

We Have a Purpose

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Preacher: Pastor Bart Leger

[0 : 00] Well, good morning again. So glad to be with you here today. Imagine with me for a moment that you are given a key. This key is not ordinary. It has a power to open doors that no other key can open. It can open doors of freedom, open doors of blessing, healing, salvation, and countless other things. Now, how eager would you be to learn more about this special key?

Well, today we have access to this key. Now, it's not some special golden key or some complex digital code. It's the key that we all have access to today if we know Christ as our Savior. This special key is a name, and it's none other than the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Jesus is the one. He is the only one, that there is power beyond belief and comprehension in His name. Now, our message today is titled, The Power of His Name. And this morning, as we journey through Acts chapter 3, verse 1 through Acts chapter 4, and verse number 4, I realize it is a long passage, but this is a section that is a section that is one long section, and I don't want to break it because it is a continuous section all the way through Acts chapter 4 and verse number 4. We are going to witness how the apostle Peter and John transformed the life of one man, and in turn, events that led up to that and continued, many people came to know Jesus Christ as their Savior. Now, are you prepared to understand? Are we prepared to embrace this key, this message this morning, this name of Jesus? Because if you are, we're going to look at the three stages that took place in this event that we see in chapter number three through verse number four. Now, the emphasis in Acts chapter 3 and Acts chapter 4, because Peter was speaking, excuse me, was speaking to primarily an audience of Jews. And as we're going to see in a moment, the Jews had blood on their hands. And the emphasis of Acts chapter 3 and Acts chapter 4 is on the name of Jesus and the power that name carried and who Jesus was as the Son of God. So when we're going through Acts chapter 3, Acts chapter 4, we're going to see the name of Jesus over and over and over again and the power in that name. Now, a name implies so much more than just the name.

A name can carry with it identity. A name can carry with it authority and reputation. And a name can also carry with it some power. When someone says, you go to this person and tell them this is what you need and you can use my name. Well, what do you hope? You at least hope their name carries some weight, right?

You at least hope that they'll say, oh, okay, and then do whatever it is for you rather than, oh, you know, so and so. No, you hope that their name would carry some authority. If an order is given in the name of the President of the United States or the Prime Minister of Great Britain, you know, you're obligated, the person's obligated to obey. Now, if I went to the White House or number 10 Downing Street, even if I would be allowed in and I say, you know what, you need to do this, people will go, you've got no authority behind your name to do anything here. So when there is authority behind a name, it makes a profound difference.

The name of Jesus Christ has all authority behind it. Matthew 28, 18. All authority has been given to the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven and in earth. The name of Jesus Christ, when we glorify, when we worship, when we sing, the name of Jesus Christ is above every name. Philippians chapter 2, verses 9 through 11 talks about that, that his name is above all names. There's no other name that's the equal in the person, in the name of the person, Jesus Christ, because his name is above every name. He deserves our worship and he deserves our obedience. Now, the great concern of the first Christians was the name of Jesus Christ. They were concerned about propagating that name. They were concerned about, eventually, they were concerned about sharing the name of Jesus with all of those around them. Now, as we said earlier, there are stages to this event. We're going to look at the three stages as we go through this morning.

[5 : 51] The first is we see people witness the miraculous healing power of Jesus. So this scene unfolds as Peter and John approach the temple, a place of worship, excuse me, and there's a man

whose life has been affected and has been transformed by the power of Jesus Christ. This lame man encounters Peter and encounters John. Let's take a look. Acts chapter 3, Acts chapter 3, verses 1 through 3, starting in verse number 1. Now, Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. We begin by seeing Peter and John going to the temple for the regular 3 o'clock prayer service. They were going to go and they were going to be praying with the rest of the body of believers. 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 or the beautiful gate, to ask alms or to ask charity from those who entered the temple. Who's seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple? And he's thinking to himself, ah, likely, yeah, maybe they're going to give me something. And so he either holds out his hand or pushes a cup or maybe had a little bowl that he was, people were dropping in coins as they were passing by. And he asks for charity.

So the lame man being carried every day to this gate, just like someone has their corner picked out where they asked for a handout, this guy had his place picked out where every day someone would carry him. And he was probably a familiar sight. People will walk by. Well, there he is again. There's some intersections where you travel in town and you'll see that same person day after day after day. And so you see them. And so this, this guy who couldn't walk was a regular fixture there at that gate. So people knew what he looked like. People knew the problems that he had. He'd been unable to walk, probably unable to work. And he relied on the charity of others just to eke out a living.

