

## Acts Part 6 – A Lame Man Healed

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney Wednesday, October 7, 2015

† Acts 3:1-10

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.

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.

We left off in our last study 2-weeks ago, talking about the early Church, and how they had all things in common. We discussed the means in which they had to operate; Old Testament Scripture, Guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the Apostle's Doctrine. These were the things that helped the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Church.

So, tonight with the Lord's help, we are going to look at verses 1-10 of Chapter 3 and see the miraculous healing of a lame man by Peter working through the power of the Holy Spirit.

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

We find these two power house preachers walking together to the temple; Peter and John. They were always part of the "inner-circle" while Christ was living and ministering on earth. They are still being mightily used by God to continue spreading the Gospel. Of course Peter, hot off of the powerful message he had preached on the Day of Pentecost when 3,000 souls were saved, had to be feeling pretty confident and on fire for the Lord.

These two disciples are going to the Temple as they always did. It was custom for the Jews to go to the Temple and pray 3 times a day. This has always been part of their daily routine. Even as far back as Daniel, we find that God's people would set apart 3 times a day to pray. The first mention of this is found in **Daniel 6:10: Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.**

The Psalmist wrote in **Psalms 55:17: Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.**

It says that they went to pray in the 9<sup>th</sup> hour. The Jews had three different hours that they prayed; the 3<sup>rd</sup>, the 6<sup>th</sup>, and the 9<sup>th</sup>. Their day began at 6:00 so the 3<sup>rd</sup> hour would be at 9:00, the 6<sup>th</sup> hour would be at 12:00, and the 9<sup>th</sup> hour would be at 3:00 in the afternoon. So, Peter and John are going into the Temple at 3:00 in the afternoon for prayer. There would have been a lot of other people coming to the Temple at the same 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 of them that entered into the temple; 3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

Since all of these people would be going to the Temple, this was the perfect place for a lame man or any beggar to be right at the gate of the Temple. Each and every person would have to walk past him as they entered. It was very common in those days for people such as this lame man to do their begging in places where there was a large volume of traffic; the gate of the Temple, the entrance and exits of the city, and at any large street corner. It is much like these folks you see at the end of the interstate exit holding the cardboard signs. They know this is where they can reach the most people.

Notice that it says that he was "carried" and laid at the gate. So, somebody had enough compassion on him to bring him to the gate to beg for money. We don't know how long he had been carried there every day but we read in the next chapter that this man was above 40-years old. **Acts 4:22 For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.** The Bible also mentions that this gate the lame man was at was called "Beautiful." I did a little research on the gate and found the following statements from the Jewish historian, Josephus, in his book, War of the Jews:

"Now nine of these gates were on every side covered over with gold and silver, as were the jambs of their doors and their lintels; but there was one gate that was without the [inward court of the] holy house, which was of Corinthian brass, and greatly excelled those that were only covered over with silver and gold. Each gate had two doors, whose height was severally thirty cubits, and their breadth fifteen. However, they had large spaces within of thirty cubits, and had on each side rooms, and those, both in breadth and in length, built like towers, and their height was above forty cubits. Two pillars did also support these rooms, and were in circumference twelve cubits. Now the magnitudes of the other gates were equal one to another; but that over the Corinthian gate, which opened on the east over against the gate of the holy house itself, was much larger; for its height was fifty cubits; and its doors were forty cubits; and it was adorned after a most costly manner, as having much richer and thicker plates of silver and gold upon them than the other. These nine gates had that silver and gold poured upon them by Alexander, the father of Tiberius. Now there were fifteen steps, which led away from the wall of the court of the women to this greater gate; whereas those that led thither from the other gates were five steps shorter."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Josephus, War of the Jews, Book 5, Chapter 5, section 3.

So no wonder they called this gate beautiful! Made of Corinthian brass and covered with silver and gold. The lame man should have just brought him a hammer and chisel and chiseled him off a chunk of that gate and he would have had plenty of money!

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.

