

Concordia Theological Monthly

Continuing

LEHRE UND WEHRE
MAGAZIN FUER EV.-LUTH. HOMILETIK
THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY-THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

Vol. XII

July, 1941

No. 7

CONTENTS

	Page
Verbal Inspiration — a Stumbling-Block to the Jews and Foolishness to the Greeks. Th. Engelder	481
Sermon Study for Fourth Sunday after Trinity. Th. Laetsch	510
The Lutheran Pastor as Teacher. P. E. Kretzmann	523
Outlines on the Wuerttemberg Gospel Selections	528
Miscellanea	535
Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches	543
Book Review. — Literatur	554

Ein Prediger muss nicht allein *weiden*, also dass er die Schafe unterweise, wie sie rechte Christen sollen sein, sondern auch daneben den *Wölfen wehren*, dass sie die Schafe nicht angreifen und mit falscher Lehre verfuehren und Irrtum einfuehren.

Luther

Es ist kein Ding, das die Leute mehr bei der Kirche behaelt denn die gute Predigt. — *Apologie, Art. 24*

If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? — 1 Cor. 14:8

Published for the
Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States
CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE, St. Louis, Mo.



ARCHIVES

a half farthings. Yes, indeed, "some have fancied a contradiction here," Harry Rimmer tells us. And he asks the contradictionists to exercise their common sense: "In our modern markets apples may be five cents apiece, but at the same time sell six for twenty-five cents." (*Modern Science*, p. 303 f.)

Other contradictionists complain: Saul's companions heard the voice (Acts 9:7), and they did not hear the voice (Acts 22:9)! Poor Luke! But Luke knew his Greek. They did not hear τὴν φωνήν, but they did hear τῆς φωνῆς. They heard the sound, but did not hear the words and did not get the sense of the sound. (See Lenski, *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, etc.) — B. Bauer knows his Greek, but that does not keep him from the discrepancy-hunt. Luke 7:2 uses the term "servant," δούλος, Matt. 8:6 the term "servant," παῖς. Bauer: The Greek word παῖς means both son and servant." Good! But: "Das Kategorische aber, wie der Hauptmann sagt: 'Mein Knabe,' das Dringende und Flehende seiner Bitte um Hilfe beweist, dass Matthaeus von uns verlangt, wir sollen an den Sohn des Mannes denken." (*Op. cit.*, II, p. 26.) And there's your contradiction, as plain as day! — We wish Bauer would exercise common sense and not imagine that his readers will not notice at once that his sole interest in the matter is to find a contradiction. His common sense should have told him that his readers are in possession of common intelligence. — It's a most unscientific swindle.

Epiphanius of old († 407) said of the discrepancy-hunters of his day that they "are not sound in the faith, or else they are weak intellectually." The level of intelligence has not risen since then. — The fatuity displayed in this branch of human knowledge is so great that it calls for additional chapters.

(To be continued)

TH. ENGELDER



Sermon Study for Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Acts 4:1-12

When Jesus had foretold His suffering and death, Peter had rebuked Him, saying: "Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee." Jesus had reprimanded him and told him and His disciples that the way to glory was the way of the cross, Matt. 16:21-28. In a similar manner John had been told that truth that was so hard to grasp for every Jew, that the kingdom of God was not a temporal but a spiritual one and that membership involved suffering and tribulation, Matt. 20:20-29. In our text we see both men willing to testify no longer of a Messiah according to their

own preconceived ideas. It was the Messiah of God whom Peter had boldly preached before the people (Acts 3:12-26) and whom they were now to confess before the High Council of the Jews. In the third chapter St. Luke told of the healing of a lame man by Peter and John and of the noble testimony of these two men to their Savior. While Peter had remained unharmed after his Pentecostal sermon, while the enemy had seemed paralyzed, the two apostles were now to experience the truth of Christ's prophecies: Matt. 10:16-18; 16:24; John 15:19 to 16:4; but at the same time the reliability of the promises of Christ: Matt. 10:19, 20; John 15:27.