Now think about it. Many of us encounter people, not only physically disabled, not only physical need, but we, we come across people in need every day. Do we stop and pay attention? And we're going to see in just a moment that money wasn't the, what, what Peter and John gave, but they gave him something infinitely more important and something I trust that he appreciated. Do we offer a kind word?

Sometimes, sometimes someone will come and you'll see that they're sad or you'll see that they've been through, been through something. Do we stop and do we offer a kind word? Do we offer encouragement?

[9 : 16] Or even better, do we offer something more meaningful, something more long lasting by sharing with them the name of Jesus Christ and what he can do in their life? So Peter and John had faith. Peter and John had faith in the name of Jesus and believed in the authority of the name of Jesus. Look at verse number four through verse six. And fixing his eyes on him with John and Peter said, so the man wants money.

And John and Peter, Peter says, look at us, look at us, look at, look at us in the eyes. So he gave him his attention, expecting to receive something from them. Then Peter said, I don't have money. Silver and gold.

I do not have. But what I do have, I give you in the name of G in the what? In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. Peter and John walking up to this guy didn't just pass on by. They stopped and took the time.

They didn't have physical riches to give, but what they gave him and what they offered him was infinitely more valuable than money. All too often we think money is the answer to all problems. Well, let's just give him, let's just give him a handout. That won't fix their problem. He'll just let them go begging for another day. Now, doesn't mean that giving someone the gospel and helping them to find Jesus is, well, it may not fix their physical problem, but it certainly will give them a different perspective, a brand new life and a different way of looking at their life and might even give them an opportunity to move forward from where they are. So they give him something. Now, what does Peter do? Peter says, look at us. Do we have that kind of boldness today to walk up to someone and say, I've got some good news for you.

Um, it's, it's, it's, it's an opportunity that we have. Uh, I was shared, uh, a couple of folks this week had an opportunity with, uh, uh, person that checkout Walmart, uh, ended up being bold enough to, to say, I challenge you to read the gospel of John. Well, how did you know that I like to read?

[11 : 53] Well, you know, the Holy spirit has a way of, of prompting us do things that God's already been preparing in someone else's heart and life. And so just taking that boldness, uh, and I, I hear testimony of, of people sharing at work or, uh, sharing in different places. Do we have that boldness? What did the early church pray for after they had been beaten and told, don't talk about Jesus anymore. They got back together. They prayed and asked the Lord for what? Even more boldness for a fresh and filling of the Holy spirit. So they could be bold. Uh, do we have that same

kind of boldness as Peter and John had, uh, when he says, we don't have any money for you, but we've got something that's even better in the name of Jesus Christ. Now I don't have that kind of power today.

You don't have that kind of power today to go up to someone and say, in the name of Jesus, get up and walk. Now, some people may think they have, but that power does not reside within us. If God wants to do that, God can still do it. So there is power in his name, but they had enough boldness to approach this fellow. Next, what we, what we see next is demonstrating the power of Jesus name in verse seven and eight. And he took him by the right hand, lifted him up immediately, his feet and ankle bones received strength. So he leaping up stood and walking, enter the temple with them, walking, leaping and praising God. So upon Jesus, upon Peter's command in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. The man's feet were healed and his ankles were strengthened. He was able to start walking, jumping, fully healed. Now this, this was performed in the name of Jesus. How do you imagine the crowd reacts? Wow. Something special has happened today. And you know how the gossip mill starts. Look, Hey, did you hear about so-and-so? Hey, did you hear about the guy that's always been at the, at the gate asking for money? You know that? Yeah. That guy's always bothered us every time we walk by and we just saw him walking because someone said the name Jesus. And he got up and he started walking. Now, whether it's physical, emotional, or spiritual healing, Jesus is able to restore you completely. See, that's the message that you and I have today. It may not be a physical healing that he chooses to give you, but it may be that he can restore you completely with a brand new life.

There's power in the name of Jesus. Next, we see the crowd's astonishment verses nine and 10 and all the people saw him walking and praising God. They were, they were wondering what happened to this guy.

