

The Joyful Walk: Expect the Unexpected

Acts 3; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 11-7-2021

1. Expect God, because of Jesus, to give you more than you ask for! (1-11)

Do you expect God, because of Jesus, to give you more than you ask for?

God calls us to love in both word and deed. (Matthew 4:23) This healing is an illustration of what Jesus was doing through his Apostles. (Acts 2:43) These miracles were intended to point to Jesus as the Messiah and to his gospel as the good news from God. (Acts 3:13; Matthew 11:2-6) These miracles were evidence that the apostles were the true messengers of God. (2 Corinthians 12:12) These miracles pointed beyond the authority to heal to the authority to grant the forgiveness of sins (because of the relationship between sin and suffering – directly or indirectly). (Mark 2:1-12) These miracles pointed beyond the physical healing of the body to the more important spiritual healing of the soul. (1 Peter 2:24) We often fear two things when we pray (1) that God will not hear or (2) that God will not give us what is good (usually defined as what we ask for) but only what he wants (usually thought of as ‘not so good’ or ‘bad’ by us). (Matthew 7:7-11) The God who answers prayer is able to do (and willing to do) far more than we could ever ask! (Ephesians 3:20-21) God is at work to help the spiritually lame begin to walk in a new path of love and joy and obedience. (Isaiah 40:31; Romans 6:4) God wants us to walk in a manner that pleases him and in a manner that pleases us (brings us the greatest joy)! (Isaiah 35:6; Luke 1:44; Luke 6:23; Ephesians 4:1) The lame man asked for money to purchase another meal and God through Peter gave him health to make his own money for many meals to come! (Acts 3:6)

2. Expect God, because of Jesus, to give you righteousness and life out of sin and death. (12-18)

Do you expect God, because of Jesus, to bring good out of evil through your circumstances?

Peter makes it clear that it was not because of their own power or their own holiness that the lame man was healed. They were just a tool of the Lord Jesus. (Isaiah 10:15) Peter convicts them of making a terrible trade: the righteous One for a murderer and putting to death the Prince of Life (the One who gives life)! (Romans 1:22-25) Peter makes it clear that it was through faith in the name of Jesus that this lame man was healed. Faith is key in salvation! (Ephesians 2:8-9) Even though the people and rulers did what is evil, God worked it for good. (Acts 3:18; Romans 8:28-32) Even though Christ died, he brought life to many! Indeed, death was necessary for life! (John 12:20-26) It required the disowning and death of the Prince of Life in order to give health to this lame man (along with salvation)! (Acts 3:14-16; 1 Peter 1:6; James 1:2)

3. Expect God, because of Jesus, to give you what you really need so you can have what you really want. (19-26)

Do you expect God, because of Jesus, to give you what you really want through what you really need?

Turning from sin to God is necessary to receive forgiveness. If we want to be delivered from sin, then we can be! Indeed, it is necessary for God to work for our repentance in order for us to have his joy! The joy of a new walk! (Luke 24:46-47) Job wrestled with what God was doing in his life until he saw that God was up to things ‘too wonderful’ to imagine through the horrible things he was going through. (Job 42:1-6) Joseph came to see that God means all suffering for good in the lives of his people, no matter what the intentions of others might be. (Genesis 50:15-21) To give us the ‘blessing’ requires that God give us the ‘turning’! The ‘blessing’ is what we truly want; the ‘turning’ is what we truly need! (Acts 3:26)

Application

- The lame man reached out for help.
- Peter reached out to help.
- Peter gave the glory to God in Jesus for the help given and received.

Reaching Out: Hindrances

- Ignorance (“Someone needs help?”)
- Pride (“I don’t need help!”)
- Fear (“I couldn’t be of much help!”)
- Selfishness (“I would help but that would take a lot of time!”)
- Bad Past Experiences (“Last time I tried to help/asked for help it wasn’t good!”)

Reaching Out for Help

- Silent and Independent (doesn’t ask for help because they don’t think they need it)
- Silent and Needy (doesn’t ask for help when they know they need it)
- Verbal and Resistant (talks as if they need help but refuses it when offered)
- Verbal and Receptive (asks for help and is willing to receive it)

Reaching Out to Help

- Unhelpful and Indifferent (isn’t concerned about helping others)
- Unhelpful and Concerned (is concerned but is hindered from helping)
- Helpful and Responsive (ready to help those who ask for help)
- Helpful and Proactive (insightful and takes initiative in helping others)

The Most Important Helper

- Have you reached out to God for help?
- For help to reach out *for* help?
- For help to reach out *to* help?
- Have you reached out to God for help by reaching out for help from others?
- Have you reached out on God’s behalf by reaching out to help others?