

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon May 22, 2022
Acts 3: 1 - 11 "Filled with Wonder and Amazement"

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. 46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

1 Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, 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 from those who entered the temple; 3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. 4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." 5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. 6 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: 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 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them--walking, leaping, and praising God. 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God. 10 Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. 11 Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed.

12 So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? 13 The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. 14 But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15 and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. 16 And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. 17 Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers. 18 But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. 19 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20 and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. 22 For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. 23 And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.' 24 Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. 25 You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' 26 To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities."

I. Introduction

- a. Here in today's text we see an example of what Luke said in Acts 2:43: "Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles." We've seen this same post-miracle amazement and curiosity already in Acts 2:6,7: "And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?" So, the Lord continues to pour out His Holy Spirit upon His people, displaying His signs and wonders and creating amazement and curiosity in the people. We will see Peter once again preach into this miracle-wrought public curiosity (3:11-26), and the Lord will again grow His Church through the preaching (4:4) as the preaching also triggers persecution of the Church begins (4:1-3).
 - i. Henry "We were told in general (ch. 2:43) that *many signs and wonders were done by the apostles*, which are not written in this book; but here we have one given us for an instance. As they wrought miracles, not upon every body as every body had occasion for them, but as the Holy Spirit gave direction, so as to answer the end of their commission; so all the miracles they did work are not written in this book, but such only are recorded as the Holy Ghost thought fit, to answer the end of this sacred history."¹
 - b. Today's Sermon: Acts 3: 1 - 10 "Filled with Wonder and Amazement"
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 - ii. A Certain Lame man v2,3
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- II. The Setting v1
- a. 1 Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.
 - b. Who: Peter and John – Christ's "Rock" and the disciple whom Jesus loved, together.
 - i. The last time we saw them mentioned working together in Luke (v22:8) was the day of the Last Supper: "And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat."" This is the episode where Christ directs them to follow the man with the water pitcher. (Lk 22:9-13)
 - 1. "So they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare?" 10 And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. 11 "Then you shall say to the master of

¹ Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2072.

the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?" ' 12 "Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready." 13 So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover."

- ii. In John's Gospel, we see Peter and John were together on the resurrection Sunday morning. (Jn 20:4-10) We're not told why they are together at this time. The last we've seen of Peter before this moment is his thrice denial of the Lord. Now, he and John learn of the empty tomb and run together to see it.
 1. "Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. 2 Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." 3 Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. 4 So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. 5 And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. 9 For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. 10 Then the disciples went away again to their own homes."
- iii. So, Peter and John share some very special memories together leading up to this moment on their way to the temple to pray. Not only did they witness Christ's life and work along with the other apostles, they also have these moments just the two of them. They work together to prepare the Last Supper meal between Jesus and His disciples. They are together the morning of Christ's resurrection, and they have a footrace to the empty tomb, observing the inside of the tomb together.
 1. Henry "Peter and John had each of them a brother among the twelve, with whom they were coupled when they were sent out; yet now they seem to be knit together more closely than either of them to his brother, for the bond of friendship is sometimes stronger than that of relation: *there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother*. Peter and John seem to have had a peculiar intimacy after Christ's resurrection more than before, Jn. 20:2. The reason of which (if I may have liberty to conjecture) might be this, that John, a disciple made up of love, was more

compassionate to Peter upon his fall and repentance, and more tender of him in his *bitter weeping* for his sin, than any other of the apostles were, and more solicitous to restore him in the *spirit of meekness*, which made him very dear to Peter ever after; and it was good evidence of Peter's acceptance with God, upon his repentance, that Christ's favourite was made his bosom friend."²

- c. What: Peter and John were walking together to go to prayer
 - i. Note the proximity of their dwelling place made it possible for them to walk to the temple together. Had they been removed from Jerusalem, this would not have been possible. Proximity to one another was an essential element necessary for this event to occur.
- d. Time and Place: They were walking together to go to the temple for the hour of prayer in the afternoon. (Ninth hour = 3pm)
 - i. We get a more detailed picture of their daily life. It appears it was likely their daily practice to be at the temple for the times of prayer.
 - 1. Henry "It was in *the temple*, whither *Peter and John went up together*, because it was the place of concourse; there were the shoals of fish among which the net of the gospel was to be cast, especially during the days of pentecost, within the compass of which we may suppose this to have happened. Note, It is good to go up to the temple, to attend on public ordinances; and it is comfortable to go up together to the temple: *I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go*. The best society is society in worshipping God. ... With reference to public worship, there must be a house of prayer and an hour of prayer: the ninth hour, that is, three o'clock in the afternoon, was one of the hours of prayer among the Jews; nine in the morning and twelve at noon were the other two. See Ps. 55:17; Dan. 6:10. It is of use for private Christians so far to have their hours of prayer as may serve, though not to bind, yet to remind conscience: *every thing is beautiful in its season*."^{3,4}

III. A Certain Lame man v2,3

- a. 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 from those who entered the temple; 3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms.

² Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2072.

³ Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2072.

⁴ Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2072.

