

THE BOOK OF ACTS

CHAPTER 3

A CALL TO REPENTANCE

The whole purpose of miracles, healings, signs and wonders is for people to come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Born-again, Spirit-filled believers are exhorted to “desire spiritual gifts” (1 Corinthians 14:1). But the operation of spiritual gifts is not intended to draw attention to the individuals, rather to cause the unbelievers to repent and receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

We must never see the gifts for our own glory. Our motives should always be to glorify the one who makes salvation possible and sent the gift of the Holy Spirit to abide with us forever -- Jesus Christ!

LAME MAN HEALED (1-11)

Sometime after the day of Pentecost, Peter and John are headed into the temple, a lame man asks them for money. This man is well-known because he has asked for alms at the temple gate for many years. This day, however, would be different. Although Peter and John have no money to offer the lame man, Peter, operating in the working of miracles, offers him the healing power of Jesus Christ. When bystanders in the temple see the man walking, they give glory to God and stand amazed at his healing.

THE HABIT OF ATTENDING CHURCH

Act 3:1 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

Now Peter and John went up (linear action, “continually went up”) together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.).

Going to the temple to pray is something Peter and John do daily. They have developed the habit of attending church (Hebrews 10:25). There is no record of the number of days after Pentecost this event occurs, but enough time has elapsed for Peter and John to establish the habit of attending church.

The day this miracle occurs is probably not the first day Peter and John have seen the lame man at the gate, but this will be a day of divine appointment for the lame man. He will have the faith to be healed, and the crowd is large enough to be affected by the miracle.

The primary purpose of miracles, signs, and wonders is for the salvation of the lost (Acts 1:8).

THE LAME MAN'S DAILY ROUTINE

Act 3:2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

Being laid at the temple gate has been the lame man's daily routine for many years. He is placed at the opening of the temple at the main gate, and all who entered the temple pass by him. If Peter and John had not seen the lame man on this particular day, he would have been seen on many days preceding it.

This man and his condition are well known outside of the temple. Religion has not helped him, but the power of Jesus stands in opposition to religion on this day even as it had during His earthly ministry.

As the man sits at the gate, many pass him on their way into the temple, especially at the hour of prayer when the gate gets very busy. As people pass, the man asks for a small portion of the money they are going to offer in the temple. Their alms are what keep him alive.

Outward problems, like this man's dependency on alms, always have a root cause, and this man does not fully realize that cause. It is not his lack of money, but his lameness. His financial situation is a result of his problem, not the problem itself. Peter and John minister to the root of his problem.

Act 3:3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

This man asks to be rid of the symptoms, but Peter and John are going to remedy the cause.

Act 3:4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

While John and Peter are standing there, the lame man is probably looking beyond Peter and John and trying to catch the attention of others. The man has given them a glance after catching their attention and expects to receive money, but at the same time continues speaking to others. Peter now asks the man to put his attention on them. Faith always demands our full attention.

FAITH DEMANDS ATTENTION

Act 3:5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

The lame man's faith is in operation, even if it was for money. Peter uses his attention and simply diverts it toward the Lord; the lame man expects to receive.

Act 3:6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk (start walking and keep on walking).

Peter does not speak until he has the lame man's attention. He has no money to offer since he had given it all into the common treasury (Acts 2:44-45), but Peter has more than money. He carries the healing authority of Jesus. Peter speaks to the man in the name of the humanity of Jesus Christ. He also commands the man to do what he normally cannot do.

Throughout the Word, healing commands are to be acted upon. Men are commanded to stretch out a withered hand or pick up a bed and walk. Faith demands simple action. Faith acts on the Word it has received, not on the manifestation.

A MIRACLE PERFORMED

Act 3:7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

This is an operation of the working of miracles. It is a result of Peter being Spirit-filled. The writer Luke, being a physician, naturally describes the internal results of God's power being manifested in this man's body.

Act 3:8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

Since the man is healed, he is led to church and willingly follows. The excitement of being healed causes the man to follow Peter and John into the temple. By the time the man enters the temple, he has received Jesus as his Lord and is on the path toward maturity and becoming a disciple of the Lord. The best time to take a person to church is immediately after they receive the Lord.

Act 3:9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

Act 3:10 And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder (awe) and amazement (confusion) at that which had happened unto him.

Because this man is so well-known, the miracle in his body is producing an attitude of wonder in the people. This is the purpose of miracles and wonders: to bring attention to the Lord and open hearts to the new birth. This is the time to preach the gospel, and Peter will soon know it.

Act 3:11 And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

And as the lame man which was healed beheld Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering (completely flabbergasted [Wuest]).

The man is holding on to Peter and John because he has never walked in his life. After the initial leaping and walking, he is still quite shaky and is learning to walk normally for the first time. The miracle has caused a crowd of people to gather under the covered terrace on the east side of the temple.

THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB

Now at the center of an amazed crowd, Peter directs their attention away from himself and toward God. He explains that the Messiah had already come, but they have rejected Him. He also informs them that the lame man's faith in God brought healing to his physical body.

THE CROWD'S ATTENTION TURNED TOWARD GOD

Act 3:12 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?

When Peter sees the amazement of the crowd, he answers the questions they are thinking. Peter begins by letting the people know that this healing has come from God's grace and is not from his works of righteousness. Grace and healing power both come from God.

THE MESSIAH DENIED

Act 3:13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.

Peter informs the crowd that the patriarchs were believers, and the Messiah they had believed in and waited for had already been sent. Jesus had already come, but they denied Him and delivered Him up to be killed. By reminding these religious Jews of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Peter gets their spiritual attention. He then proclaims Jesus as the Messiah as evidenced by God glorifying Him and raising Him from the dead. Most likely these people in the temple are part of the same crowd who stood before Pilate and cried "Crucify Him!"

