

The Lame Man Healed

Lesson Scope: Acts 3

Lesson Focus

We see an outline of the Book of Acts in Jesus' promise to the disciples—"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:8). Following Christ's ascension, the disciples experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and they saw multitudes respond to the Gospel on the day of Pentecost.

The Holy Spirit saw fit to draw attention to Jesus Christ by granting the apostles power to work special signs and miracles. Physical healing proved Jesus' power to effect spiritual change through repentance and belief in His Name.

Fallen man seeks physical and spiritual healing apart from the acknowledgment of Christ. Man's concept of healing is fixing the old, but Christ offers regeneration—becoming new creatures through the power and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Regenerated people look forward in hope to receiving a new, glorified body at the resurrection.

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.

Opportunity presents itself when we are faithful in our service to the Lord. Peter and John met the lame man on their way to prayer.

We need to give God the glory for any accomplishment or blessing evident in our lives. Failure to do so will steal glory that belongs to God.

Peter drew the crowd's attention away from himself and pointed them to Christ. This is an important example for every Christian to follow. Through Christ alone, sinful man can find lasting fulfillment, spiritual healing, and eternal rest.

Peter grounded his message firmly on the Old Testament, showing the people that his words had the authority of God behind them—another good example for us.

Lesson Aim: To see 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:

Faith Quickened

Acts 3:1-5 ¹ Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth *hour*. 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; ³ Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. ⁴ And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. ⁵ And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

Healing Experienced

Acts 3:6-11 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. ⁷ And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. ⁸ And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. ⁹ And all the people saw him walking and praising God: 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. 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.

Wholeness Realized

Acts 3:12-22 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? 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. ¹⁴ But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; ¹⁵ And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. 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. ¹⁷ And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers. ¹⁸ But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. 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; ²⁰ And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 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. 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.

Questions for Study

Faith Quickened

1. In what ways is a sinner's condition similar to that of the lame man?
2. What was required of the lame man in order to experience healing?

Healing Experienced

3. Why is it significant that Peter offered healing in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth?
4. Compare the lame man's expectation with what he received. What is the spiritual parallel?
5. Why does a curious audience present an ideal witnessing opportunity?

Wholeness Realized

6. What misconception of the people did Peter first address?
7. Discuss the requirements for spiritual healing that Peter emphasized.
8. What motivates the Lord's healing ministry?

Analyzing the Passage

Every action has its own time and place. Peter and John went to the house of prayer (the temple) at the hour of prayer (Acts 3:1). The ninth hour (3:00 p.m.) was one of the three daily times of prayer established among the Jews. The other two were 9:00 in the morning and 12:00 noon.

The man on whom this miraculous cure was wrought was a poor beggar, lame from birth (Acts 3:2). It seems that he was partially paralyzed, for in describing his cure, the writer says, "Immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength" (Acts 3:7).

Peter "took him by the right hand" (Acts 3:7). This suggests an act of faith

on the part of the lame man as he endeavored to obey Peter's command to rise. The apostles were ready to witness to the audience that quickly gathered. Christ's "name through faith in his name bath ... given [the former lame man] this perfect soundness in the presence of you all" (Acts 3:16). The Name of Christ, in response to the faith of the lame man, brought healing. Peter quickly assured the crowd that the power of Christ, not their own power, was the source of healing.

Peter used the opportunity to call the crowd to spiritual healing. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). He informed his listeners that Moses' prophecy (Deuteronomy 18:15,18) was fulfilled in Jesus. They were to put away their former ignorance (Acts 3:17) and receive the offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Principles and Applications

Faith Quickened

1. Man is born spiritually lame and in need of help (Acts 3:2). "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). Apart from God, man is in a deplorable state of depravity. He is powerless to change his own spiritual condition. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: ... for the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Romans 7:18-19).

2. Man must acknowledge his need of spiritual help (Acts 3:3). The lame man was willing to be carried to the temple so he could beg for his living. He responded to Peter's call to "look on us." Likewise, we need humility to acknowledge our need, and faith to reach out and receive God's provision for our salvation. If we are unwilling to call on God with our needs, we will not receive His blessing.

Healing Experienced

3. Men receive knowledge of spiritual healing through preaching (Acts 3:6). "How shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14). The lame man was focused on physical survival. Peter and John were able to demonstrate in him the power of Jesus Christ and His provision for spiritual restoration. Faithful ministers today admonish the erring, speak edification to the faithful, encourage the repentant, comfort the sorrowing, and rebuke the sinner. Faithful brothers and sisters in the church also spread the Gospel in their everyday contacts with others.

4. Man receives spiritual healing by responding in faith to God's offer and requirements (Acts 3:6-7). As the lame man responded in faith to the com-

mand, "Rise up and walk," he received strength. God strengthens us as we step out in faith to follow His will for our lives. We receive His offered salvation, and He provides us with strength to live in victory as we maintain our relationship with Him. Diligent devotional life, persistent prayer life, fellowship with like-minded believers, and a consistent everyday application of Biblical principles indicate a spiritually healthy Christian.

