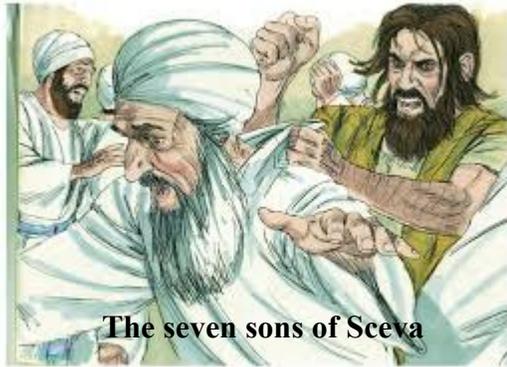


**Tom Edwards Evangelistic
Assoc., Inc.**

Forty-six years
of
Full time outreach

—a ministry of lay Catholic evangelization & mission—



The seven sons of Sceva

Knowing the Name
Requires
Knowing the Man

The Proclaiming

In Acts 19 we read— *“(13) Then some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those with evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.” (14) When the seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish high priest, tried to do this, (15) the evil spirit said to them in reply, “Jesus I recognize, Paul I know, but who are you?” (16) The person with the evil spirit then sprang at them and subdued them all. He so overpowered them that they fled naked and wounded from that house.”*

I’m always a bit saddened when I hear or read a Christian message or teaching and the name of Jesus is never mentioned. We are told in the Holy Scriptures that His name reigns above all things. —*“(8) he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. (9) Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name. (10) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth,” (Phil. 2:8-10).*

There is no limit to what can happen when we base our lives on the power that is resident in the name of Jesus. Jesus has given his name to those who believe, those who choose to abide in him, those who allow him to abide in them. The name conveys the power, authority and will of Jesus the designator to the designee. Thus the one who truly exercises this name as an ambassador of Jesus

will have the assurance of Christ’s presence in prayer, in proclamation, and in confronting the forces of evil.

However, knowing the name requires knowing the man, Jesus. The seven sons of Sceva, a high Jewish priest, were attempting to work a miracle in the occult infested city of Ephesus. Their goal was to make a profit. They had witnessed the success of the Apostle Paul as he worked wonders in the name of Jesus. They attempted to do the same while armed only with a second-hand knowledge of Jesus. The results were catastrophic. They fell into the great chasm that exist between working magic and working a miracle. Their counterfeit formula for exorcism failed miserably. They fled naked and wounded—picture that! Only in one whom Jesus lives and has his being is there power for authentic use of his name for prayer and healing.

Surprisingly, or maybe not, the clear contrast between the Apostle Paul’s successful ministry and the abject failure of the sons of Sceva served to reveal the truth of the Gospel. When this became known to all the Jews and Greeks who lived in Ephesus, fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in great esteem. (vs.17) A tremendous conviction fell over those in Ephesus who were believing in Jesus Christ. Those who had become Christians began to confess the dark deeds to which they were clinging. Moreover, a large number of those who had practiced magic collected their books

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and burned them in public. They calculated their value and found it to be fifty thousand silver pieces. Thus, did the word of the Lord continue to spread with influence and power.

I have witnessed this very phenomena many times over when we proclaim the name of Jesus in open air rallies in Africa. These events have been attended by up to thirty thousand people each day. They come from all walks of life (some believers, some not). It is not unusual for hostile spirits to rise up and show themselves after the manner of the accounts presented in the New Testament. Many are freed from the chains of sin and evil. Witch doctors, some of whom come to pray against us, are converted. One such witchdoctor, who was also a member of the parish, came to the platform and fell down in front of the priest who was with us. He emptied out a bag of his witchcraft paraphernalia (feathers, bones, potions, etc.) while asking for prayer. Later, on a designated day, hundreds of people brought their occult items and books and piled them high in front of our platform. The items were then burned in the midst of great praise, dance and song.

The Heavenly Father is extremely serious about the name of his Son. When the angel Gabriel was commissioned to visit the young virgin Mary, the instructions were very specific, “Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and **you shall name him Jesus.** (Luke 1:31) Again when Gabriel visited Joseph, he said, “...**you shall name him Jesus**”. (Matt. 1:21) Jesus spoke very powerfully and poignantly to his disciples about boldly confessing his name. “*Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. (33) But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father. (Matt.10:32-33)* Jesus gave this word in the context of facing those who were openly hostile to Jesus and his followers. We live in the midst of a culture today where the mere mention of Jesus may result in a verbal attack or worse. Laws are being passed that makes one who proclaims the name of Jesus and the things he clearly teaches a hate-crime for those who dare. Every believer needs to ask the question of self, “Do I want Jesus to stand up for me before the Heavenly Father”? I tremble as I think of the times I have failed the test.

