

Bedrock Beliefs Discussion Questions **Solus Christus: Christ Alone – Acts 4:11-12**

Drawn from the November 19, 2023 sermon by Dr. Jeff Chandler

Opener: When did Jesus become more than just a name to you?

I. The Problem

Five hundred years ago, the church lost sight of the means by which we are saved. Jesus was important, the means of salvation, but we needed other mediators to help connect us to God.

Those other mediators were sacraments, priests, indulgences, and the saints. These served as intermediaries, and adding these could bridge the gap between a person and God.

The Reformers searched the Scriptures and rediscovered the truth:

- a. Salvation comes only through the person and work of Jesus.
- b. It isn't Jesus plus...
- c. It is in Christ alone (*solo Christo*).

Our passage today from Acts 4:11-12 is one of those Scriptures. Peter and John had been arrested and were speaking before the council of rulers, elders and scribes:

Jesus is “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.’ Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

1. The cornerstone is the rock on which the weight of the structure rests. Without it nothing holds together. How is this an appropriate description of Jesus?

The Apostle John quotes Jesus in a very familiar verse from John 14:6:

“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

2. *What are some reasons that people would say there are other ways to salvation besides Jesus?*

To counter the idea that there are other ways to salvation or even “other names” by which we could be saved, the writers of the New Testament illustrated the exclusivity of Jesus by talking about him as the “one mediator”.

For example, the apostle Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 2:5-6:

For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.

3. Why might it be tempting to add these other intermediaries (priests, indulgences, and the saints) to help bridge the gap between ourselves and God?

4. What does it mean that Jesus gave himself as “a ransom for all people”?

The writer of Hebrews illustrated that priests in the Old Testament under the covenant given to Moses only made people outwardly clean by the sacrifices they administered. Jesus as “the mediator of a new covenant” accomplished so much more!

¹³ The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death,^[a] so that we may serve the living God!

¹⁵ For this reason Christ is **the mediator of a new covenant**, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. Hebrews 9:13-15

5. How would you describe the “new covenant” mentioned here and how is it different than the old covenant?

The Hebrews passage mentions being set free by the blood of Christ. The apostle Paul in Romans 8:1-4 expands on this idea. Read it carefully, looking for evidence that Jesus’ sacrifice truly “IS ENOUGH!”

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

6. How does the truth of Romans 8:1-2—that in Christ we have no condemnation—impact your life?

7. Read verse 4 again. In everyday terms, what does it mean to be righteous before God?

Group Prayer Time: As you close in prayer, ask that the reality of God’s gift of salvation—by grace through faith in Christ alone—will bring thankfulness and gratitude in our hearts. Thank Jesus for descending to the depths of our need by taking upon Himself the penalty and punishment for our sins. Pray God will give us such a deep understanding and humble appreciation for His gospel that we will want to share it with others.

For Personal Reflection your own:

- A. Living by the Spirit is the essence of the “new covenant” mentioned in the passages we have read. How would you describe this in your own words.
- B. Is there a sin or temptation in your life that causes you to question whether Jesus has freed you from it? How can you incorporate today’s Scriptural insights into your life?
- C. From Romans 8:1-4, how would you explain the gospel to someone who feels they are not “good enough” for God or who wants to bridge the gap to God by other things besides Jesus?

Next week, November 26, pastor Jeff will cover “Soli Deo Gloria (The Glory of God Alone)” and there will be discussion questions available in “Downloads” on the SCC website.