

## The Lame Man Is Healed

### Lesson Scope: Acts 3

*References in brackets refer to Acts 3 unless otherwise specified*

### Lesson Focus

The days just prior to the events of this lesson were full of action and transition. Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension had been accomplished. Then, on the day of Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit upon the waiting disciples. Peter rose up and preached a powerful sermon that day, and three thousand souls responded to the call of the Gospel and were saved. God was building the church. The multitude of believers was united in faith and practice, and was joyfully praising God.

In the midst of all these happenings we find that God was still very much interested in the souls of individuals. The lame man had his own ideas about how his immediate needs could be met. But typical of God's work in a person's life, the true answer to this man's needs was infinitely greater and better than he could imagine. The man rejoiced and the whole multitude marvelled. This humanly impossible transformation revealed the power of God.

In the physical and spiritual needs of this lame man, we see the needs of each of the three thousand souls that God had healed just prior to this.

We see our own souls' needs and the needs of those around us as well.

Man is helpless to provide his own spiritual healing. Only through the power of Christ can the believer "rise up and walk" in newness of life.

This miraculous healing attracted the attention of the multitudes and proved Jesus' power to effect spiritual change in the lives of those who repent and believe on His name. The analogy between physical healing and spiritual healing is fitting. This man's paralysis is representative of the inability of humanity to cure its own ills. Jesus' power is more than adequate to meet the needs of mankind.

But men must exercise faith for that power to be effective in their lives. Many today have gotten carried away believing that primarily physical healing is God's intention. God does not ignore physical needs.

At times, such as this incident described in Acts 3, physical needs can bring a person to the end of himself where he realizes his need for help and will reach out in faith to God. However, physical needs are secondary to the spiritual needs of humanity. The Great Commission directs us to minister to the spiritual needs in the world around us.

The example and teaching of the early church direct us to focus on the physical needs of those whose spiritual needs are already met.

We should challenge ourselves and others to “Picture yourself as one day having lain where the lame man lay. Who helped you up? Is the power to rise any different today?” Are we thanking and glorifying God as we ought? Can we see other lame souls lying at the “Beautiful gate”? What are we doing about it?

**Lesson Aim:** To present principles related to spiritual healing.

**Theme Verse:** **Isaiah 53:5.** But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

## Lesson Text

### “Rise Up and Walk”

#### Acts 3:1-11

<sup>1</sup> (KJV) Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth hour. <sup>2</sup> 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; <sup>3</sup> Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. <sup>4</sup> And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. <sup>5</sup> And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. <sup>8</sup> And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. <sup>9</sup> And all the people saw him walking and praising God: <sup>10</sup> And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with won-

der and amazement at that which had happened unto him. <sup>11</sup> 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.

### “Repent Ye Therefore”

Acts 3:12-26

<sup>12</sup> (KJV) 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? <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; <sup>15</sup> And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers. <sup>18</sup> But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. <sup>19</sup> 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; <sup>20</sup> And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: <sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> 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. <sup>23</sup> And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. <sup>24</sup> Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. <sup>25</sup> 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. <sup>26</sup> 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.

### **Questions for Study**

#### **“Rise Up and Walk”**

1. How does this lame man represent sinful humanity?
2. Contrast what the lame man expected with what he received.
3. What are the steps in the process of spiritual healing?
4. What characteristics of a new believer do we see in the healed man’s expressions?
5. Give some principles for relating to the spiritually lame around us today.

#### **“Repent Ye Therefore”**

6. What powers are involved in spiritual healing?
7. What things accompany sincere repentance?
8. How can we “hear that prophet” (3:23)?

### **Analysing the Passage**

The hour of prayer, the ninth hour (3:1), corresponds to three o’clock in the afternoon. The third hour (2:15) and the sixth hour (10:9) were also times of prayer.

This lame man was well-known to the temple worshipers. He was laid there daily, likely for quite some time. He was over forty years old (4:22), and had been lame from birth.

The gate “which is called Beautiful” (3:2) was the main entrance to the inner court of the temple. This beautiful gate was seventy-five feet high and sixty feet wide, made of brass and decorated with precious metals. This lame man lay at the gateway to God and life, but had no ability to enter it. Peter “fastened his eyes upon” the lame man (3:4). This means “to gaze intently or earnestly.” Peter and John by this gesture encouraged the same gaze in return from the lame man.

The apostles healed the lame man in the name of Jesus. They were clear and emphatic that in themselves they had no miraculous power.

They pointed this man to Jesus, and his faith in Jesus’ name resulted in his miraculous healing.

## **Principles and Applications**

### **“Rise Up and Walk”**

1. Man must realize his need and desire help (3:2-3). “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick” (Matthew 9:12).

The lame soul must realize his utter helplessness in himself and his total dependence upon God and men of God to find the help he needs. He must be ready to surrender his own will and accept the help that God sends.

2. God uses faithful men as His agents (3:3-5).

Here He used Peter and John. Sometimes it may be a servant, as in the case of Naaman the leper. God’s agents must represent Him to a lost and dying humanity. The world may marvel, but God’s agents use every opportunity to point the attention to God. At the same time, none of us is ever so much of an agent for God that we cannot be helped by others.

3. Spiritual healing comes through the power of Jesus’ name (3:6).

His name has power because He is the Son of God. He has overcome death and Satan, shedding His blood to atone for the sins of the whole world. “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25).

4. Spiritual healing is complete and totally changes one’s life (3:7-9).

When a person is humble, surrendered, and trusting, miracles happen. This transformation does not ensure a healthy spiritual life ever after, but it is the first step toward a repentant, believing, obedient life. The path ahead is not always easy, but it is unfettered. God gives a new heart and the strength to rise and walk in newness of life.