- i. More setting information: “at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful” Edersheim “These eight side gates, as we may call them, were all two-leaved, wide, high, with superstructures and chambers supported by two pillars, and covered with gold and silver plating. But far more magnificent than any of them was the ninth or eastern gate, which formed the principal entrance into the Temple. The ascent to it was from the terrace by twelve easy steps. The gate itself was made of dazzling Corinthian brass, most richly ornamented; and so massive were its double doors that it needed the united strength of twenty men to open and close them. This was the 'Beautiful Gate'; and on its steps had they been wont these many years to lay the lame man, just as privileged beggars now lie at the entrance to Continental cathedrals. No wonder that all Jerusalem knew him.”
- b. “a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried” – this man was born with defective “feet and ankle bones” (v7). Those with inborn physical impairments are often the hardest to heal with typical medical means. This man has been unable to walk for his entire life, always dependent upon the care of others, needing to be “carried”.
 - i. Bock “The fact that the condition is from birth intensifies its severity. Van der Horst (1989: 37) argues that *χλωός* (*chōlos*, lame) refers not to complete paralysis but to damage to feet, ankles, knees, or hips. So the man is crippled but not completely paralyzed. This man has never known anything else, nor can he do anything.”⁵
 - ii. We also learn the lame man’s approximate age from Acts 4:22 “For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.”
- c. “whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful”
 - i. So, on each day those who helped this man would lay him there at the Beautiful gate entrance to the temple. This lame man was well-known to the people of Jerusalem.
 - ii. Had this man ever seen or heard of Jesus during our Lord’s earthly ministry? Note, Jesus did not heal every lame person in Israel or Jerusalem. There will always be the sick amongst us. Let us be vigilant to serve.
- d. “to ask alms from those who entered the temple; 3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms.”
 - i. So, the reason the man is there is to beg for his sustenance. While his feet and ankles were frozen, his lips and tongue were free. He asked them for alms. While his speech was intact, it appears his faith was limited. He asked only for alms.

⁵ Darrell L. Bock, [Acts](#), Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 159–160.

1. Henry “He begged of Peter and John (v. 3), begged an alms; this was the utmost he expected from them, who had the reputation of being charitable men, and who, though they had not much, yet did good with what they had. It was not many weeks ago that the blind and the lame came to Christ in the temple, and were healed there, Mt. 21:14. And why might not he have asked more than an alms, if he knew that Peter and John were Christ’s messengers, and preached and wrought miracles in his name? But he had that done for him which he looked not for; he *asked an alms*, and had a cure.”⁶
2. Note, how often do we seek only alms from God, when so much more He will give to us?
3. Note, the extent of our requests before God’s throne in no way limit how much God will do for us, His beloved.

IV. The Healing v4-7

- a. 4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." 5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. 6 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: 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."
- b. The lame man was apt to speak and ask alms without looking at those from whom he begged. For how many decades had he spoken the words asking for alms? How many lifeless coins fell into his cup from so many whose faces he would not engage? But, John and Peter, men of faith, quickly fixed their eyes upon the lame beggar. How apt are we to look upon the suffering? Isn’t it easier to drop the coin in passing, never looking, avoiding the pain of the sufferer and the apathy in our own souls? Usually, it appears this was an anonymous exchange, lifeless, impersonal. Peter and John would not allow such an empty, loveless exchange. They bid the lame man to look at them, and he did, because he expected to receive something from them.
 - i. Henry “Our eye must be ever towards the Lord (the eye of our mind), and, in token of this, the eye of the body may properly be fixed on those whom he employs as the ministers of his grace. This man needed not to be bidden twice to look on the apostles; for he justly thought this gave him cause to expect that he should *receive something from them*, and therefore he *gave heed to them*, v. 5. Note, We must come to God both to attend on his word and to apply ourselves to him in prayer, with hearts fixed and expectations raised. We must look up to heaven and expect to receive benefit by that which God speaks thence, and an answer of peace

⁶ Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2072.

to the prayers sent up thither. *I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.*"⁷

- c. v6 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."
 - i. Now that they have the man's attention, Peter takes the man's attention away from lesser concerns such as silver and gold and turns the man's attention to life's most critical concern: "Jesus of Nazareth". While the man's request was for alms, his deepest desire was to be healed so he could walk like other men. The Lord Jesus Christ meets this man at that spot and heals him, not just to give him physical wholeness, but also to bring him into the knowledge and love of Christ. Based upon the man's response, we can safely guess he was amongst those added to the Church after Peter's sermon. (Acts 4:4)
 - ii. Also, note that Peter and John are not distracted by the man's limited request. As ministers of the Gospel of the Kingdom, they have Christ's eyes to see and minister to the deepest needs. The "presenting request" brings people to the Lord, and He gives so much more. Will we remember this as His ministers?
 - 1. Henry "Peter had not money to give him; but, (1.) He had that which was better, such an interest in heaven, such a power from heaven, as to be able to cure his disease. Note, Those who are poor in the world may yet be rich, very rich, in spiritual gifts, graces, and comforts; certainly there is that which we are capable of possessing which is infinitely better than silver and gold; the merchandise and gain of it are better, Job 28:12, etc.; Prov. 3:14, etc. (2.) He gave him that which was better-the cure of his disease, which he would gladly have given a great deal of silver and gold for, if he had had it, and the cure could have been so obtained. This would enable him to work for his living, so that he would not need to beg any more; nay, he would *have to give to those that needed*, and it is *more blessed to give than to receive*. A miraculous cure would be a greater instance of God's favour, and would put a greater honour upon him, than thousands of gold and silver could. observe, When Peter had no silver and gold to give, yet (says he) *such as I have I give thee.*"⁸
 - iii. "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."
 - 1. There is no healing apart from the Name of Jesus Christ. The power of the healing flows not from Peter or John, but from Christ Himself. Jesus Christ, our risen and reigning Lord, healed this lame

⁷ Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2072.

