

A Miracle and A Message

Acts Chapter 3

Act 3:1 1) Miracle at a Beautiful Gate vs 1-10

Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth {hour,} the hour of prayer.

- The hour of prayer was 3 times a day. 9 AM, NOON, 3 PM 9th hour is 3 PM
- Contrast Peter with John (Would these 2 be friends or get along with out Christ)

Peter	John
Course	Gentle
Impetuous	Meditative (Head on Jesus Breast)
Violent (Cuts of Servants Ear)	Love
- These two were going to the temple. These early Christians didn't remove themselves from who they were. Jews. They understood that Christ was a fulfillment of their Judaism and continued in the practice and devotion of Judaism.

Act 3:2 And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple.

- There was a man at a Beautiful Gate
- Contrast a Lame Man with the Gate Beautiful

Lame Man	Gate Beautiful
Crippled from birth	Not eastern Gate but gate before court of women
40 years old (Acts 4:22)	50 years old (at this time in our story)
Dependent on Others	Stands to
Begging of the People	People come to Give
Ignored	Attracts and Awes
Makes people feel uncomfortable	Inspires People
Rejected (outside)	Received People inside
- He was laid there every day. He was there when Jesus came to the temple. Yet Jesus passed him by.

Act 3:3 When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he {began} asking to receive alms.

Act 3:4 But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!"

- This beggar was used to people passing him by as he cried out "Alms for the poor, alms for the poor" He was used to being unseen and ignored. He probably had a few regular people that gave to him but for the most part they just ignored him.
- This beggar probably learned to cry out and yet not necessarily make eye contact with anyone to avoid the feeling of rejection and avoid the feeling of being damaged goods or lower class.
- Peter and John said "Look at us." They could have passed him by but this was the crises point in a conversation with a stranger. When we share the gospel with a stranger there is always a crises point. This is where you are committed to engage in a conversation or you back away.
- Here is a divine appointment that is presented to Peter and John as something that they have seen many times currently an interruption to what they are intended to do.

Act 3:5 And he {began} to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

Act 3:6 But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene--walk!"

- (H.A. Ironside) There is a story of Thomas Aquinas when he came to Rome to pay his respects to the pope, the pope showed him all the wonders of the papal palace. The pope took Thomas to the treasury and showed him all the chests of silver and gold collected from every part of the world. The pope said, "We cannot say now as the first pope said 'silver and gold have I none'" Thomas fearlessly replied back "True and neither can you say 'In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene - rise up and walk' "
- I don't have --
- What a negative confession. But it was truth. Peter & John didn't hold to the popular teaching of our day of positive confession. They were just fine with where they are positioned on everyone's charts. Their social status chart, their economic status chart, their political or influential chart. They were

what they were and Jesus choose them as they were.

- Philippians 4:11-13 *"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, [therewith] to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*
- What I do have I give --
- They knew what they did have it was for giving to share with others.
- They had Salvation, Favour with God, Authority and Power to heal.
- Blessing other people is the purpose of having these things. TO GIVE not to establish my ministry or to enlarge my accounts
- If Peter and John were in ministry today and held to popular belief of what successful ministry is today, they would have a tv healing ministry and be sending out donation letters so they could stay on the air in your area. I DO NOT SEE THIS IN THEIR MINISTRY IN SCRIPTURE.
- 2 Corinthians 4:5-12 *"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to [give] the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. [We are] troubled on every side, yet not distressed; [we are] perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you."*

Act 3:7 And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened.

Act 3:8 With a leap he stood upright and {began} to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

- This is remarkable healing
- 1st it is "In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene" Not by Peter. But by faith in Jesus from Nazareth THE MESSIAH. Even in this, Peter is preaching the Messiah has come.
- 2nd Peter helped him up. The sense is the man is healed by faith in Jesus the Messiah but faith is growing. Peter helped him up.
- 3rd As the man was rising, His bones straightened and his joints popped in place. Much like Peter walking on water. How do you know you can walk on water until you got out of the boat and step on it.
- 4th He entered the temple Praising God
 - He had never been able to enter. He wasn't allowed. This is the first time he could walk in.
 - Leaping illustrated the praise in his heart and also how strong the healing. The stress of jumping and landing surely wouldn't be recommended by our Physical Therapist. Sure push past the pain and improve flexibility and improve strength but do it gradual steps. Jesus healed him completely.