Then they knew that it would, they recognized him, that it was he who sat begging alms at the beautiful gate at the temple. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what happened to him. So the crowd sees a wonderful thing happen that God does. And they were filled with awe. They were amazed by what God did. Now think about that. Our response shouldn't be any different. When God does something profound in your life, we should get excited about it. When God does something profound in the life of another person, we should be so quick to say to God be the glory. Not, not us. That's not something that we do. There are so many people that are so proud of their gifts. There are so many people that are so proud of what they do. And they say, Hey, look at what I did. And they want to tell people about what they did. So, Hey, look at me. I'm so holy and I'm so, uh, you know, I'm so spiritual because, you know, I did this and I did that and I did that. And who's getting the glory. It's just like the, the, the Pharisees who were the long prayer prayers. And Jesus said, yeah, they got their reward because people are looking at them and applauding them today. Uh, they got the reward here.

See, you give God the glory and you do it in the power of his Holy spirit. Not only are you going to get reward eventually, but you're going to get reward eternally. And so God, the name of Jesus Christ is powerful, excuse me, even more, we should be shouting it from the rooftop, what God has done in our life. And some people say, well, I don't have a, I don't have a big testimony. You know, God didn't save me from a, from a, a life of, of, of horrible, terrible sin. He didn't lift me out of the gutter and well, praise God. He didn't have to take you very far. Uh, but no matter how good we think we are, when you trusted Christ as your savior, receive a brand new life. It was a miracle because the Bible says that we are all sinners. We all deserve death. There is none righteous, as the Bible says, no, not one, not even a single person has any righteousness to offer God.

[17 : 25] And so when we trust Christ as our savior, when we say, God, I know I'm a sinner. God, I know that I don't deserve to be a part of your family, but because Jesus died on the cross for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Whoever believes in his heart, that Jesus is the son of God, God raised him from the dead for all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, shall be delivered from the penalty of death because of our sin. And so we should be willing to shout it from the mountaintop just that God's loved me enough to save me and he can do the same for you. So in doing so, in sharing the name of Jesus Christ, we continue to carry the power of the name of Jesus Christ. Next, it doesn't stop there. The second stage is we see an indictment. We see an indictment upon those who killed Jesus. And so the people, the Jews who were there had to acknowledge, or at least they needed to acknowledge that they had killed the son of God, that they had killed the

divine son of God. Look with me in verses 11 and 12. Now, as a lame man who was healed, held onto Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch, which is called Solomon's or Solomon's portico. One of the outer, one of the courts before you leading into, uh, into the, the temple, which is called Solomon. And they were greatly amazed. So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people. Remember what Larry was saying just a moment ago on the platform when we have an opportunity, never miss an opportunity to talk about Jesus. You know, sometimes people will open the door just a, just a crack. You know, they will say, you know what, I'm having a, I'm having a tough day today. Or, you know, they may, they may say something, uh, something else that might be a little bit of an open door for you to share, maybe something of your, about your own life and the way Jesus made a difference in your life.

Uh, Larry talks about, uh, the, the, one of the funerals he mentioned, uh, was it last Saturday, Saturday before last? They said, uh, yeah, we want you to do the funeral, but we don't want any religious stuff. What they meant by that was they didn't want to hear Jesus. Well, the mom, was it the mother? The mother, when he was talking to her a little bit later, she says, I know that my daughter is in heaven. Well, guess what? She opened that door wide open. And so he said, well, I hope, I hope she is, but you want to know what the Bible says about how you can know that you're in heaven, that you can be, that you can go to heaven one day. And so he had the opportunity to share the gospel then and had the opportunity to share the gospel at the funeral. So what does Peter do?

All these people were amazed and they're probably, the crowd is, they're hearing all this things people are saying and, and Peter said, opportunity. And so what does he do? He says, men of Israel, why, why are you so astonished? Why are you marveling at this? Or why look, why are you staring at us? Why look so intently at us as though by our own power or godliness had made this man walk? I mean, we're not superstars. Why are you looking to us like we did something great? What does he go on to say? He says, well, later what we're going to see is it's not their power. You know, in the same way, we shouldn't shy away when someone opens the door. You may be in the line, the checkout line at Walmart. Walmart. And they say something and it says to you, I left it down there. But if they say something to you and it kind of opens the door a little bit, take out your truelife.org card and say, and you may not have time to carry on a conversation and share a whole gospel message message about how to know Jesus, maybe there's some answers to that issue that you're having right now. Just check this out. And then just pray for them. Continue on. You may not even know their name.

[22 : 14] That's an opportunity. Be bold enough to take the opportunity. We may never know on this side of heaven what difference you made when you give someone an opportunity to know some more about Jesus and to trust him as their savior. Some people say, well, I'm not an evangelist.

You know, I don't have the gift of evangelism. I don't have that spiritual gift. So what did Paul tell Timothy? He said, just do as if you're an evangelist. Do the work of an evangelist.

