

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to Acts 3

We spent the last two weeks on chapter two – looking at the manifestation of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

We saw it through the noise of rushing wind

We saw it through what appeared to be flames on heads of the disciples

And we saw it through the foreign tongues that were spoken that day.

This evening, we are going to continue to see the work of the Holy Spirit through the apostles.

As great as the Day of Pentecost was – we have to remember that “that was only one day” because from that day until now, the Holy Spirit has been working through us in doing God’s will.

Let’s pray...

[Act 3:1-26 NKJV] 1 Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth [hour].

So, it's been a few days since the Day of Pentecost happened – the new church is growing and people's lives are being changed.

And here, Luke tells us that Peter and John go to the temple – at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour (3:00 PM)

There was no specific law that said how many times a person was to pray.

But the Jews eventually developed a tradition of praying three times each day, morning, noon, and evening.

These were the third hour, the sixth hour, and the ninth hour.

And as we study the book of Acts, we will see a few events that occur during these times of prayer.

We saw last week - on the day of Pentecost, the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit at the third hour (Acts 2:15)

The lame man here is healed at the ninth hour (Acts 3:1)

Later on in chapter – we find Peter praying at the sixth hour when God gives him a vision, showing him that salvation belongs to the Gentiles as well (Acts 10:9)

And then we find Cornelius, praying at the ninth hour when an angel tells him to go get Peter, leading to the salvation of the Gentiles (Acts 10:30)

Church, things happen when people pray. And God answers all our prayers – in His perfect time.

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 from those who entered the temple;

So, here in verse two we are introduced to this anonymous man.

We are not given his name.

All we know is that he had been lame from childbirth – he couldn't walk, he couldn't work and therefore, his friend or those that had compassion on him would carry him and drop him off at this gate where he would ask for alms / money.

Actually the word for alms – literally means mercy.

And that is what those in need would be asking for – and the Jews would respond by giving them money. (That's how they would take care of each other – there was no social security or disability during this time) People in need would ask for alms.

And the reason that he was positioned at one of the gates to the temple was because the “religious people / the hypocrites” were always looking for an opportunity to show men just how charitable they were –

You see, giving to the poor – especially beggars was traditionally viewed as an act of righteousness to the Jews.

So – the some of the Jews would only give to be seen.

And Jesus, during His ministry pointed it out and rebuked them for it. (Matt 6)

[Mat 6:3-4 NKJV] 3 "But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 "that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. 4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." 5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. 6 Then Peter said, **"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." 7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted [him] up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.**

Peter and John are about to walk in the temple –

And then the Holy Spirit draws Peter's attention to this lame man.

This lame man whom they probably seen many times on their way to the temple.

We just read that he was at the gate daily –

Church, sometimes God seems to "point people out" to you.

You've seen them before, but now you know that God wants you to do something, to go over and talk to them.

"Go talk to them. Ask them how their day is going? – that is how the Holy Spirit works.

And that is what we see here.

The Holy Spirit points this lame man out to Peter – The Holy Spirit has revealed to Peter the work that He is going to do through him and Peter gets his attention.

The lame man thinks he is going to get a couple of coins

And what does Peter say – "I left my wallet at home – but I have something better to give you - healing"

And Peter knew the source of the healing – that is why he says, In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.

I want you to notice two very important things –

1. Peter gave the lame man power in the name of Jesus, but he could not give it unless he had it in his own life (but what I do have I give you). Many people want to be able to say, "rise up and walk" without having received the power of Jesus to transform their own life.

2. The lame man did not get up when Peter told him to rise up and walk – he only got up after Peter had received the gift of faith from the Holy Spirit and went up to the lame man and picked him up.

Church, Peter simply didn't decide that he was going to heal the lame man that afternoon – God revealed it to him and then gave him the faith to trust Him.

Turn to 1 Cor 12 -

[1Co 12:7-9 NKJV] 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit [of all]: 8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,

Think about what was going through Peter's mind –

What if I go to lift him up and he doesn't walk or what if he simply falls back on the floor.

But somehow, Peter had the faith that God was the one leading him to minister to this man.

Church, faith is the ability to trust God, even when you don't see how something is going to happen.

8 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them-- walking, leaping, and praising God. 9 And all the people saw him walking and

praising God. 10 Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. 11 Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed.

So we see that after the lame man was healed – he heads into the temple with Peter and John and praises God.

I want you to think about this for a second – in the very next chapter, we are told that this man is in his 40's.

So we know that he was there at the temple gate for some time everybody knew him.

This means that Jesus must have seen him in his multiple trips to the temple.

So then the question becomes – why didn't Jesus heal him?

Think about it?

Was it because he was lame from birth – and it was impossible for Jesus to heal him?

No - After all, Jesus brought Lazarus back from the dead – and Lazarus was in a worse situation than this lame man.

Church, it wasn't God timing to heal him.

And by waiting for Jesus to do it from heaven through His apostles – He would receive the greater glory.

Another thing I want you to look at –

This event gives us a perfect illustration of those that are lost.

