

Theme: There is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved. This declaration hinges on the fact of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. To proclaim such a position, however, is to mark oneself for opposition, indeed, persecution.

Background: Acts opens with Christ’s ascension to his eternal place in heaven. Ten days later the promised gift of the Holy Spirit falls on the believers as Jesus promised. Everything has changed forever.

Introduction: What has been a defining moment in your life. We witness such a moment in the lives of Peter and John.

I. Our Greatest Hope – Resurrection

A. A startling change in the Apostles

1. Facing the odds

- a. A formidable alliance is against them (4:1)
- b. “Greatly annoyed” leaders in Judea (4:2)
 - Why are they (disciples) still talking about Jesus?

2. A fearless response by...

- a. The resurrection!
 - Transforming the fearful into the fearless
 - In front of the Jewish authorities (4:5-7)
 - Because JESUS LIVES!! (Luke 24:6)
 - Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; John 2:20
- b. The gift of the Holy Spirit
 - They remembered (John 16:7)
 - With new power/authority (4:8)
 - With power (3:1ff)

NOTE: Healing a man everyone knew

- 3. The *resurrection* threatens the Sadducees
 - They did not believe in a resurrection
 - Undermining their entire system of belief

NOTE: They sound very “modern” to me.

B. The promise of life

1. Jesus’ resurrection proclaimed (2b)

- a. A confident declaration
 - With over-whelming evidence
 - Seen him, touched him, ate with him
- b. A bold proclamation (3:15; 4:10)
 - Christ is the “first-fruits” (1 Corinthians 15:20-23)

2. Our resurrection in him – proclaimed

- John 11:23,24 – We will rise, too! According to Jesus.

II. Our Greatest Need – Salvation! (12)

A. Before Christ's resurrection – mixed messages

1. Many different agendas re Jesus
 - Political – Personal - Social
2. Weak understanding of Jesus' agenda by
 - The disciples
 - The crowds
 - The rulers (religious and political)

B. After His resurrection – one message

1. Salvation – with a *laser focus*
 - **2:38; 3:19; 10:43**
 - Governing all who would follow (Acts 13:38)
2. In Jesus Christ alone!
 - There are no rivals, no equals, no substitutes
3. No other name! No other hope!
4. Sealed with their lives

NOTE: Heaven is the end – Christ is the way!

III. Our Greatest Challenge – Proclamation

A. The urgency

1. IF – The resurrection is NOT the essential element of life
THEN – We don't need to "testify" to it
2. IF – The resurrection IS the essential for life
THEN – We *must* testify

B. The opposition/persecution

1. Verbal opposition
 - Threats (4:18)

NOTE: They were giving the same message Jesus gave – repent and believe!
They would get the same treatment. Response? (4:19,20)

2. Physical opposition
 - Bonds (5:18) Response (5:19-21)
 - Beatings (5:40)
 - Blood

C. The field – To the ends of the earth

1. The world is coming to us
 - a. Internationals on our college campuses and through immigration
 - b. Through the outworking of godless philosophies in the culture
2. The world still needs to hear

D. The reward

- Eternal Life! (John 5:24)
- The joy of our master! (Matthew 25:21)