And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the Temple and the Sadducees came upon them, v. 1. While they were still speaking to the people, there "came upon them," stood there—a very suitable word usually denoting suddenness (cp. Luke 2:9; 24:4; Acts 12:7; 23:11) and at times implying hostile purpose (Luke 20:1: note the similar circumstances; Acts 6:12; 17:5). Compare "horribly and speedily shall He come upon you," Wisdom of Solomon, 6:5. In our passage both suddenness and hostility are implied.

"The priests." Some manuscripts read "high priests" a term frequently designating the former high priests deposed by the Romans, or the members of the chief priestly families. "Priests," however, is the better-attested reading and naturally includes both priests and high priests.

"The captain of the Temple" was not a heathen official, as some commentators suggest. No heathen was permitted in the actual sanctuary (Acts 21:27-32), and certainly no heathen would have been chosen as the captain of the Temple. Josephus writes that, when the eastern gate of the Temple was seen suddenly to open of itself, "those that kept watch in the Temple came running to the captain of the Temple and told him of it." (Josephus, *Jewish War*, VI, 5, 3.) According to Schuerer, this official was second in dignity to the high priest himself. (*Jewish People*, II, 1, pp. 258 f., 267.) Volz identifies this office with that of the "chief governor of the house of the Lord," whose duty it was to prevent the entry of undesirables into the Temple, to forestall disturbances at the festivities and to guard the sacred courts against indignities. He had the right and duty to punish disturbers and actually smote Jeremiah and put him in the stocks, Jer. 20:1, 2; cp. 29:24-26. (Volz, "Jeremia," in *Sellins's Commentary*, Vol. X, p. 207.) The LXX does not call him στρατηγός, however.

"The Sadducees," though mentioned last, were certainly not the least in their hatred and opposition to the person and doctrine of Jesus and His followers. They were the liberals, the modernists

of those days. Their philosophy of life may be summarized in the words of Paul "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" (1 Cor. 15:32), and death was for them the end. They did not believe in a world of spirits nor in the resurrection of the dead, Matt. 22:23; Acts 23:8. Though numerically not strong, yet, as Weizsaecker puts it, "the Sadducees were at the helm, and the office of the high priest was in Sadducean hands, and the Sadducees predominated in the high-priestly families (Weizsaecker, *Apostolic Age*, I, 61, E. T.)." *Expositor's Greek Testament*, Vol. II, p. 122. Josephus states that the Sadducees were very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews (*Ant.*, XX, ix, 1), while the Pharisees were characterized by clemency (*Ant.*, XIII, x, 6). That seems to be borne out in the book of Acts; cp. Acts 5:33-39; 23:6-9. Yet Saul, the Pharisee, certainly did not consider even fury to the point of madness in persecuting the Christians as conflicting with Pharisaic principles, Acts 26:11; 9:1.

The rulers of the Jews, civic and spiritual, rose up against the Church of Christ and His ambassadors; cp. Acts 4:24-30. Their motive is brought out in the next verse. *Being grieved that they taught the people and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead*, V. 2. "Being grieved." The word originally means to work out laboriously; then, to be troubled, displeased, offended, pained. Thayer very aptly compares the colloquial English phrase "to be worked up." A double motive is named, because not all the opponents were actuated by the same considerations. The priests, besides being filled with hatred against Jesus and His disciples, naturally resented the preaching of the apostles, these "unlearned and ignorant men" (Acts 4:13), on general grounds. The Temple, the sacred house of God, was under the supervision of the priests. For a layman, an unprofessional man, who had not been trained in the schools of the Rabbis, to teach publicly in the domain of the priests, seemed preposterous to them, and to preach without having asked permission from them seemed outright rebellion against age-old authority. The Sadducees, in addition, were angry because the two men publicly preached the resurrection of the dead in the person of Jesus. They had publicly ridiculed the doctrine of resurrection by pointing to some corollaries which seemed to them as necessary as they were impossible. Jesus had put them to shame, Matt. 22:23-34. The high-priestly party, largely Sadducean, had sought to do away with Lazarus, on whose account many believed on Jesus (John 12:9-11) and who was a living proof of the resurrection of the dead. Now Jesus Himself had proved not only the Scripturalness (Acts 2:22-32), not only the possibility, but the actuality of the resurrection by suffering Himself to be put to death by the Roman government on the instigation

