

“There is no other name under heaven” Pastor Takashi Inoue
Acts 4:5-14, Matthew 10:26-31

① [The leaders were amazed at Peter's bold attitude]

Peter and John healed a man who had been crippled from birth and had been living by receiving alms near the Beautiful Gate of the temple. Through this, they were proclaiming to the people in the temple that Jesus was the true Messiah. As a result, they were arrested by Jewish leaders such as the high priests, the Sadducees, and the temple guards, imprisoned, and brought before the council the next day for questioning. The leaders questioned them, saying, “By what authority, and in whose name, did you do this?” (verse 7). They were accused of disrupting the order of Judaism by preaching without authorization. Since they could not defeat Peter and the others with reason, they tried to suppress them with the “power” of this world. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said, “This man was healed and is standing before you because of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified and whom God raised from the dead” (verse 10). “There is no salvation through anyone else. There is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved” (verse 12). This is an incredible confession of faith. A man who, just three years earlier, had been fishing on the Sea of Galilee, now stood before scholars and worldly authorities, confidently declaring, “Only Jesus can save people; there is no other name to call upon.” The council members were amazed at his boldness and the fact that the two were uneducated, ordinary people (verse 13). In the end, the leaders could only threaten them not to speak the name of Jesus or teach in his name.

Looking back at the history of Christianity, it seems that periods of decline and reform have alternated throughout the ages. When the church grows large and acquires worldly wealth, power, and influence, it tends to decline. From this, small communities emerge that seek to return to the roots of Christianity through monastic life. Because they are small and poor, they rely solely on God. The church is not about becoming large; it is about preaching pure truth, returning to its roots, and looking to Christ. If Christianity loses its essence, it becomes meaningless. The early church had neither worldly wealth nor power, but it possessed the power and life from God. Paul says, “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds” (2 Corinthians 10:4). This power cannot be obtained without prayer; it is the power given by the Holy Spirit. Today's church seems to be speaking based on worldly knowledge and information without prayer. While we can correctly understand the world's situation, in the end, it boils down to “let's strive to love others,” ultimately ending in morality. However,

without confidence in God, it does not resonate with people. How can others believe in something if he does not truly believe in it? For everything that is not based on conviction is sin." (Romans 14:23) When the Holy Spirit enters a person, He removes fear, gives confidence in Christ, and empowers him to preach boldly. The small church that was just born had only great confidence. A confident person may be small, but he or she looks big. It is important to have this confidence in God.

② **【Being called by the name of Jesus Christ】**

Why did you come to church? I think it is because this place bears the name of "Jesus Christ." We came here seeking Christ. I believe it is because we thought, "If it is Christ, He will save me, heal my illness, remove my suffering, and do something for me." Because it bears the name of Jesus Christ, even this small, humble church has gained the trust of people. Because of this name, even this powerless church is regarded as something great. And each of you has become someone called by the name of Jesus Christ. Christians are called "Christians," which means "believers in Christ, belonging to Christ," but this was originally a derogatory term. "It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians" (Acts 11:26). Even though the name of Jesus Christ is used for someone like me, Christ did not disown me. I want to rejoice in that. No matter how weak, poor, or sinful a person may be, because the name of Jesus Christ has been given to them, the devil flees and the angels bow down. We have been exalted by the name of Christ. As it is written, "This man was made strong by the name of Jesus" (Acts 4:16).

③ **【Christ truly loves us】**

I feel the most peace when I stand in the chapel on weekday mornings, calling out God's name and praying. On the 18th, I went to a senior citizen's home to worship and celebrate Holy Communion. On the 18th, I went to a senior citizen's home to worship and administer the sacrament. I remembered those happy days when I was a child, when I had no worries about anything, when I lived each day with full trust. I had faith in the love of my parents. Young children cling to their mothers with their arms around them. That is how they feel safe. That is the heart. They feel safe when Christ and the Holy Spirit are with them. Through Christ, I regained the security I had lost.

● There is a Lutheran church in Tanimachi 4-chome, Osaka. I heard the testimony of a female member of the congregation. When she was a student, she found out that she had a disability that made it impossible for her to have children. So she went to various churches to seek salvation. She said, "He gave children to Elisabeth and Sarah, so why doesn't He save me? She protests, saying that if He is the Savior, why doesn't He just let her rest and solve her problems, and that there are no

miracles even if she believes in Jesus. I also get angry at the well-meaning words of various people and stumble. I have a strong feeling in my heart that I will be the Antichrist. I even worshipped idols, became a phony fortune teller, and spoke ill of the church to many people. "One day, she has a dream. She was not breathing at the time, but when she met Jesus and heard his voice, "K, my Father God is waiting for you with open doors, believing that you will return to heaven," she woke up and when her breathing returned, she could not stop crying, shaking her shoulders and crying. I am so loved! I thought. I was born again. I made my own evangelistic flyers and started posting them. "One day she met a terminal cancer patient. She told him, "I was at the Pool of Bethesda." The man at the Pool of Bethesda was healed of his disease, but he didn't believe in Jesus. The one who went to the Pool of Siloam and washed his eyes was healed and believed in Jesus. The robber next to Jesus on the cross repented and believed in Jesus even though he was not taken down from the cross. Who do you think is the most amazing person among these three? M You believe in Jesus even in the pain of using morphine drugs. You have not been taken down from the cross, but you have not given up your faith. You are the one in Paradise. I wish I had that kind of faith." Ms. M said, "Thank you," and broke down in tears.... Oh great peace, I thank the Lord for giving me a rest from my burdens.

This world is unreasonable. When the son of a Christian psychiatrist committed suicide, he told me, "I have found that anything can happen in this world, even if you have faith. This is the truth of this world.

The Jews think that the end of suffering is salvation, and the cults of this world all promise freedom from suffering. But Christianity does not promise freedom from suffering. It says, "You will have tribulation in the world, but take courage. But take courage. I have already overcome the world" (John 16:33). (John 16:33). Suffering should not exist in the world God created. However, with the fall of mankind, suffering entered the world. Suffering does not disappear in this world. It is impossible in this fallen world. Therefore, God did not save mankind through miracles, but by means of solidarity with suffering. God is always there to help in times of distress" (Psalm 46:1). (Psalm 46:1).

One thing is certain. There is suffering. There is unreasonableness. But God's love remains the same. God loves you and will be with you. He loves you and will be with you, and in time He will bear all of you and take you in His arms and carry you up into the Kingdom of God. Let us, like Peter, boast in the name of Jesus Christ. Let us boast in His love. Let us enjoy the peace of walking with Christ in this life.