I none.’” “True, holy father,” was the reply; “neither can she now say, ‘Rise and walk.’” The moral of this tale may be pondered by any Christian body that enjoys a fair degree of temporal prosperity.” **FF Bruce, *The Book of Acts*,**

The Gospel - Voddie Bachman

What we do in the midst of this sin sick age that has rejected the Gospel and perverted the gospel and replaced the Gospel with that which is not the Gospel. Is that we call out that wickedness; call it by name. Reminding people of the good news of the Gospel, again and again, and again, and again until it tastes sweet to them again.

When people say, “No, our problem is this or that.” We say no. Our problem is that God created the world and created man and put man in the garden to keep the garden. And He gave the man a command and He held that man to perfect, perpetual obedience to that command and He promised him life if he kept that command and death he didn’t keep it.

Man didn’t keep that command, he ate. Because he ate, because of that one sin, sin entered the world and death through sin. Now, everyone born from that man through ordinary generation inherited that man’s sin nature. Because of that sin nature, sins proceed from it and our world is broken because of that sin and we stand guilty before a holy and righteous God. We know that He is holy and we know that he is righteous and we crave justice.

But, the problem is that if God gives us justice we all die! And so that God in His goodness and in His mercy sent forth His son who was not made from ordinary generation but instead was born of a virgin! The virgin birth matters! Why? Because if He is born by ordinary generation He is born in sin. Because He is not born of ordinary generation! He is clean of sin and He is righteous. His record is clean and keeps His record clean. He obeys God’s law. Because he is truly God and truly man, He obeys the law of God on our behalf in His active obedience.

Then, in His passive obedience, God made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us. God laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Christ died for sin once, for all, the just for the unjust, and God imputes our sinfulness to Him, and He nails our sinfulness to the tree. Christ dies and is resurrected on third day for our justification.

There is another imputation. The righteousness of Christ is actually imputed to us! So that God can be both just and the justifier of the one who places faith in Jesus Christ. So that all those who come to Christ may enter in; so that all those who place faith in Christ might be saved. But, not only saved, but sanctified. Because He is the firstborn of many brethren. We are justified and adopted into the family of God. And we are sanctified and as His children we begin to bear the family resemblance. Further sanctified throughout this life by the very same Gospel that saves us. Until one day, when it is all said and done, we not just saved from the penalty of sin, we not just saved from the power of sin, but one day, we will be saved from the presence of sin. We will be glorified and delivered from sin’s presence. That is the Gospel we preach. That is the Gospel that we need. That’s the Gospel that is more than enough.