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

Act 3:10 and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to {beg} alms, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

- All those in the court recognized him and were amazed. They in awe knowing something remarkable has happened.
- What has happened So much more than a beggar got healed
 - Peter & John going about their normal devotions met with a divine appointment
 - A Beggar saw not religious men but men who are led by the Spirit
 - Spirit led to A) Normal Devotions B) Divine Appointments C) Content with their Place D) Assured in Christ E) Generous with Grace
 - A Beggar's faith in Jesus was born
 - A Beggar benefited from faith in Jesus
 - A crippled taker became a walking giver of praise to God.

How are you crippled? Are you a taker? A beggar? Jesus can change all we are in a moment.

2) Message at a Beautiful Gate vs 11-26

After this message 5000 believed. (Acts 4:4) I desire even one to believe after I preach. What is the difference? Is there a formula? How can I be more effective for the gospel sake?

- 1st At the beginning of this chapter we see Peter & John going to the temple to PRAY.
- 2nd We see another quality in them. THEY ARE WILLING to give as the Spirit leads them.
- 3rd They RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND to the opportunity. As we see in the next few verses.

Act 3:11 While he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement.

Act 3:12 **5 Parts to Peter's Message**

1. The Connection / Identification

But when Peter saw {this,} he replied to the people, "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk?"

- Peter took his cue from the men of Israel looking at them. Just like with the beggar it started with them looking at them, then Peter taking their eyes from him to Jesus. We need to take the cue. When someone looks at us or are impressed with us, let's turn their eyes to Jesus.
- Peter asked them 2 questions:
 - **Why are you amazed at this?** Israel whose history is full of the miraculous God intervening in the lives of men. (Exodus from Egypt, Red Sea parting, Fall of Jericho, God winning Battles in Canaan, Elijah at Mt Carmel) Why are you amazed at this? Why aren't you amazed with God?
 - **Why look at us?** This is a remarkable attitude. Surly, we know their obedience to God had quite a bit to do with this miracle. But Peter & John do not even take that glory.
- Peter was very careful in the introduction to be sure he is on the same level as the hearers of his message. He was not special (piety) or held a power that others didn't have.
- We need to be very careful to not consider ourselves better than those in the world. The only difference between me and an unbeliever is "I BELIEVE". And once the hearer of our message believes, there is no difference at all.
- We need to be very careful not to receive glory to ourselves:
 - Glory goes to God ALWAYS!
 - 1 Cor 10:17-18 "*But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.*"

Act 3:13 **2. The Transition**

"The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, {the one} whom you delivered and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him.

- Peter moves in the discourse from what was happening with a healing and peoples amazement to Jesus
- This is the part of our conversations that requires something from us. I would like to say it takes courage. But I believe that is not true. Courage is greatness on your part. I believe what it takes is a true understanding of how wretched you were before Christ.
- *One commentator says that the miracle of the speech of Peter is a far more wonderful one than the miracle wrought in the healing of the man who lay at the Beautiful Gate.*

Act 3:14 **3. The Challenge (demonstration of guilt)**

"But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,

Act 3:15 but put to death the Prince of life, {the one} whom God raised from the dead, {a fact} to which we are witnesses.

- **3 points to the Challenge**
- Point 1 - You Have Sinned
- Peter speaks of 2 contrasts:
 - they rejected the HOLY / RIGHTEOUS One to receive a MURDERER
 - put to DEATH the Prince of LIFE
- Peter is clearly not worried about the peoples self esteem. He is more concerned about their salvation. Peter is very strong and to the point as to what their sin was.