All that means is just share the gospel. Just tell people about Jesus. You don't have to be gifted to do something. I play at the guitar. I'm certainly not gifted. Back a number of years ago before we had all these musicians on the stage, I got up with my guitar and I just kind of added a little bit. Every once in a while, Jeremy would have to correct me so that you don't do it that way. So I'm not, I wasn't gifted, but I was willing to use a talent that I had. So we may not be spiritually gifted in certain areas. You may not be gifted in mercy, but we're still supposed to show mercy. You may not be gifted at exhortation. You may not be gifted at, at letting someone know, you know, you probably shouldn't be doing that anymore. But sometimes we may not like conflict, but sometimes we have to step into the gap and say, you know, this is something that, that is not right. So do the work, be bold enough. In the same way, we too shouldn't shy away from taking those opportunities. Then what does Peter do? Not only does he say that, why are you looking at us like we did something special? He goes on to present Jesus, the glorified son of God that they betrayed and they denied. Look with me at verse, verses 13 and 14. He says, the God of Abraham, who was he speaking to? He was speaking to Jews. And anytime the Jews wanted to stand upon principle or stand upon their heritage, they would always talk about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers glorified this servant or his servant, Jesus, whom what? He said, you delivered up and you denied, you denied this divine son of God in the presence of Pilate. Pilate gave you an option for this Jesus to live. But you didn't take that option when he was determined to let him go. Pilate wanted to let

Jesus go. He didn't want to riot and he didn't think Jesus was guilty of death for sure and may not have even been guilty of anything, probably according to Pilate. But he says, but you denied the Holy One and the just and asked for a murderer to be granted to you. Peter then recounts the painful truth. This Jesus, remember that they had said, you can have Barabbas. You know, we'll, uh, uh, we can, you can, we can let Jesus go. But they said, no, we want Barabbas. We want this, we want this, uh, this other guy. Uh, we want Jesus to be put to death. Crucify him, crucify him, crucify him. Peter's audience chose a murderer over the Holy One, Jesus Christ. See, in today's world, similar choices confront us. And you think, well, you know, I wouldn't, I wouldn't do that. Well, how often do we choose convenience over Jesus?

How often do we choose sinful pleasures over following Jesus? How often do we choose personal ambitions over following Jesus? We put ourselves first rather than, than him. And in so doing, what do we do? We deny his sovereignty in our life. Anytime we choose pleasure over him, anytime we choose sinful pleasure over him, anytime we choose a personal ambition over Jesus, what do we do? We deny his sovereignty in our life because he is sovereign. He is in control whether we allow him to be or not. He is the one whose name is above all names. All authority has been given to him in heaven and on earth. But thanks be to God, this was not the end. He says, you chose a murderer.

[27 : 25] It wasn't the end. Then they're told about what happened next. Verse 15, he says, and you kill the prince of life whom God raised from the dead. It wasn't the end. It wasn't the finale. God had something else in mind. You kill the prince of life, but God raised him from the dead. And he says, all of us here, we're witnesses. Because what did Jesus do after he rose from the grave? He appeared. He appeared to the women. He appeared to the men. He appeared in the upper room. Thomas wasn't there. He comes back.

Thomas, he says, Thomas, why don't you touch my hands, my side? Thomas says, oh, that's okay, Lord. I believe. I believe you now. And so he appeared to many, many others. He says, we are all witnesses. In his resurrection, we see the triumph of divine love. God loved us so much. I want you to think about something. What, where would we be without life? Now, when we think about physical life, we're going to spend eternity in one place or another. God loved you so much that he didn't want you to be separated from him forever. Think about the person you love the most. I'm going to get personal now. Think about one of your children. What if someone said, I'm going to take your child away and you'll never see them again. What do you think about that? You would never want that to happen. But do you realize that God as your and my creator in the garden of Eden because of Adam's sin, you and I were separated from God because of our sin? As a matter of fact, when Jesus was hanging on the cross, the Bible tells us that for the time of about three hours, because your sin and mine was placed upon Jesus, God couldn't even look at him. He turned his back on Jesus. Can you imagine the person that you love the most turning their back on you? Jesus did what he did. Jesus endured on the cross what he did because he loves you so much. He didn't want to be separated from you. Think about that.