5. Those who have been healed spiritually prove it by their words and actions (Acts 3:8-10). The lame man was not ashamed to glorify God for his healing. As Christians, we should feel privileged to testify of God's goodness in our lives. Does someone express appreciation for our well-behaved children? Give God the glory for giving us principles to raise a family for Him. Perhaps someone is thankful to see us dressing in plain and modest attire. Give God the glory for caring enough about our spiritual well-being to give us guidelines in His Word as to how we should dress. We must know what we believe and be ready to witness to those who ask "a reason of the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15).

Wholeness Realized

6. Men who have been healed spiritually become channels of healing to others (Acts 3:12-16). The lame man's response gave opportunity for Peter to call the multitude to repentance. Four lepers spoiling the Syrian camp realized they held the key to life for the besieged city of Samaria. "They said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace" (2 Kings 7:9).

God has given us the good news of salvation for the lost and dying in the world around us. God calls us to be faithful in telling others of what He has done for us. Our appearance, countenance, and testimony should reflect the spiritual healing we have received.

7. Repentance and conversion are integral to spiritual healing (Acts 3:17-19). God desires that all men be restored to a new life in Him. Man must repent of his sins and submit to the Spirit of God. Total abandonment of self and complete dependence on God are necessary to experience spiritual healing. Conversion involves serving a new Master and forsaking the lusts of the flesh.

8. Only those who willingly accept the supreme authority of Christ's Word can experience spiritual healing (Acts 3:22). God has given us His Word to guide our faith and practice. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). God's Word is

living and powerful. It offers spiritual cleansing, comfort in distress, and nourishment for growth as well as assurance and promises for the future.

Important Teachings

1. Man is born spiritually lame and in need of help (Acts 3:2).
2. Man must acknowledge his need of spiritual help (Acts 3:3).
3. Men receive knowledge of spiritual healing through preaching (Acts 3:6).
4. Man receives spiritual healing by responding in faith to God's offer and requirements (Acts 3:6-7).
5. Those who have been healed spiritually prove it by their words and actions (Acts 3:8-10).
6. Men who have been healed spiritually become channels of healing to others (Acts 3:12-16).
7. Repentance and conversion are integral to spiritual healing (Acts 3:17-19).
8. Only those who willingly accept the supreme authority of Christ's Word can experience spiritual healing (Acts 3:22).
9. Those who have been spiritually healed look forward to the restitution of all things (Acts 3:20-21).

Answers to Questions

1. In what ways is a sinner's condition similar to that of the lame man? The sinner has a sinful nature from birth. He lives under Satan's domination, helpless to free himself.

2. What was required of the lame man in order to experience healing?

The lame man was to look on Peter and John. His expectation allowed their words to arouse his faith. He had to believe that Jesus Christ of Nazareth could heal his crippled body. When Peter lifted him up, the man cooperated.

3. Why is it significant that Peter offered healing in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth?

To refer to God's Son as Jesus Christ was acknowledging His sovereignty as Lord and Saviour—one who could heal both soul and body. Mentioning Nazareth emphasized Jesus' humble identity as a man. The apostles were continuing the work that so many had observed during Jesus' earthly ministry.

4. Compare the lame man's expectation with what he received. What is the

spiritual parallel?

The lame man no doubt expected a few small coins to sustain him temporarily. He received what he would not have believed possible—healing for his crippled body.

Sinners who come to Christ for salvation also receive blessings far beyond their expectation—peace, joy, freedom from guilt and the bondage of sin, and fellowship with God.

5. Why does a curious audience present an ideal witnessing opportunity?

Peter had the crowd's undivided attention; they were full of questions, and Peter was able to answer those questions in a few short sentences. People are much more ready to hear when they initiate the interchange.

6. What misconception of the people did Peter first address?

The people were seeing Peter and John as the source of power to heal the lame man. Peter informed them that the power lay rather in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

7. Discuss the requirements for spiritual healing that Peter emphasized.

Spiritual healing begins with repentance (Acts 3:19), the acknowledgement of and sorrow for one's sinful condition. To "be converted" involves submission to the Holy Spirit's regenerating work, which imparts power to live in holiness. Peter also emphasized the need for a commitment to live by Jesus' teaching (Acts 3:22).

8. What motivates the Lord's healing ministry?

The miracles of healing that Jesus performed while on earth, as well as the miracles wrought by the disciples, verified Jesus' deity and His ability to effect spiritual healing. In His compassion and mercy, the Lord desires that every sinner would be delivered from sin and experience regeneration.

Summarizing the Lesson

God has kept His promise to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15, sending a Saviour to bring spiritual healing and restoration. Jesus' provision is now available to all who will believe. Soon Christ will return to complete His work of redemption—removing the curse of the Fall, raising the saints who have died, and taking all His followers to be with Him in heaven forever.

Research Guide

Read the chapters titled "Repentance" and "Conversion" in *Doctrines of the Bible*.