of His enemies, neither of which would have permitted His living body to be removed from the cross. The empty cross on Calvary proved incontrovertibly the death of Christ, and the empty tomb, which they had sealed and had guarded by a Roman watch, proved just as incontrovertibly His resurrection, not to speak of the signs and miracles which had occurred and had become known to all Jerusalem. The fact of His resurrection they could not deny, just as little as they could deny the reality of the cure of the lame man, chap. 4:14. Yet the public proclamation of these facts must be stopped and could be stopped. At least so they thought, vv. 17, 18. Knowling adds another reason for their irritation. "It was not merely a dogmatic question of the denial of the resurrection which concerned the Sadducees, but the danger to their power and to their wealth from the Temple sacrifices and dues if the resurrection of Jesus was proclaimed and accepted." *Exp. Gr. Test.*, Vol. II, p. 123. Cp. Mark 11:15-18. Would the followers of this Jesus still support their traffic? The followers of the Rabbi of Nazareth must be silenced.

And they laid hands on them and put them in hold unto the next day, for it was now eventide, V. 3. "In hold." The term means a watching; it may mean merely under guard, in private custody, or it may mean prison. Since in 5:18 the word "common," "public," is prefixed, we may assume that Peter and John were not at once cast into public prison but kept under guard. In 5:18 the apostles were treated as guilty of having transgressed the council's charge not to speak at all or teach in the name of Jesus, 4:17, 18. At the time of the healing of the lame there had been no such prohibition; hence they may have been treated a little more considerably, particularly since they had so large a following. Whether the lame man was imprisoned with them is not definitely stated; v. 10 seems to indicate that he was.

It was now eventide, perhaps the "second evening"; cp. Ex. 12:6, marginal reading; "between the two evenings"; one beginning at 3 o'clock, the other at 6. According to the Talmud (Shabb. 10a) "the ordinary court-hours were from after morning service till the time of the meal." Edersheim, *Life and Time of the Messiah*, II, p. 557, Note 1. The two sessions in which Jesus was condemned were not held at the usual time because of the need of hurrying His conviction for fear of a revolt.

Howbeit, many of them which heard the word, believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand, V. 4. While Peter and John were held in custody, the seed which they had sown continued to sprout and grow and bear abundant fruit. Man may silence temporarily the preaching of the Word, but no man can stop the Word from working in the hearts of those who have

heard it. This Word is incorruptible seed (1 Pet. 1:23), a power unto salvation (Rom. 1:17), which in God's own time will accomplish that which He pleases, Is. 55:10, 11; Mark 4:26-29. It is the *Word*, not the preacher, that works faith. Let the preacher not attribute to himself and his skill, his art, his tact, what is possible only to God's Word. And let not the preacher be discouraged because he cannot be with his parishioners at all times. The Word which he has been privileged to speak will prosper in the thing whereto God sent it.

"The number of the men was," or rather came to be, "about five thousand. On Pentecost Day about three thousand souls had been added (Acts 2:41) to the original number of names, about 120, Acts 1:15. Since Luke here in distinction to the terms used in 1:15 and 2:41 uses "men," we may assume that now the congregation numbered five thousand men without women and children. Compare Matt. 14:21: "Five thousand men beside women and children," while Mark 6:44; Luke 9:14, we read "five thousand men." "St. Luke does not say that five thousand of St. Peter's hearers were converted in addition to those already converted at Pentecost (although Dr. Hort, following Chrys., Aug., Jer., takes this view, *Judaistic Christianity*, p. 47) or that five thousand were added, but his words certainly mark the growing expansion of the Church in spite of threatening danger, as this is also evident on the view that five thousand represent the total number of believers." (*Exp. Gr. Test.*, Vol. II, p. 124.)