We may think that we've got life. We've got it all together. And there are many who are walking around today saying, I don't need you. I don't need Jesus. I don't need God. I got a good job. I got health, got a nice car, got a nice truck, got a family. I don't need God. That's what I call the height of ignorance because the Bible tells us that Jesus holds everything together. Jesus is the one that gives you and me the air to breathe. What if he said, no, no more air today. We are at his mercy. But he's not just some capricious God up there who says, you know what, I'm going to play with, with, with them. No, he won't. He loves us so much that he gave his life for us. And just as the apostles testified about Jesus and the crucifixion and the resurrection, we need to be sharing that as well. And then Peter proclaims the power in his name very quickly as we go through. And it is, and his name through faith in his name. We didn't make this guy, we didn't heal this guy. It was the name of Jesus Christ, the power in his name that made this man strong whom you see now. Yes, the faith which comes through him was given him, has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. See, faith is not only in words, but it's in the person of Jesus Christ. Now, some people have faith in their religion. Some people have faith in their work. Some people have faith in, in a, in a person, but it's faith in the name of Jesus Christ, faith in Jesus Christ himself. Let's boldly share that faith with those around us because just like this lame man that Peter and John ran into, we have people around us that are hurting and they need new life. And finally, we see the third

stage. Peter calls for repentance. Peter's calling for them to come to Jesus Christ. Just come to Jesus. He's our savior. He is our redeemer.

[33 : 00] Peter, look at verse 17 through 19. Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance. You didn't really know what you were doing when you asked for Jesus's death, as did also your rulers. But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all his prophets, that the Christ would suffer. It was foretold in the Old Testament that the Messiah would have to suffer and ultimately the Messiah would have to die, that the Christ would suffer and he has thus fulfilled. Here's that word again. Repent. We saw a few weeks ago, repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out so that the time of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord. The message is clear. It's not too late to turn back. The message is the same for us today. I've heard people say, well, you don't know what I've done. I said, no, I don't.

But it's not too bad for Jesus to forgive. Well, you don't know where I've been. I said, it doesn't matter. Well, what about people on their deathbed? Well, what about the person hanging next to Jesus on the cross? Jesus said, today you'll be with me in paradise. It was not too late for the criminal next to Jesus. It's not too late for you and it's not too late for others that we come into contact with. Let's be ready to share the gospel. And then next, Jesus we see is the promised Messiah, our welcome Savior and our Redeemer, verse 20 and 21, and that he may send Jesus Christ who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world had begun. Jesus, his arrival, his sacrifice, Jesus fulfilled all these prophecies.

One day, we've been going through the book of Revelation on Sunday mornings in Sunday school. One day, Jesus Christ is going to come back and he'll fulfill all those prophecies. Jesus Christ is going to make everything right. And we, if we know Jesus, if we're a follower of Christ, we are going to spend eternity with him. We live in anticipation of that. At least I trust that you are.

The end of, of, of Revelation. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. We want you to come today. And someone said, well, wait, wait a minute. I haven't experienced this yet. Well, whatever you're going to experience in heaven is going to trump anything else you think you could experience on earth. Amen. It's going to be a great time. And we live in anticipation of that. But I know some people who live in trepidation because they were afraid that the world is going to end and they don't know what's going to happen or they don't know where they're going to be spending eternity.

See, that can change the moment we share Christ with someone and they trust him as their savior. So there's Moses's prophecy. Verse 22. For Moses truly said to the fathers, the Lord, your God, will raise you up, raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren. You'll, and him, you shall hear in all things, whatever he says to you. And it shall be that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. Verse 24. Yes. And all the prophets from Samuel and all those who follow as many as have spoken have also foretold of these days.

[36 : 29] You are the sons of the prophets, meaning they come from the lineage of the prophets, these Jews they were speaking to, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Peter's sermon is going to be leading to the conversion of so many. He says to you, first God, having raised up his servant Jesus and sent him to bless you and turning away from every one of you from your iniquities. Now we come to chapter 4. Final four verses. Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captains of the temple, the Sadducees came upon them, being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And verses 3 and 4. And they laid hands on them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. However, I love that word, however, they arrested Peter and John, they arrested them, laid hands on them, put them in custody until the next day. However, many of those who heard the word trusted. They believed. And the number of the men that came to know the Lord tallied up to about 5,000. Peter's message, the name of Jesus Christ led to an additional 2,000 people trusting Christ. So it all started, day of Pentecost, 3,000 people come to know Jesus. A little bit later, Peter speaks after the healing of a lame man, and we've probably got another 2,000 that trust the Lord. Now this highlights the power of the gospel.