Acts 3 tells about a time when Peter and John went to the temple in Jerusalem. At the “Gate called

Beautiful” sat a man lame from birth begging for alms. Peter said, “I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, rise and walk.” The man jumped up walking and leaping and praising God. On the next day, their leaders, elders, and scribes were assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly class. They brought them into their presence and questioned them, “***By what power or by what name have you done this?***” Then Peter, filled with the holy Spirit, answered them, “***Leaders of the people and elders: If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely, by what means he was saved, then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; in his name this man stands before you healed. There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved.***”

Question

Do I want Jesus to stand up for me before the Heavenly Father?

Surely, nothing could be more clear than the Apostle Peter’s answer. Note that the name has been give to the human race. How sad it is that more people push the name away rather than embrace it. This name is so often used as a curse word, the very name that has been given us for blessing. There is of course personal responsibility and consequences in accordance with the reverence or disdain of the name. The consequences are eternal, even a matter of life and death.

ASKING & ACTING

Asking and acting in the name of Jesus is imperative. Chapters fourteen through seventeen of the Gospel of John take us to a most intimate time between Jesus and his followers. It is referred to as the “last discourse”, the last supper as Jesus makes ready for the impending cross. This is sometimes called the “Holy Ground” of scripture. In this context, Jesus says, “***Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it.*** (Jn. 14:12-14) This word is spoken to those who truly believe, those found mutually abiding with the Son of God named Jesus. Explicitly, the Father



will continue his work through disciples who are united with him in faith. This continuing production of spiritual fruit will result in a harvest that will glorify the Father. Consider the implications of this promise! What does it mean to you who are praying for children gone astray, for loved ones entangled in the world? What does it mean to you who see a confused church marked by scandal and lack of clarity on issues that plague the current culture? Considering his promise, how will we purpose to pray today?

As Jesus continues his final words in this defining moment, a great and radical emphasis is placed on his name. ***“On that day you will not question me about anything. Amen, amen, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you. Until now you have not asked anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete. I have told you this in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures but I will tell you clearly about the Father. On that day you will***

ask in my name, and I do not tell you that I will ask the Father for you.” (Jn. 16: 23-26) Notice that Jesus instructs his followers on their personal active participation in prayer. He specifically says that he is not going to do it for them. They are to pray directly to the Father and to do so standing solidly in the full authority of the Son himself. That’s what it means to “ask in the Name of Jesus”! To dare to paraphrase this amazing promise, Jesus is saying to those who follow him, “I’ve got your back”.

Just in case anyone is tempted to think “I can’t do that, I am too weak”. Jesus has already made known in John 14 that you are not alone or orphaned and is providing an Advocate or a Paraclete, one who will stand beside you as helper, encourager, counselor, and much more. This Paraclete will remain with you forever. The world will be blind to this helper, unable to see him or experience him. But you will know he is there just as you know when you are standing in a mighty wind. The Holy Spirit teaches us and convicts us of truth, that we might **know the name and know the man.**

One last word regarding the holy and mighty name of Jesus. How will we convey his message to others? The primary answer to that question is, “We will proclaim him to others in love”. But also, we make him known always and everywhere. How do we do that? The Apostle Paul gives us the most concise answer: “----**An whatever you do , in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving**

More Jesus–Less Me by Jean Marie

I read about a story told by an early church historian named Eusebius. He described a French believer named Sanctus who was tortured for his love for Jesus. The torturers asked him what was his name, his nation, his city, was he a slave or free man. No matter what they asked him, he always replied, “I am a Christian.” He died with those words on his lips. I have to ask myself if those would be my words if I were being tortured. Is Jesus so deeply a part of me that being his disciple, a laying down my life for him follower, defines who I am? I can only answer that I want to be that disciple but I fear I am



not. Jesus, give us the courage and grace in our lives to become so one with you that our strongest identity is in you. That our lives, our words, and our actions show the world who you truly are: our God and our Savior.

Your gift now will help greatly

We realize it’s a difficult time for many. If you are one of those in a position to help us with financial support, we are thankful. Envelope enclosed. For those who pray for this ministry, you are vital to our continued service. May the Lord Jesus bless you in abundance of provision and health.