And it came to pass on the morrow that their rulers and elders and scribes and Annas, the high priest, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest were gathered together at Jerusalem, vv. 5, 6. It was a meeting of the High Council of the Jews, the Sanhedrin, composed of 70 members, the three classes of which are here named. High priests, elders, and scribes are named as the constituent classes (Matt. 26:3; Mark 14:53; 15:1; Luke 9:22; 22:66), though the order varies with each evangelist. Here not high priests, but "rulers" are named with the elders and scribes, the term probably being used as indicating the high priests as the chief rulers, the Sadduceans actually dominating the council. The scribes were men learned in the Mosaic Law and in the rest of Scripture, carefully supervising the work of copying the sacred books, teaching the people, and advising them in questions pertaining to the Law. The scribes generally were members of the Pharisaic party. The elders were such men as were chosen into the council because of their special qualifications, but did not belong to either of the other two classes of the Sanhedrin. The enemies of Christ regarded the silencing of the apostles as sufficiently important to assemble all

the members of the Sanhedrin. There was Annas the high priest, who, though deposed from office by Valerius Gratus, the Roman procurator, in the year 23 A.D. because of his political intrigues, still was the power behind the throne; Caiaphas, his son-in-law, being completely under his influence. Not fewer than five of his sons and his son-in-law Caiaphas held the office of high priest. Annas even retained the title of high priest (cp. Luke 3:1; John 18:13, 24), as did the other high priests deposed from office. Compare the plural "high priests" so frequently found in the New Testament and Josephus. No fewer than twenty-eight high priests held the office during the century preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, 32 B.C. to 70 A.D. Annas is named first because he was the first man in the nation. There was Caiaphas, who had counseled the Sanhedrin rather to kill Jesus than to have the entire nation perish, John 11:49-57. Cp. John 18:24; Mark 14:53-64. We know nothing certain of the other two men named, evidently well-known men.

"And as many as were of the kindred of the high priest." All the other relatives of the high priest were brought into the assembly. It seems that an attempt was made to pack the house by taking special pains to have as many Sadducees at this meeting as possible (cp. chap. 5:17) so that the outcome of the session would surely be unfavorable to the apostles.

"Were gathered together at Jerusalem." A few manuscripts read "into," implying that such members as had left Jerusalem were hurriedly summoned. The reading adopted by the Authorized Version would seem to state that only such members of the Sanhedrin as happened to be in Jerusalem were assembled. In either case, it was a large array of powerful enemies looming up against two fishermen, messengers of the crucified and risen Jesus.

And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power or by what name have ye done this? V. 7. The members of the Sanhedrin sat in a semicircle, so that all could see the person accused, and he would have to face them all. And now they asked, inquired. The imperfect describes the opening of the formal inquiry or inquisition. Haughtily they ask, In what sort of power and in what sort of a name have done this thing you? Their impotent hatred and the utter contempt in which they held these men could hardly have been expressed more forcibly. "This thing," τοῦτο, they cannot bring themselves to call the cure a miracle; slightly, purposely belittling what they feared, trying to deceive themselves, they call it "this thing." "You" placed emphatically at the end to show their scorn, their contempt. Who are you to dare to do this? At the same time they wanted to cow the apostles. How dare you to do such a thing without permission? What manner