- WHOM GOD RAISED - points out another contrast that Israel wanted Jesus dead God wanted Him alive.
- Is our sin today that we pick and choose when Jesus is alive in us? Are we guilty of disowning and putting Him to death at various times throughout our week? God wants Him Alive in us!

Act 3:16 "And on the basis of faith in His name, {it is} the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which {comes} through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.

- Point 2 - Faith In Jesus
- Peter is so selfless that he doesn't even take credit for his faith in the name of Jesus.
- The Name of Jesus - gk "onoma" *the name is used for everything which the name covers, everything the thought or feeling of which is aroused in the mind by mentioning, hearing, remembering, the name, i.e. for one's rank, authority, interests, pleasure, command, excellences, deeds etc.*
- We are
 - to Name the Name (2 Tim 2:19);
 - called by His name (Acts 15:17);
 - to hold fast to His name (Rev3:13; 3:8);
 - to gather in His name (Matt 18:20);
 - to do all things in His name (Col 3:17);
 - to baptize in His name (Acts 2:38; 22:16);
 - to Call in His name (Acts 22:16);
 - to pray/ask in His name (John 14:13; John 15:16; John 16:23)
- To pray and end as simply thoughtless tag at the end of prayer is no where near the meaning of the Name of Jesus. We should realize that at the end of prayer we are asking in the Name of (all He is, His rank, authority, interests, pleasure, command, excellences, deeds) Jesus.
- Very important point this faith is through Him (by Him)
- This faith accomplished 2 things for this man at the Gate Beautiful 1) Strength 2) Perfect Health

Act 3:17 "And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also.

Act 3:18 "But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

- Point 3 - Your Ignorance Is Not an Excuse
- "Jurisprudence" - *juris* = law; *prudence* = knowledge This concept comes from Roman law. This meaning is simple. It means that an individual charged with a criminal offense could not claim as a defense that they were unaware of a law to avoid liability. What becomes important is jurisdiction. Knowledge of all laws are imputed to all who all peoples within the authority of that law.
- Jurisdiction of God's Law is over the whole earth.
- All men everywhere are under God's Law and are found guilty
- Romans 3:19 "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."
- GOD ANNOUNCED BEFOREHAND - the people who were the keepers of the law should have known.

Act 3:19 **4. The Call to Action**

"Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

- Repent - turn around from the present course of life.
- I confess I need to live this daily. I need to repent from MY COURSE and return to HIS COURSE.
- Daily I need sins wiped away. To walk with Him is to repent from having Him walk with me. And for me to turn and walk with Him.
- HIS PRESENCE is refreshing

- Act 3:20 **5. The Consequences of Action**
and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you,
- Act 3:21 whom heaven must receive until {the} period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.
- God has appointed Jesus the MESSIAH for you. He is the answer.
 - This RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS is not referring to the restoration of all mankind in all history even fallen angels and Lucifer. (which is a poor belief that is not founded in biblical teaching) This Restoration of all things is referring to the fulfillment of all the prophets have foretold concerning the 2nd coming of Christ and His permanent rule and reign.
- Act 3:22 "Moses said, 'THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you.
- Act 3:23 'And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'
- Act 3:24 "And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and {his} successors onward, also announced these days.
- Act 3:25 "It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.'
- Act 3:26 "For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one {of you} from your wicked ways."
- It is not a call to follow a new religion. Peter and John were very Jewish and were still devoted to going to the temple. The call is to recognize Jesus the Messiah has come, put to death and arose from the dead to give forgiveness for sins.
 - Peter is clarifying to the Jews who were looking for a political Messiah, that the Messiah who Moses, Samuel and all the prophets spoke about was to bless the people BY TURNING EVERY ONE OF YOU FROM YOUR WICKED WAYS.
 - FOR YOU FIRST - just as Jesus promised in ACTS 1:8 "to Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria, even to the remotest parts of the earth."
 - FOR YOU FIRST - implies to someone else second and so on and so on.
 - Are you looking for a different blessing from Jesus? What did He come to bless us with? Turning from wickedness.

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