5. Praise and thanksgiving are spontaneous from those who are healed (3:8-9).

The lame man praised God, headed for the place of worship, and readily identified with God’s people. How is it with us? While there may be such a thing as tactful silence, are we too often guilty of silence because of the fear of man? If we are truly healed, there will be no secrets as to our strength or our joy.

6. Spiritual healing is a divine miracle (3:10-12).

As such, it cannot be comprehended by the natural mind. Men will marvel at the change Christ can bring, but unless they exercise faith and

experience His power themselves, their amazement will not bring understanding. We, like Peter and John, must clearly tell others that we of ourselves do not have miraculous power. Rather, “It is God which worketh in [us]” (Philippians 2:13).

### **“Repent Ye Therefore”**

7. Faith in the name of Jesus brings spiritual healing (3:16).

If Peter and John had no special power of themselves, what then was their role? They themselves had faith in the power of Jesus. They could tell the lame man about Jesus. Their faith sparked his faith to be healed. We cannot believe in Jesus for another person. But we can relate to others in such a way that it inspires and strengthens their faith. This faith is not just the simple belief that God exists, but rather a fixed conviction that “what he [has] promised, he [is] able also to perform” (Romans 4:21).

8. Repentance and conversion accompany spiritual healing (3:19).

These are missing ingredients many times when the emphasis is on physical healing by faith in the power of God. To be healed spiritually, one must abhor the old life and be ready to do whatever God asks of him. God does the converting as a man surrenders himself to the work of Christ in his life. Reservations about what God may ask us to do reveal either a lack of faith in the sovereignty of God or a lack of surrender on our part.

9. Spiritual healing depends on obedience to the words of Jesus (3:22-23).

God does not tell us all that we will ever need to know before we are converted. Rather, He requires us to repent and to commit our lives to Him. Now He gives direction day by day and hour by hour as we need it. These daily decisions set before us the choice between life and death, blessing and cursing. Our spiritual health depends on our willingness to follow the path of obedience and blessing.

### **Important Teachings**

1. Man must realize his need and desire help (3:2-3).
2. God uses faithful men as His agents (3:3-5).
3. Spiritual healing comes through the power of Jesus’ name (3:6).
4. Spiritual healing is complete and totally changes one’s life (3:7-9).

5. Praise and thanksgiving are spontaneous from those who are healed (3:8-9).
6. Spiritual healing is a divine miracle (3:10-12).
7. Faith in the name of Jesus brings spiritual healing (3:16).
8. Repentance and conversion accompany spiritual healing (3:19).
9. Spiritual healing depends on obedience to the words of Jesus (3:22-23).

### **Answers to Questions**

1. How does this lame man represent sinful humanity?

He had crying needs, but was unable to help himself. Some friends tried to help him, but they did not meet his soul's needs. God was not far from him, but he was unable of himself to reach God. He had become somewhat satisfied with an existence that fell far short of meeting his real needs.

2. Contrast what the lame man expected with what he received.

He expected money; he received an invitation to faith in Jesus Christ. He expected to have others meet his needs; he received power to meet his own needs. He expected to remain a hopeless case; he received complete healing, physical and spiritual.

3. What are the steps in the process of spiritual healing?

One must first recognize his need. He must in some way be directed to Jesus as the one who can meet his needs. He must believe that this is the true answer to his need. In most cases, he must accept the outstretched hand of a man of God who can direct his faith. He must leave the old life behind and exercise the power of his newfound life.

4. What characteristics of a new believer do we see in the healed man's expressions?

He stood—he had power to rise above the old life. He walked—he made forward progress. He leaped, exercising his newfound freedoms and abilities. He praised God—communication with God is every believer's new privilege. He held Peter and John—he trusted and identified with God's people.

5. Give some principles for relating to the spiritually lame around us today.

We first of all must nurture our own spiritual lives. Peter said, "Such as I have give I thee." We cannot give what we do not have. We also need

to see needs—not just physical needs but spiritual needs. We must believe that Christ is the answer for every need. We will need boldness to stand out, step out, and speak out.

6. What powers are involved in spiritual healing?

One is the power of Christ, who by His death triumphed over Satan's power. Then there is the power of faith that links us poor humans to the power of God. We must also mention the power of a man's will—we must surrender our will to God's will in order for His power to be effective in our lives.

7. What things accompany sincere repentance?

Sincere repentance brings conversion—a change of heart and life. That change is a result of Christ living in the believer. His presence brings peace, power, and praise. With conversion also comes a teachable attitude and a desire and willingness to identify with God's people.

8. How can we “hear that prophet” (3:23)?

“That prophet” is a reference to Jesus Christ. In hearing, we not only sense with the ears, but also surrender our wills to obey that which we hear. Jesus is not physically present, but he speaks to us by His Spirit. The Spirit speaks to us through the conscience, the Word, and the church. So, some practical answers are to read the Word, heed Christ's messengers, and unite with the church.

### **Summarizing the Lesson**

Spiritual healing is a process that everyone admires. Yet it is too simple for the wise and prudent, and too complicated for the indifferent and impudent. Many try to replicate the miraculous by pretence of faith without surrender to the lordship of Christ. These efforts fall short and leave confusion and unbelief in their wake. God needs faithful, bold men who can point lame souls to Jesus Christ. “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Romans 10:14).

### **Research Guide**

1. Read Scriptures related to God's intention for meeting physical needs, such as James 2:14-17; 5:13-16; 2 Corinthians 8:1-8; 9:1-2, 12-13.