of power do you claim, and by what kind of a name have you done what you did? The Jews had blasphemously charged Jesus with being in league with the devil, Matt. 12:24; John 7:20; 8:48; 10:20, 21. The Mosaic Law regarded witchcraft and sorcery as capital crimes (Deut. 18:10-12) and pronounced the death penalty on any one doing signs or wonders for the purpose of luring the Israelite away from the worship of Jehovah, Deut. 13:1-5. Quite evidently they hoped to prove John and Peter to have committed this very crime. They knew that they had preached Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God. That was the very charge on which the Sanhedrin had condemned Jesus to die on the cross. The same Council now sat in judgment upon these followers of Jesus, who proclaimed publicly that Jesus was the true God and the Messiah of Israel. Would the Council hesitate to condemn them? If they could succeed in silencing the apostles, in obtaining from them the promise no longer to preach the name of Jesus, they would be satisfied. If the apostles would not promise, their lips would be silenced in death. What will the men do? We can see the members of the Council eagerly watching the two prisoners, anxiously looking for a sign of fear or trepidation. They looked in vain. A few months ago Peter had denied. But it was a changed Peter that stood before the Council, a Peter who was actually a rock man, a Peter who had seen his risen Savior, a Peter to whom at this very moment the Savior sent an almighty aid, the Holy Spirit.

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, v. 8. That Holy Spirit which Christ had given to His disciples as His Easter gift (John 20:22), which had come down visibly at Pentecost, now, in keeping with Christ's promise (Matt. 10:19, 20) imbued Peter with heroic courage and put the right words into his mouth and upon his lips, so that indeed it was not Peter but his Father's Spirit that spoke in him.

In the night of Christ's betrayal Peter had rebelled against the authorities when they took Jesus captive. He had been properly rebuked by his Master. As he stands before the High Council, there is not a trace of rebellion or insubordination. He gives his superiors the honor due them as his divinely instituted government. He respects their authority even though they are abusing it. At the same time Peter with supreme tact reminds them of the duties which the high office as "rulers of the people and elders of Israel" placed upon them. Compare Ex. 18:21; Deut. 1:13-17.

The Council had placed "you people!" with depreciating emphasis at the close of their question. (Meyer.) Peter takes up that word and emphasizes "we," not for the purpose of self-glorification but to give honor to Him to whom alone it was due.

If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole, v.9. The term "examine" is here used in its forensic sense, to hold a legal investigation, to put on trial: if we are being judicially examined "of the good deed done to the impotent man." The Greek text omits the two articles. Peter expresses his astonishment that John and he had been placed before this high tribunal to explain a good deed done to a poor unfortunate. Rulers are to be a terror not to good works but to the evil, Rom. 13:3. "A miracle of healing could not reasonably be referred to an evil spirit, was no fit subject for legal investigation and ought not to have been visited with imprisonment." (*The Bible Commentary.*) Peter is an apt pupil of his Master, who expressed similar astonishment and administered like rebuke to the authorities when they transgressed the limits of justice. Matt. 26:55; Mark 3:4; Luke 13:15, 16; 22:67-69; John 10:32; 18:20-23; 19:10, 11. Respect for, and submission to, the powers that be is not incompatible with the duty of calling the attention of these powers to overt acts of injustice committed by them. Such reproof may at times become the duty of the Christian. Let him not forget, however, the respect and honor he owes his government for conscience' sake.

"By what means." The Greek may be either masculine or neuter. Since the council had asked, "By what power and by what name?" it seems best to take it in the neutral sense, by what means, either name or power. "He is made whole." Here Peter uses *σέσωσται* to indicate that this man was healed not only physically but spiritually. He had come to faith in the name of Jesus Christ and thereby had become one placed into a state of salvation, as the perfect denotes.

Be it known unto you all and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole, v. 10. Only a few weeks before, Peter had said, "I do not know the man." Now he is not ashamed to proclaim publicly his own knowledge of Jesus before his enemies. He rather exhorts them to come to this same knowledge for which Christ had called him a blessed man, Matt. 16:17. It is a knowledge which is of utmost importance to all of them, and not only to the members of the Council but to all the people of Israel, whether in the city or in their own land or scattered among the nations. Let them all and each one individually know that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, even by Him, doth this man stand here before you whole. Peter uses a different word here for "whole," a term denoting healthy, in sound condition. The fact that he was saved spiritually could not be seen by human eyes, but the fact that the

lame man had been physically healed was undeniable. For this miraculous curing they claim no honor for themselves, because "by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" was the cure effected. Those were the first words they had used, chap. 3:6. This name they had publicly confessed before the people, chap. 3:12, 16. Now once more they boldly confessed this name before the hostile Council. To the members of the Sanhedrin, Jesus was the Nazarene. They had rejected, they had crucified Him. To Peter and John this lowly Nazarene was Jesus Christ, the Messiah appointed of God, God's own anointed Savior.

