

Series: Great Hymns of the Faith

Sermon: All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

Matthew 8:5-13 (NIV)

When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help.

6 “Lord,” he said, “my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly.”

7 Jesus said to him, “Shall I come and heal him?”

8 The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and that one, ‘Come,’ and he comes. I say to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

10 When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, “Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. 11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would.” And his servant was healed at that moment.

Sermon

Help me out and finish this line: “O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?” Good job. Wherefore. Old word. Does not mean “Where”. Where are you. It means “Why.” Why are you. When Juliet is pining away on her balcony, she is not wondering where is he, but why he had to be Romeo. If it was written today, it would read something like, Romeo, Romeo, why did you have to be Romeo? Deny thy father and refuse thy name; or if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love and I’ll no longer be a Capulet. His name is the problem. He’s a Montague, the sworn enemy of Capulets. What’s in a name? Apparently, a lot. This morning, I want to look at the Name of Jesus. All Hail the Power of Jesus name. “Jesus” — a name uttered in anger and cursing by some and in devout worship by others. The name Jesus is searched for on Google over 16 million times a month. Two billion inhabitants of this earth identify themselves as followers of Jesus.

So just for a little Bible lesson today, I want to explore a few verses that ask for the Name of Jesus, what it might mean for us today, and a little history of a classic hymn that asks the same question - why should we care.

From Matthew 1:21; the Christmas Story: She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. The name Jesus is the Greek name to the Hebrew word for Joshua, which means “the Lord is salvation”. Chances are Jesus went by Joshua his whole life - at least by his Hebrew speaking friends and family. But what more fitting name could there be for our Savior than “Jesus”? The angel told Joseph to name the child Jesus, “because he will save his people from their sins.”

Skip to the next gospel, Mark, and you read this: 9:39 “Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me.” There is such power in Jesus’ name that it can enable those who invoke His name in faith to accomplish even miracles. Mark 16:17-18 [Jesus

said] And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.

If you jump over to John, you catch these lines: John 16:23-24 In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. Answered prayers! What's the key? Pray to God the Father in Jesus' name. Don't be hesitant or timid. James wrote, in the Ol' King James: "Ye have not because ye ask not" (James 4:2, KJV). Jesus said our part is to "ask" in His name. God's part (and promise) is to answer.

Someone asked me a while ago, if it's alright to pray to Jesus. He is part of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Why bother with God at all, just ask to Jesus. He's a little less scary for some. While it is certainly not inappropriate to speak to and pray to Jesus, my feeling is that Jesus Himself encouraged us to pray to God the Father in Jesus' name — which speaks of the direct access we have to the Father through the Son. As you invoke Jesus' name in faith, "ask and you will receive."

Just a few more lines to share: John 20:31; But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. You want life? Get Jesus in your heart - you'll have life. Abundant life. Eternal life, a life worth living.

Acts 2:21; And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.
Echoed in Romans 10:13; "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

The biblical opposite of "saved" is "lost". Lost in our unforgiven sins, lost in guilt, in judgement, but also lost in life, in purpose, in moral compass. But if I remember my Bible, it also said that Jesus came to save the lost!

In our scripture passage for today, just the name of Jesus was sufficient to heal the centurion's servant - Jesus didn't even have to show up!

What's in a name? Why should we care about the name of Jesus? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet? There's power in names. Names are important to us. We take great pains and care in naming our children. We put intentionality into last names as we marry. We had an outside cat for about a year. Black cat, roams the neighborhood. Not wild, but looks abandoned. We already have a cat. And two guinea pigs. Not looking to have any more. Outside cat. Don't let the outside cat come in. OUR cat vs. ANOTHER cat - the OUTSIDE cat. We even called it that. Outside cat. A year later. My daughter took to calling her Izzy. Then everyone called her Izzy. Guess what. She's no longer an outside cat. But an inside cat. There's power in a name - once you name it, it's yours.

There's power in the name of Jesus. Maybe I'm bad pastor, but I don't get into miraculous healings, casting away demons in the Name of Jesus, or trying to perform miracles uttering the name of our Savior - the Power of Christ compels thee!

We are in the middle of a short sermon series exploring a few of the stories behind the most famous hymns in Christianity, and learning the history behind the words that we sing. Think of it like VH1 "Behind the Music" but for church.

Today's Hymn has been called the "National Anthem of Christendom." It is one of the most famous and recognizable hymns that we have. It has been translated into every single Christian language, and has been included in over 2,300 American hymnals alone. It was first written in 1779 by an Englishman, Edward

Perronet. Edward Perronet was the son of an Anglican priest. Born in Kent, England. Perronet's family was already quite familiar with trials and tribulations. Edward's Protestant grandparents had fled Catholic France, going first to Switzerland then to relative safety of England. Edward followed in his father's footsteps, becoming a Vicar himself. He eventually became very close to the famous English reformers John and Charles Wesley - the founders of the Methodist Movement.

Now, I already said that England was only "relatively" safe for Protestants. In time, Edward would be exposed to his own trials and persecutions. Edward would often travel with John and Charles Wesley, and in one of John Wesley's journals, we find this entry: "Edward Perronet was thrown down and rolled in mud and mire. Stones were hurled and windows broken." We might think things are tense between different denominations now... but it is nothing in comparison to what it was like back then.

Edward was also subjected to some strife between himself and the Wesleys. Though considered a capable preacher, Perronet was uneasy about doing so in front of John Wesley, despite Wesley's persistent urging. Finally, one Sunday, Wesley simply announced that Brother Perronet would be giving the sermon that day. So, unable to resist any longer, Edward mounted the pulpit and declared he would deliver the greatest sermon ever preached. He then proceeded to read Christ's "Sermon on the Mount"; after which, he immediately sat down. I couldn't find if John Wesley after asked him to preach again.

The conflict didn't stop at sermons either. In time, Edward broke with the Wesleys over various Methodist policies, and in retribution, John Wesley excluded his hymns from all of the Methodist hymnals. John kicked him out. Actually, it was Edwards who left, he was frustrated with the Methodist's stance on the separation of Church and State. Methodists don't like to get too political with their religion - Edward wanted them married together.

Edward went off to pastor a small independent church in Canterbury, where he died in 1792, just after John Wesley. His last words were: "Glory to God in the height of His divinity! Glory to God in the depth of His humanity! Glory to God in His all-sufficiency! Into His hands I commend my spirit."

A life lived... in conflict... strife... persecution... and separation. It was a life that led to the writing of "All Hail the Power of Jesus Name." A hymn... in its simplicity proclaims an powerful truth. That one day... all will be equal at the feet of our Lord. We might not all get along. We might not think alike. We might vote differently. Some of us are more passive. Some of us are more aggressive. Some of us have more faith than others. But no matter our differences or denominations, we point to Christ. All Hail the power of Jesus name. No other name. As Paul put it in Philippians,

"Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
10
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

What can this song do? Just one story: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_UhtYhhDFI

What's in a name? What's in a song? It can heal divisions. It can bring peace. It can bring wonder. And it can bring love. All Hail the Power of Jesus Name. And the family of God said, AMEN.