Road Trip

We so much sensed the Lord’s blessings as we set out on our August road trip. The journey took us through 12 states as we motored up through the Midwest, across, and down the East Coast. We prayed that the Lord would allow us to be his witnesses and grant opportunities to share His love and Word. This he did. In addition we were refreshed by enjoying the beauty of creation on back road jaunts. We saw old friends and made new acquaintances. Our prayers for divine appointments were answered in surprising ways. Thanks to all were praying for us.



*A Gift for
You*

Two Transforming Messages by
Tom Edwards on regular CD's

The Power of Forgiveness

How to Fulfill the Law of Love

Absolutely free! Just let us know and we will send them post haste. Contact us by mail, email, or telephone. All of our contact information is on the back page of this newsletter. Let us know where you would like them sent.

Itinerary

As many of you know, the schedules this year have been disrupted beyond measure. Our mission to Tanzania was set back from July to October. Since then we have rebooked flights four times for this mission only to be thwarted by untenable requirements for Covid testing and quarantines, and repeated cancellations of overseas flights. We are laying the groundwork for overseas outreaches in 2021 which will include Tanzania, Taiwan, and Eastern Europe. Please continue to offer up your intercessory prayers.

Monday night Prayer Meeting

On Sept. 4, we will resume our Monday night prayer meeting via a live gathering as safe distancing allows and also by Zoom. Let us know by email if you want to Zoom meet with us from anywhere. An invitation link will be sent.



Parish Missions

For many years, our parish mission work has been a vital part of this outreach. Hundreds of parish missions have been presented, especially in the USA, Canada, England, and some Caribbean countries. Like most other things this year, the parish missions were drastically curtailed. Presently we are optimistically scheduling for 2021 and beyond. Throughout the years, many pastors have hosted and subsequently endorsed the work. Here is what some have written:



*Tom & Jean Marie
Edwards*

"Best retreat we've ever had in this parish", "I really felt touched by the Lord" are among the comments I have already heard about this parish retreat. (Raymond c. Theroux, Pastor—Cumberland, R.I.)

"Your doing what you are doing is a dream come true for me, because I learned my theology in the forty's. At that time there was great stress on the role of the laity to realize that they have obligations of "witnessing" and taking an "active role in their faith. I have received many comments of praise and even letters thanking me for having you here" (Rev. Msg. Damian E. McGovern—Sacred Heart Church, Lancaster, PA)

"Greetings from RAF Alconbury, UK I can't thank you sufficiently for your outstanding work for this community. The Catholic parish continues to increase in size and level of commitment. These can be attributed to your dynamic presentations of the Lord's message". (Thomas P. Olszyk, Maj USAF, Catholic Chaplain)

"We, the Norbertine Fathers, having pastoral care over the parishes of St. Andrew's at Ocean View, and St. Joseph's at Kommetjie, Cape Province, South Africa would like to publicly record our thanks to Mr. Tom Edwards for his work among us. We were inspired by his enthusiastic teaching of the truths of our faith. He worked well with us in evangelising our parish communities. We do not hesitate to recommend him most warmly in the service of other parishes." (Fr. J. P. Kavelaars. O. Praem and Fr. R. Pasensie, O.Praem, South Africa)

"Words cannot describe the presence and the power of God that was so evident at each morning and evening presentation. We have indeed been blessed by God by your willingness to share the good news and already see the fruit." (Rev. J. F. O'Malley, Braeside, Ontario)

"It was one of the best missions we've had here in 19 years at Christ the King. I want you back---"Msgr. Mortimer Danaher, Christ the King, Jacksonville, FL 1996

"Thank you for the excellent week of presentations you gave our parish--I appreciated how you could hold the interest and continued attendance of such a wide range of parishioners, some who get hung up on church issues and fail to hear Jesus in the Gospel. There were favorable comments across the spectrum of people including the talk you gave to the teens." (Rev. Richard Tero, Pastor--Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Soldotna, Alaska)

May I thank you on behalf of the whole parish for leading us through the Scriptures in our renewal for Jubilee Year 2000 AD. Many people have told me that the Spirit has encouraged them with a sense of mission and with an enthusiasm to be evangelists. I was particularly grateful for the way in which you challenged our young people in St. Theodore's and St. Hilda's to live according to the gospel of Jesus Christ." (Fr. Michael Waters, St. John the Baptist, Burnley, England) **(Please contact us with questions and for details)**

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