Had Peter said no more, it would have been a bold, courageous confession of his Lord and Savior. Peter might have permitted them to draw their own conclusions and inferences. That would have been the safer course to take. But Peter goes farther. Though he knew that he was treading on dangerous ground, though he knew their murderous intentions, he charges them pointblank with having crucified the Son of God. He tells the instigators of that murderous crime committed against Jesus of Nazareth the same bitter truth that he had told the people on the day before (chap. 3:15) and on Pentecost Day, chap. 2:23, 24. Note the emphatic contrast between "ye" and "God," and between "crucified" and "raised up." The battle between the leaders of the Jews, powerful and cunning though they were, and the lowly Nazarene was in fact a battle between man and his Maker, the creature and his God and Judge; a wicked battle, a blasphemous undertaking, and an utterly futile warfare. Already God, the Judge, had spoken, spoken in clear, unmistakable terms. They crucified, they killed, Jesus because, they claimed, He had blasphemously claimed to be Messiah. God raised Him from the dead and justified and ratified His every claim. Will they continue to fight against God? Cp. chap. 5:28. Ought they not to change their course?

Peter might have stopped here. But Peter has more to tell them, and he tells them boldly, in the power of the Spirit. He emphasizes the wickedness and hopelessness of their action. *This is the Stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the Head of the corner*, v. 11. Since the twofold *ὁ* in v. 10 refer to Jesus Christ of Nazareth, we refer the *οὗτος* beginning v. 11 not to the following *ὁ λίθος*, as the Authorized Version does, but to the preceding "Jesus Christ" and translate, "He is the stone." Peter cites here the same passage, Ps. 118:22, that Jesus had quoted on the Monday prior to His death when the chief priests and the elders of the people had challenged His authority to teach in the Temple; cp. Matt. 21:23-46; Mark 11:27 to 12:12; Luke 20:1-19. There Jesus had used the word "rejected," the term employed also by the LXX. Peter uses a far stronger

term, used by the LXX in other passages in translation of the same Hebrew word, *e. g.*, 1 Sam. 8:7: to make of no account, to treat as if one were nothing. In the original meaning of the psalm the stone rejected is not Israel, as the *Expositor's Greek Testament* holds; nor does the psalmist think primarily of "the small beginning of a new era" in the days of Zerubbabel, Ezra 3:10 ff. It is a direct prophecy concerning the promised Messiah; cp. Is. 53:2, 3. When the leaders of Israel had crucified Jesus (v. 10), their purpose had been to make Him an "out and out nothingness," an utter outcast, one accursed and cut off from his people and God by the Lord of Hosts Himself, Deut. 21:23.

"Of you builders." Again the apostle changes the original wording "the builders" and applies its dreadful charge directly to the members of the Sanhedrin. You builders, you who ought to be the spiritual leaders in building the city of God, the temple of the Most High, that Church of the New Covenant to which all the prophets pointed forward; you who should have been the first to recognize on the basis of Scripture the Messiah at His coming into the world and to bid Him welcome and to hail Him joyously as the Salvation of Israel—you rejected, you utterly annihilated, as far as your own efforts were concerned, the Stone selected by God from eternity and announced by Him as the Stone and sure Foundation, Is. 28:16. But though you seemingly succeeded in doing away with Jesus of Nazareth, you did not and could not frustrate the plan of the Lord, Is. 28:29. You crucified Jesus and thereby set at naught God's Stone; God raised Jesus from the dead, so that He is now become the Head of the corner. In the Hebrew language both terms are used in poetry and prose as designations of the leaders of the people; so "corner," *פִּנָּה*, Judg. 20:2; 1 Sam. 14:38 (A. V., "chiefs"); Is. 19:13b (A. V., "stay"); "head," *רֹאשׁ*, Judg. 11:8; Jer. 31:7; Ps. 106:6, etc. The head of a corner in a building is a stone placed in a conspicuous position, for a special purpose, not primarily to bind the walls together—every other stone at the corners serves that purpose—nor to support the entire building, for no corner-stone actually does that. "A corner-stone may be removed like any other stone without interfering with the stability of the building. The function of the corner-stone is primarily symbolical; it is laid to denote the character, the purpose, the nature, of the building, and it is laid at the corner in order to attract attention and proclaim the character of the building to all passers-by." CONC. THEOL. MTHLY, IX, p. 446.

