

Sermon Series: TRANSFORMATION

Sermon Title: In the Name of Jesus

Text: Acts 3:1-16

Discussion Questions:

Your name is one of the most precious things that you possess. It is distinctly and uniquely yours. When you “give” another person your name, they “have” a very important piece of you.

To get the discussion started, break into groups of four to eight. Talk a little bit about your name. First, make sure that you know the names of the other people in your group. Go around the group, and share about your name. Is there anything unique about the way your name is spelled? Is there a story behind why your parents gave you the name you have? Do you like your name - or not? For the ladies in the group who are married, did you struggle with changing your last name? How long did it take for you to get comfortable using and writing your new name?

Stay in your smaller group, and answer these questions:

- Why are names so important?
- Do you believe that a person’s identity is tied in some spiritual way to their name?
- What effect do you think it has on a person if they don’t like their name?
- Exactly 100 years ago (1917), the most popular baby names were: John, William, James and Mary, Helen, Dorothy. This year they are: Jackson, Aiden, Lewis and Sophia, Emma, Olivia. Does anything stand out to you about how names are changing (or not!)?

In **Revelation 2:17**, we’re told that “*...the one who is victorious, I [God] will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.*” What do you think this means? What do you make of the fact that when we get to heaven, we will be given a new name? How does that strike you? Are you glad? How does it make you feel to know that God has a new name picked out for just you?

Examination:

- **Read Exodus 3:1-15.**

- Re-read verse 13. Back in verse 10, God is describing to Moses that He is sending him to Pharaoh. But here in verse 13, Moses isn’t asking what name he should give to the Egyptians - but to the Israelites. Moses knows that before he ever begins to confront Pharaoh, he has to convince the Israelites that he is there to accomplish God’s work. Up to this point, what name might the Israelites have had for God?
- If Moses walks into Egypt on a mission from “the God of your fathers,” are there some immediate questions that the Israelites might ask? Keep in mind that it had been several hundred years, and at least four generations, since this “God of your fathers” had been active. Is it possible that arriving in the name of “the God of your fathers” wouldn’t be a very good thing?
- When God told Moses that His name is “I AM WHO I AM,” do you think this made sense to Moses? Does it make sense to you?

- The textual note on God's name says that God's name can also be translated, "I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE." Does this change your understanding of the meaning of God's name?
- The textual note on v. 15 states (at least in my Bible) that "I AM" may be related to - and sounds like - the name "LORD." We don't often use the term "I AM" when we speak about or with God, but we do use the name LORD. What effect might this understanding have for you in the future...knowing that when you call God "LORD," you're referring back to what God says right here in Exodus 3?

- **Read Acts 4:8-12.**

- What difference does the actual name of Jesus make in this story?
- It's not just the name "Jesus." There are two other "parts" of His name that are cited (v. 10). What are they, and why are each important in understanding what Jesus' "full name" is?
- What difference does the cross make in understanding who Jesus is?
- Have someone look up what the name JESUS actually means. Does it show up in the Old Testament? Are there other variations to the name?
- The phrase "no other name" really stands out from this passage. When you hear this phrase, what does it mean to you?

- **Read James 5:13-18.**

- If you're in trouble - pray. If you're happy - sing. If you're sick - anoint with oil. Be honest...do any of you struggle with that last part?
- Why must elders do it? And why oil - what's the significance of oil?
- "In the name of the Lord." How important is this phrase? Can it be said that this simple phrase holds the most importance? If the anointing ISN'T done in the name of Jesus, what difference would that make?
- Does the oil become some sort of magic potion? Might some view it this way? Have you ever been anointed with oil? Can you tell your story?
- What role does faith play in all of this?
- What role does sin play in all of this?
- What role does confession, and praying for one another play in all of this?

Application:

Now talk about ways that each of you can "apply" this phrase "NO OTHER NAME BUT JESUS" in your day-to-day lives this coming week. Perhaps, instead of closing your prayers with the "mindless" phrase, "In Jesus name I pray...", change it to "No other name but Jesus!" Perhaps, in a moment of temptation or weakness, say out loud, "No other name but Jesus!" Maybe you could write on a sticky note, "No other name but Jesus!", and put it in a place where you'll see it every day. Share ideas with each other.