⁸ Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2072.

man by reaching out and touching him by His Holy Spirit. Through His Church, Jesus still does and teaches Kingdom acts and Kingdom truth.

- iv. “7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.”
 - 1. Note the immediate impact of God’s power. Peter speaks the words of healing, Peter reaches down and helps the man up, Jesus reaches down and heals the man from heaven, and the man’s previously irreparable feet and ankles are fully healed. What no doctors could perform over more than 40 years, Christ does in a moment. Do we remember God’s power as we pray, or do we look at the decades of apparently invincible lameness instead?

V. The Lame Man Walks, Leaps and Praises God v8

- a. “8 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them-- walking, leaping, and praising God.”
- b. What joy this man has. Inexpressible. He leaps. He stands. He walks. He’s walking more. He’s leaping more. He’s praising God. The lame man knows that God in heaven has healed him, not Peter or John. He stays with Peter and John, entering the temple, but his praise is for God alone, no man.
 - i. Bock “The healing allows the man to walk into the temple proper for the first time ... He stood ... and was walking He does so with Peter and John. What would normally take months because of muscular atrophy occurs instantly The idea of an immediate healing is common in Luke’s miracle accounts (Luke 1:64; 4:39; 5:25 [the paralytic]; 8:44, 55; 13:13; 18:43). He walks, leaps, and praises God, enjoying the gift of his newfound ability. The overload and repetitiveness of movement verbs stresses the healing’s complete success. Jesus’s work has changed this man’s life forever. The miracle portrays what Jesus can do and the joy such work brings. ... The newly healed man knows that God has been at work and that God has been at work through Jesus (v. 6). The man has received a new kind of alms.”⁹
- c. Note, where does the joy of God’s salvation lead us? Into fellowship with His Church and into prayers to Him with His Church.

VI. The People are Filled with Wonder and Amazement v9,10

- a. 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God. 10 Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. 11 Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed.
- b. “All the people saw him walking and praising God” – The lame man’s healed feet, fully strengthened, along with his ongoing praise (twice we see him praising

⁹ Darrell L. Bock, [Acts](#), Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 162–163.

God), grip the attention of the people at the temple that afternoon. All the people realize this Beautiful-gate lame-from-birth beggar is walking now, and he is praising God for his healing. This fills all the people with wonder and amazement as they consider his instant healing. Note God's use of this miracle: to generate wonder and amazement at His great power and mercy.

- i. Bock "There is no doubt who he is or what his previous condition has been. So wonder and amazement ...fill them. This is the only appearance of this combination in the NT. The term θάμβος (*thambos*) appears three times in the NT, all in reaction to miraculous actions in Luke-Acts (Luke 4:36; 5:9 and here). The term ἔκστασις (*ekstasis*) for amazement appears seven times in the NT, five of them in Luke-Acts (Mark 5:42 [the miracle of Jairus's daughter]; 16:8 [the resurrection announcement]; Luke 5:26 [a paralytic]; Acts 3:9; 10:10 ["vision"]; 11:5 ["vision"]; 22:17 ["vision"]; the verb ἐξίστημι [*existēmi*, to amaze] is in Luke 2:47; 8:56; 24:22; Acts 8:9, 11, 13; 9:21; 10:45; 12:16). This term describes someone emotionally impacted by an experience (BAGD 245 §1; BDAG 309 §1). As these texts show, the reaction is common for miracles."¹⁰
- c. "Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John"
 - i. The man is holding on to Peter and John, displaying his inexpressible joy and gratitude to them as God's faithful ministers. He held on to Peter and John. What joy and gladness!
 1. Henry "We need not ask why he held them. I believe he scarcely knew himself: but it was in a transport of joy that he embraced them as the best benefactors he had ever met with, and hung upon them to a degree of rudeness; he would not let them go forward, but would have them stay with him, while he published to all about him what God had done for him by them. Thus he testified his affection to them; he held them, and would not let them go. Some suggest that he clung to them for fear lest, if they should leave him, his lameness should return. Those whom God hath healed love those whom he made instruments of their healing, and see the need of their further help."¹¹
- d. "all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed."
 - i. God uses this great wonder to create great excitement and amazement and curiosity amongst all the people present that day. They gather to see the miracle, and this sets the stage for Peter's 2nd public sermon in Acts.

VII. Questions to know, love and obey God

¹⁰ Darrell L. Bock, [Acts](#), Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 163.

¹¹ Matthew Henry, [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2073.