Alas, so thoroughly had the leaders of the Jews misunderstood the real nature of the house of God (Is. 2:3) and of its great Master that, when He came to lay the very foundation of God's holy temple, in the building of which they should have aided, they recognized

Him not. They examined Him; they measured Him according to their own standards; they weighed Him on their own scales and found Him wanting in every way, altogether useless. They did away with Him once for all. And now this Stone rejected, set at naught, there it stands, the Head of the corner, declared so with power by the resurrection from the dead through the glory of the Father. The Jews annihilated neither Jesus nor His Church. Jesus the Crucified lives. His Church, built on Him, the risen Head of the corner, shall live and grow and flourish forever. The enemies are endeavoring to accomplish the impossible.

The same sad mistake and the same hopeless efforts characterize the modern self-styled builders of the Church. They misunderstand completely the purpose of Christ's coming into the world. They want a social reformer, a defender of civilization, a 'big brother,' an example which they can follow, a teacher showing them a way to a happy and contented life here on earth, without bothering much about the uncertainties of a future world. They want anything but the God-appointed Savior, a vicarious atonement, a Redeemer for lost and condemned sinners. Such a Christ is to them foolishness, an abomination. They pit their puny will and mind against the plan conceived and carried out by the Lord God Almighty and marvelous in grace and mercy. The outcome of their blasphemous warfare? Read 1 Thess. 1:6-10.

Again Peter might have stopped. But he has still more to say. This Jesus of Nazareth is the one and only Savior. *Neither is there salvation in any other*, v. 12. Very emphatically the apostle places "salvation" at the head of the sentence and adds the specific article. "And not is there in another, not a one, the salvation." There were in Israel salvations many (Ex. 14:13; 1 Sam. 11:13; 14:45, etc.) and savior's many (Judg. 3:9, 15; Neh. 9:27); yet the salvation of which Peter speaks here, is *the* salvation, beside which all other salvations and deliverances pale into insignificance, eternal salvation, Is. 12; 25:7, 8; 26:19; 35:10. This salvation is not in another; ἄλλος denotes numerical distinction; there is not a second Savior, a second Jesus, a second Christ. Peter emphasizes the uniqueness of Jesus Christ by adding "no one." Search heaven and earth, and you will find not another in whom there is eternal life; no, not a single one, save the One, the God-appointed one and only Jesus. John 3:36; 1 John 5:12.

Many men have claimed to be Messiahs and Saviors, many self-styled Messiahs have shown signs and wonders and have had huge followings, Mark 13:6, 22. Many of them have been persecuted like Christ Crucified; all of them have died and were buried. Yet not one of them was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, Rom. 6:4; not one of them is sitting on the right hand

of the Majesty on high; not one of them shall in the name and by the authority and as the representative of the Father come into the clouds of heaven to judge the quick and the dead. Every one of these self-styled Messiahs shall be judged and condemned as a deceiver of mankind by Him besides whom there is not another, a second Anointed One, who is the *one* and only Jesus Christ.