Act 3:14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

Although Jesus was holy before God and just (innocent) before men, the people had asked for Barabas, a known gangster, to be released in Jesus' place. A guilty man (Barabas) released for the life of an innocent one (Jesus) was a type of what would happen for those in the crowd who will put their trust in Jesus.

Act 3:15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

Jesus is the Prince of eternal life (Hebrews 2:10). He was not only raised from the dead, but firstborn from the dead. The people present that day were witnesses to His death, and they now stood in the presence of witnesses to His resurrection.

FAITH IN THE NAME

Act 3:16 And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Peter is now giving them the method to receive any blessing from God, whether it be salvation, healing, or temporal needs. We receive by faith and even that faith is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8-9). Both the ability to receive and the gift come from God. This is grace.

Grace diverts attention away from Peter, John, and even the man who was healed. All attention is now focused on the Lord of their ancestors. Peter is giving them an opportunity to make Him their Lord too.

Peter explains to the crowd that the once lame man had received "perfect soundness." Whatever else might have been wrong with the man as a result of his lameness is made perfectly sound when he was healed.

3:16 Healing in Jesus' Incomparable Name, DIVINE HEALING. Immediately after the Spirit's outpouring At Pentecost, it is stated, "many wonders and signs were done through the apostles." Chapter 3 gives the account of the healing of a man who was lame from birth, a fact well known by everyone in Jerusalem. Peter attributed the healing to no unique human powers, but to faith in the name of Jesus.

Note how the invoking of the name of "Jesus Christ of Nazareth" (verse 6; 4:10) rings from the apostles' lips. The appeals to Jesus' name as the unmistakable Messiah (Christ), who

walked as a Man among men (of Nazareth), is an establishing of His Person, His character, and His kingly office as the authoritative grounds for extending healing grace. The use of another person's name to declare legal rights is called "the power of attorney." This is a privileged power that Jesus has delegated to us in confronting the retreating rule that sickness and Satan seek to sustain over mankind.

Act 3:17 And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.

After hearing Peter's sermon, the crowd is no longer ignorant.

THE MESSIAH HAS COME

Peter now exhorts the people to stop looking for the Messiah because He has already come. He then calls them to repentance and conversion which will open the doors to the infilling of the Holy Spirit and brings "times of refreshing." Peter encourages the crowd to take heed to what Moses had spoken concerning Jesus.

Act 3:18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

All of the prophets spoke by the mouth of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). Peter is exhorting them to stop looking for the Messiah. Peter is saying "The Messiah has come!" This crowd had been a witness to the fulfillment of a major portion of the Old Testament and now they would be held accountable.

A CALL TO REPENTANCE

Act 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

Repent (mataneo) ye therefore (turn from something), and be converted (turn toward something), that (for) your sins may be blotted out, when (opos: so that) the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

The new birth -- repentance, conversion and blotting out of sins -- are the door to the infilling of the Holy Spirit. This also reveals that the new birth is not the infilling. The infilling of the Holy Spirit is called the "times of refreshing." This is also the description Isaiah gave (Isaiah 28: 11-12). Times of refreshing and the blotting out of sins both come from the presence of the Father. This is the gift of the Father which was "shed forth" from His presence (Acts 2:33).

The new birth is also the guarantee of participating in the resurrection of the saints and being a part of the millennial kingdom which was prophesied to them (20-21).

Act 3:20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

This sending is at the second advent, which has been prophesied throughout the Old Testament. These people had heard the passages many times, but did not understand they had crucified and rejected the one who was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies concerning the second coming.

THE RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS

Act 3:21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution (restoration) of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began (from old).

The heavens received Jesus in Acts chapter 1. He will remain in heaven until the time for the restoration of all things: the second advent and millennial reign. Jesus will accomplish the restoration of all things, not the church. We are here and will have momentary and partial victories, but the complete victory will be accomplished by the Lord Jesus and Armageddon. The Alpha must also be the Omega; the beginning must also be the end. He that began a good work will also complete it.

Act 3:22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; (Jesus) shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he (the Father) shall say unto you.

This quote is a compilation of Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19. Stephen will also quote this later in Acts 7:37. The prophet spoken of in this verse is Jesus. He, like Moses, will be unique. Peter is telling them that their hero, Moses, was telling them to listen to Jesus even as he himself had.

FORETOLD BY THE PROPHETS

Peter brings the crowd to a place of decision. They must now choose whether to accept or reject Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. He highlights the fact that Jesus was given first to the Jews and all that have an opportunity to turn from sin to receive eternal life.

Act 3:23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

This is the end of Moses's word (Deuteronomy 18:19). The word applies to the crowd that stands before Peter. Their eternal life or damnation rest upon their acceptance or rejection of Jesus, the Prophet.

Act 3:24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken (not all prophets wrote Scripture), have likewise foretold of these days.

Samuel was the first prophet and began the school of the prophets. Everyone agrees with Moses, and this crowd now stands in a place of decision.

Act 3:25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

Ye are the children (descendents) of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed (Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:4).

The "seed," which would bring blessing was not Abraham but the Lord Jesus, the "seed" of Abraham (Galatians 3:8). The only way to be blessed with the new birth or the infilling of the Holy Spirit is to be in the seed of Abraham.

Act 3:26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

The gospel is to the Jew first (John 1:11; Romans 1:16). However, Jesus came to make salvation possible so all would have an opportunity to turn from iniquities and receive eternal life.