There was a time in our life, when we were the lame man.

We were spiritually crippled – we couldn't walk so as to please God.

We were also poor - as sinners, we were bankrupt before God, unable to pay the tremendous debt that we owe Him.

We were also outside the temple – as the lame man was.

And the reason was that as sinners, we were separated from God.

But then we were healed completely by the grace of God – like the lame man was.

12 So when Peter saw [it], he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, **why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?"**

The people are amazed ... Peter sees it ... Peter preaches.

This is the same sequence of events that took place a few days earlier, when the Holy Spirit first came upon the disciples during Pentecost.

Twice now God has done things to get the peoples' attention, and Peter has used those opportunities to tell them about Jesus.

So Peter's question to the people is why do you marvel?

Jesus healed a bunch of people during His 3 year ministry here on earth – why is it any different now that He is heaven.

I want you to see Peter's humility here – he could have said – “yes” I healed the man.

But Peter knew that he was a simple fisherman – The great power that has been displayed has been displayed by Jesus, and it's another proof to the people that Jesus is alive!

13 "**The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, the God of our fathers, glorified **His Servant** Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let [Him] go. 14 "But you denied the **Holy One** and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15 "and **killed the Prince of life**, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.

I had you make a note of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

That is the title that God used of Himself when He spoke to Moses from the Burning Bush in Exodus 3 –

His Servant is also an Old Testament title referring to the Messiah

[Isa 42:1 NKJV] 1 "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One [in whom] My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

So the reason that Peter uses these titles is because he knows that he is speaking to men and women who know scripture – remember, they are at the temple.

He is speaking to them at their level –

Later on in the book of Acts, we will see Paul address the pagan Greek Philosophers – he is not going to use the Old Testament because they don't know who Isaiah is.

So Peter begins this sermon by connecting the dots and pointing to Jesus.

And then, once again we see the boldness that the Holy Spirit equipped Peter as he reminds the people that they rejected the Messiah.

Notice how many times he says “you”

You delivered up and denied

You denied the Holy One

You asked for a murderer to be granted to you

You killed the Prince of life

I had you make a note of the title **Holy One**

This is a title found 40 times in the Old Testament and it is always used to describe Yahweh.

So Peter exalted Jesus as God.

And then at the end of verse 15 – Peter is once again bearing witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ – which I have said over and over again, is the heart of the gospel.

Without the resurrection, you have no gospel.

16 "And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which [comes] through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Not only did the healing come from God – the faith to believe (the ability to trust God for this miracle) was from God as well.

Peter can't even really take any credit for his own faith, because even that came from Jesus.

Church, be careful of the faith movement that says the reason that you are still sick is because you lack faith. That is not biblical.

Remember the example we had at the start of the chapter – the lame man's faith never figured into the equation. The lame man never showed an ounce of faith, all he wanted was a few coins that would help him get through the day.

It was the faith given by God to Peter and John that healed the lame man.

So if anyone ever says it's your lack of faith – then you should question their faith for not kicking in.

17 "Yet now, **brethren, I know that you did [it] in ignorance, as [did] also your rulers.**

Peter tells the crowd – that the reason they denied Jesus Christ was out of ignorance.

Even though the Jews were diligent in studying the scriptures, they only accepted the scriptures that spoke of the Messiah's glorious return.

They never took Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 as literal.

So even though God had given them the clear truth, they failed to see it and it led them to participate in the suffering and death of their Messiah. – the very thing that God had prophesied in His Word.

I want to make it clear – just because they did it out of ignorance, it didn't take away their guilt. They were still guilty of what they did.

18 "But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

So, even though they killed the Messiah – it still didn't change God's plans.

Because Jesus had to die.

19 "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

The Jews were guilty and Peter tells them how to correct it.

Your sins will be blotted out

You don't need to carry the guilt of your past

God will blot out the past as though it never existed – and they to having your sins blotted out is one must repent.

There is no cleansing without repentance.

Remember, the goal was not to make them feel bad – the goal was them to repent. To turn to God.

20 "and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. 22 "For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. 23 'And it shall be [that] every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'

Peter now is quoting Deut 18 –

And he is reminding the people that Moses spoke of Jesus.

And either they can accept this Prophet or they can reject Him.

There is hope for those who turn to Jesus, there is no hope for those who reject Jesus.

24 "Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. 25 "You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' 26 "To you first**, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one [of you] from your iniquities."**

Peter then continues his sermon by quoting more scripture – Genesis 22.

And he tells them that God's plan was always to extend salvation to all the world – even the gentiles.

First to the Jews and then the Gentiles –

And when we respond to the gospel – we will be blessed by Him because it will be His desire to turn us all away from our sin.

You see, the Jews were like the lame man.

The lame man wanted money – and God gave him something better.

The Jews, they wanted a Messiah that was going to be a political leader that would deliver them from Rome – and God gave them something better. He gave them a Deliverer who came to deliver them and us from our iniquities and give us hope.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 'May the LORD bless you and protect you. 25 May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. 26 May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'



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