For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. None other, ἕτερος, as compared with ἄλλος, denotes qualitative difference. There is no different kind of name. The term "name" stands here for the person himself. The *name* Jesus is Jesus Himself as He reveals Himself to us in His life and work as recorded in His Holy Word. And now note what Peter says: Neither a different kind of name under heaven is the one that has been given, (and now has been established as a continuing, lasting gift) among men, whereby we must be saved. Δεῖ denotes very frequently a necessity established by the counsel and decree of God; so Matt. 17:10; 24:6; Mark 9:11; 1 Cor. 15:53; etc. The salvation of which Peter speaks is God's own salvation, which God alone has prepared and can prepare. Hence God alone can tell us what is necessary to obtain this salvation; God alone can point out the way on which we must walk if we would enter into life eternal. And the one thing needful, the one absolutely necessary way, necessary by divine, unalterable decree, is the name laid down as a precious gift in the revelation concerning the person and work of Jesus. No other kind of name is given, search everywhere under heaven. Not the name of man's righteousness, our own or another's self-chosen virtue, not character, not nobility of purpose, not riches, not science, not wisdom, not civic reform, not any other different kind of name. Man may extol these names. Man may praise them to highest heaven. Man may pin his trust and expectation to them and frantically cling to them as his only hope. God, the Judge of all the world, has concluded all under sin, Gal. 3:22. And on this heap of ruined hopes and blasted expectations He has placed the name and cross of Jesus, towering over the wrecks of time. This name of Jesus crucified and risen is laid down as a gift among men, to be taken up by them, by every one who is an ἄνθρωπος, who is a human being, whether enthroned on the highest seat of learning or power or lying in the mire of sin and shame, the scum and offscouring of humanity. In this name every human being has the salvation of God; without this name there is no way to life.

Peter connects 12b with 12a by οὐδὲ γάρ, the negative indicating a close and internal connection of the two clauses, "so that they are mutually complementary and combine into a unity" (Thayer). This close connection is emphasized by γάρ, the second clause stating

the reason for the first: There is salvation in no second Savior, because neither is there a different kind of name given. Salvation alone by Jesus, because there is no other Savior than the One, Jesus Christ, who alone could be our vicarious Redeemer, and because there is no different way to salvation from that of vicarious redemption. But this way is open to all, for the name of Jesus Christ is God's free and abiding gift to man.

Preaching on this text, we must show that the same enmity and hatred against Christ and His Church is found among the Pharisees and Sadducees without and within the visible Church; that ever against it stands as impregnable as ever Christ, the Corner-stone, and His infallible Word; that it is our solemn duty and exalted privilege to be witnesses of Jesus and His Gospel. These are the three thoughts standing out, which may be viewed from different angles. *The Enmity of the World against Christ and His Church.* (1) It is vehement, vv. 1-3, 5-7. (2) It is senseless (they are fighting their best friends, v. 9; their only Savior, v. 12.) (3) It is futile, vv. 10, 11. — *The Word They Still Shall Let Remain!* (1) This Word is opposed, vv. 1-3, 5-7. (2) This Word grows, v. 4. (3) This Word saves, vv. 8-12. — *Christ the Head of the Corner.* (1) Against Him all opposition is futile, vv. 1-7. (2) Him let us boldly confess, vv. 8-12. — *Let Us Boldly Confess Christ.* (1) The rage of the world is futile, vv. 1-7. (2) In Him we have righteousness and strength. (He is our salvation, v. 12; the Head of the corner, v. 11; grants us His Spirit, v. 8.) — *The Mystery of the Word.* (1) It saves though it seems foolishness. (2) It is opposed though it saves. (3) It grows though it is opposed. — *The Blindness of the World.* (1) They know not the Christians, their best friends. (2) They know not the Christ, their best Friend. — *The Folly of Unbelief.* (1) It rejects the only Savior, vv. 10-12. (2) It plunges man the deeper into sin, vv. 1-7. — *The Way to Glory Is the Way of the Cross.* (1) The World furnishes the cross (Christ's and the Christians'). (2) Christ furnishes the glory (in time and eternity). TH. LAETSCH
