

Title: **"No Other Name" - The Exclusive Inclusivity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ**
Text: **Acts 4:8-12**

Find the sermon manuscript to follow along with online at mercyhillchurch.org.



Big Idea

Christians make exclusive truth claims when it comes to Jesus and the way of salvation. But this exclusivity that's baked into the Christian faith should in no way make us arrogant or oppressive towards those outside. Quite the opposite. It makes us humble. It makes us servants. It makes us like Jesus.

1. That It Is Exclusive

We're all looking for something or someone to save us. We're desperate for it. We know we need it. We just aren't exactly sure where to look. And then along comes Peter, and he says: "I do. I don't just have a mere suggestion here (fingers crossed). Nor do I have one possible solution among many. I have the answer . . . the only answer. And his name is Jesus."

When we talk like this nowadays, especially in a place like the Bay Area, most people find it incredibly offensive. They object to the exclusivity of these claims. But is the answer to just do away with religion—or at least defang or neutralize it by relativizing it and saying such disingenuous things like: "All religions are basically true" or "We can't really know anything for certain about God, so just live and let live"? Well, this line of thinking, though perhaps it arises from a good desire—to see people treating one another charitably and with humility—it doesn't hold. In their attempt to be inclusive, they end up being just as exclusive, often even more so in the end.

2. Why It Is Exclusive

What sets Christianity apart? What makes it unique from all other religions or worldviews? Why would we dare say Jesus is the only way of salvation?

Reason #1: Jesus Heals Our Wound More Deeply

Many other religions can help you tinker and clean up a bit on the surface of things. But none of them can change you fundamentally—

clean you up and put you back together on the inside. Only Jesus can. Because only Jesus, though one with God, plunged into the depths of our broken humanity, suffered its due on that rugged cross, and then lifted it up and out of that place of darkness to the light of a new day in his resurrection.

Reason #2: Jesus Gives of His Salvation More Freely

All the other religions and worldviews attempt to give you good advice—here are some things you can do to try to make your way towards God, or heaven, or enlightenment, or paradise, or salvation. But only Christianity gives you good news, the gospel of grace, the declaration of all that Jesus has already accomplished for you, even when you were his enemy! Jesus is not merely a good teacher, he is the Savior of the world!

3. How It Is Exclusive

Christianity is exclusive in the most inclusive way. If your exclusive claim centers in on the one who was rejected for you, suffered the judgment you deserve in your place, and saved you when you couldn't even get off the ground, by grace alone—well then that makes a different kind of person altogether. If you really take the gospel into your heart, if you've really been changed by it, how could you then look down your nose at anybody? You couldn't. "I'm no different. I'm no better. I didn't get in because of my pedigree, my ethnicity, my performance, my intelligence, none of it. If anything all those things were marks against me. No I got in by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. That's it!"



Reflection Questions

- Have you ever struggled with the exclusive claims of Christianity? How so? What (if anything) has helped you come to peace with them?
- Have you ever had people in your life object to Christianity on the basis of its exclusive claims? In the past, how have you responded? How might you incorporate what you've learned in this sermon into your responses going forward?
- Has your Christian faith made you more humble or more arrogant, more servant-like or more judgmental? Why?

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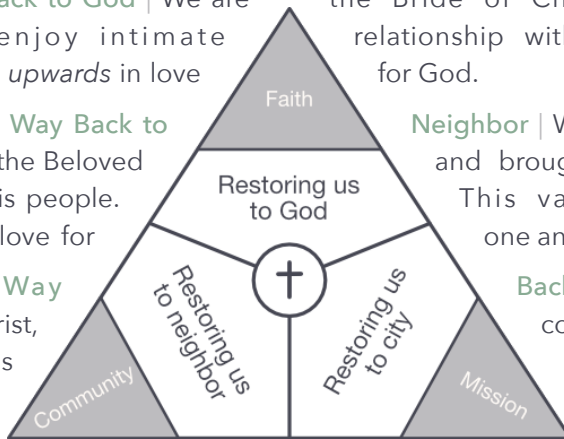
Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.

FAITH: The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with God. This value presses our church *upwards* in love.

COMMUNITY: The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for

MISSION: The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his value presses our church *outwards* in love for the



Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



Mail: PO Box 23806, San Jose, CA 95153
Phone: (408) 320-7080
Email: info@mercyhillchurch.org
Web: mercyhillchurch.org



Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

Mercy Hill Pumpkin Carving Party!

Come join us for a fun afternoon of pumpkin carving/decorating (and candy too!) on Saturday (10/28) from 3:00-5:00pm at Allen at Steinbeck Elementary School (courtyard/picnic tables area). Please RSVP by Sunday (10/22) to guarantee a FREE pumpkin for your child(ren). This event is for our Mercy Hill Church community, friends and family, as well as for our local community. This is a great opportunity to invite family, classmates, neighbors, and friends! If you would like to help out, please contact Joey.

Please scan the QR code below to find a link to RSVP.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Joey Wang at joey@mercyhillchurch.org.

Members' Meeting - Sunday, October 29th!

Covenant Members, please save the date for our next Members' Meeting to be held after the service on Sunday, October 29th (lunch provided). More details and a form to RSVP will be emailed directly to you in the next few days. Be on the lookout for that!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

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