It can change hearts. It can change lives. And as we embrace Jesus as our Savior and our Redeemer, we use the key, the name of Jesus Christ, we have also been entrusted with this gospel message to share it. He says, you shall be my witnesses when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. You know, we're called to share it in our homes. We're called to share it in our workplaces, in our

communities, trusting that the Holy Spirit is going to do the rest. All we've got to do is share the word.

All we've got to do is share the gospel, share the truth. It's not a mere assignment, and it's not an obligation, it's a privilege. Just imagine if you had the cure for cancer. We're hearing so many more and more people lately hearing the C word. Just imagine, if you could, that somehow you found that you were entrusted with a cure, complete cure for all cancers.

Would you consider it a burden to go tell someone who's got cancer that they can live? I don't think so. You would probably go running, shouting it. I've got the cure. Nobody else has to die of cancer. We've got the cure for sin or for people spending an eternity in the lake of fire separated from God because of sin. We've got the cure, and it's the name of Jesus. It's not a burden.

It's an opportunity. Now, yes, we're going to be maybe sometimes afraid of what people might think, afraid of being bold enough to open the door or to go through the door that they've opened and share the gospel. But just imagine if we experienced this same kind of church growth using the same percentage of growth that the early church experienced following Peter's message. And I did the math.

[40 : 22] If we experienced the same kind of church growth through my message today, and people are seeing us live, we would have 1,200 people here next week. I don't know where we'd put them.

Worship team, you might have to play a few more times to have enough worship services for 1,200 people, right? But see, that's the point. There's power in the name of Jesus. It can change people's lives. And so as we've journeyed, as we conclude, as we journey through Acts chapter 3, verses 1 through 4, we've seen the transformative power of Jesus's name from a lame man leaping with joy to thousands of people trusting Christ as their Savior. Think about this. This miracle and this power is not confined to the pages of Scripture. The same power that Peter spoke in Acts chapter 3 is the same power that we have available to us in the name of Jesus, the power of God's Holy Spirit today. It's as real and as relevant today as it was to them. So what's the big takeaway? Big takeaway from today's message is the reminder that we have what the world needs. It's Jesus. We have what the world needs most.

We don't need world peace. It would be nice to have. We don't need a balanced budget. It would be nice to have. You know, all these things we think would fix society. What's going to happen when Jesus comes and it all gets melted away?

We have the one thing that is what the entire world needs and that is Jesus. In a world marked by pain, by confusion and despair, the message of Jesus, his love, his healing, his restoration is a beacon of hope that we can give to folks. Now, very simply, three next steps. So what does this mean to me today?

Well, prayer and faith. Spend time daily in prayer, just affirming your faith, telling your faith in Jesus Christ, thank you for saving me. I trust you. Remember the power that is in his name and let that fuel your faith to pray for not only your personal needs but also to intercede for others. So spend time in prayer.

[43 : 02] Next would be acknowledge who Jesus is and praise him for who he is. His name is above all names. Make a deliberate effort to acknowledge Jesus in every area of your life. At home, at work, in the neighborhood, at the ball game, wherever. Acknowledge Jesus and don't be afraid to say Jesus.

You know, as the holidays, you know, it's amazing that here we are, we're getting ready to go into the second half of 2023. And I hate to say this, but Christmas is going to be upon us before we know it.

We celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Don't be afraid to say, oh, you know, Jesus is the reason for this season. Name the name of Jesus. Every opportunity we have, every step we take, use it as an opportunity to share the name of Jesus.

And then action. Identify one person in your life that you're pretty sure does not know Jesus as their Savior.

I want you to pray for them. Pray for their salvation. Pray for God's Holy Spirit to open their minds. Pray for opportunities that you might have to share with them.

[44 : 22] And then maybe share the gospel with them. So you have the message that can transform their life. Life. So living out these three steps will not only strengthen your personal life and your faith journey, but also see God being able to use you as an effective vessel in other

people's lives as well.

So let's live out the power of Jesus's name. Let's pray. Father, this morning, we're so, so very thankful for what you're doing in our lives. We thank you that we serve a God who is above all things.

We thank you that we serve a God who is living, not a religious leader who's dead and buried and whose body is decayed in the tomb many, many years ago.

But we serve a risen Savior, and he's in the world today. We thank you, Father, for what you're going to do in our lives through us. And, Lord, we pray that if there's those who do not know Jesus as Savior, that today, through this message, through your word, that they would surrender and trust Christ completely and begin to follow him.

We thank you, Lord, for what you're going to accomplish. We pray all of this in Jesus' name.