I notice that the Lord takes time to mention that Peter and John fastened their eyes upon the lame man and they told him to look on them as well. I believe every single thing in God's Word is important. While we could just simply glaze over this little fact, I think it is significant to understand that they are giving this man their utmost attention. It is a very deliberate thing they are doing by peering into his eyes and seeing his poor tortured soul and crippled body. Have you ever noticed when there is someone around with some type of disability or someone on the sidewalk or on the side of the road begging, we tend to want to look away from them? Why do we do that? Is it because we are afraid we will have to do something? Do we think "out of sight, out of mind"? I realize we cannot help every single person we come across and many of them could help themselves, but as Christians we should have compassion upon those that are less fortunate than we are. If we are able, we should give to them. Peter and John do not have any money to give but they have something even greater. Little did this lame man know that he was about to receive the greatest gift he has ever received, only not in the form of alms but from the power of the Holy Spirit.

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.

And just like most real preachers that I know, they don't have any money. Peter and John were not the Joel Osteen's of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. When Peter said that they didn't have any money, I'm sure the lame man had heard it before.

Recently my family took a trip to Morristown and were enjoying the downtown area going up and down the sidewalk and into different little stores. We came out of one and there was a woman on a bicycle begging for money. I honestly did not have any money. I rarely ever have actual money on me. If I need something I use my debit card. I've not seen any beggars that accept debit... but anyway, I told her I didn't have anything and she started peddling off in anger and said; "oh boy, here we go again." I was a little offended.

That statement that Peter makes; "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth," he is more or less saying; by the authority of Jesus Christ I tell you to rise up and walk. Remember that Peter was commissioned as the preacher that ushered in the New Testament Church, he was given the keys to the Kingdom on earth. The Lord gave him authority to act on his behalf. This was one of his apostolic gifts. These folks that try to do this nowadays are all a bunch of phonies. The Apostolic gifts are no longer valid. They were given as sign gifts to the unbelieving Jews.

To claim this healing in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth is very significant. We don't know how much the lame man knew of Jesus but I guarantee he had heard of him. Perhaps he thought of Jesus as a traitor or a martyr, we just don't know but when Peter says that name you know this lame man takes notice.

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.

Wow, what a sight that must have been! Notice that this miracle of healing, just like ALL of Jesus' miracles, was an instant miracle. It did not take time to "work." If you go through the Bible and study the miracles of Jesus and those performed by the Apostles through the Holy Spirit, you will find that in every single instance, the miracle was immediate and not delayed.

Notice the man immediately began walking and leaping. God doesn't half way do anything. When He heals he does it right. This man did not have to go to Patricia Neal rehabilitation clinic and have therapy for weeks to strengthen his muscles and bones to be able to walk again. He was able to jump up and down like a school boy with new tennis shoes!

Notice what the man did while he was walking and leaping... he praised God! He did NOT praise Peter and John. He knew exactly who was responsible for his healing, it was the Lord and no one else. Would to God that people today would come into the Church leaping and praising God! I think sometimes we get so much into our routines and ruts that we forget what kind of miracle the Lord has performed on our hearts. He took a blackened, sin sick soul and turned him into a new creature, free from sin and heaven bound. We should all be leaping and praising God for what he has done for us.

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.

And now we see the results of the power of God. Remember, as we've said several times in this study already, the Bible says in **1 Corinthians 1:22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:**

This miracle of healing is a sign gift and all of these Jews are witnessing this great miracle. They had walked past this lame man for many years. They knew he was the beggar that sat in the gate of the Temple day in and day out begging for alms. They knew that he was unable to walk. But now they see him not only walking but leaping up and down in the Temple. What a sight this must have been. The usual solemn, reverent worship and prayer that they are used to was interrupted by real worship. It has caused the people to be filled with wonder and amazement. This is the Lord getting their attention. Little do they know in just a few minutes Peter is going to stand up and start preaching and introduce them to the One that brought this miracle about.

My friend, I couldn't think of a better way to have Church than that. Can you? All it takes is a heart that is filled with joy of the Lord. Unbridled worship that flows from a thankful heart with adoration for the One that changed our lives. We should approach each and every Church service the same way. It should never be routine, mundane, and monotonous. What a difference it would make in our Church and in our lives if we were to worship the Lord in Spirit and in Truth the way this once lame man did. And I think that may just be the purpose of this whole passage.

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† All Scripture from the Authorized King James Version