

Acts 3

Promises Fulfilled

Learning Objectives

- To reveal how the power and name of Jesus has the ability to transform any life.
- To show how the OT promises of God are available to us if we put our faith in Christ.

? When you were a kid, what did you think would be your biggest accomplishment/experience some day?

Read Out Loud: Previously In Acts

Peter and John just had one of the greatest experiences at Pentecost, where the promised Holy Spirit gave power and three thousand people were saved and baptized. Now we will see how Peter and John preached about Jesus wherever they went and through the Spirit's power, accomplished the first miracle written in the book of Acts. This miracle is similar to the miracles that Christ did in His lifetime.

PART ONE: The Lame Walk

Read Out Loud: Acts 3:1-10 (NIV)

¹ One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. ² Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. ³ When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. ⁴ Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” ⁵ So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

⁶ Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” ⁷ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. ⁸ He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. ⁹ When all the people saw him walking and praising God, ¹⁰ they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Questions For Discussion

Leaders' Note: Caution! In this section we want to look at what a miracle is and why it happened in this passage. Do not get caught in an argument over what miracles still happen today or gifts of the Holy Spirit. Point people to Pastor Steve Treichler's messages on Acts 2 - 3 for additional study on this topic.

Read Out Loud: In tonight's study we're going to talk about how we see God's power at work in these passages. Let's look at the beggar first.

? What are some observations we can make about the beggar, and why do they matter?

Possible Answers: He was born lame so he could not be lame because of some sin he committed (Jewish tradition would say that someone's suffering may be for their wrong doing). He had friends who took him to the temple. He couldn't get there without his friends. He needed the help of people for money in order to live. The lame beggar's physical condition can be an example of our spiritual condition.

? What do verses 1-7 tell us about Peter and John? Why is this important?

Possible Answers: We see both of them going up to the temple which shows that they are still engaging culture and trying to be a witness. We see them stop and pay attention to the beggar when others may have dismissed his presence. This also shows how much they cared for the needy. Peter obeys God and performs a miracle.

? When you think of a miracle, what typically comes to mind?

Possible Answers: Healing, sight given to blind, dead being raised, calming of a storm, etc. God providing financially during hard times, restoring a broken relationship.

? What do you think is the purpose of a miracle?

Possible Answers: The purpose of a miracle all throughout Scripture was to point people to God and demonstrate His power over created things to bring Him glory. It is usually something that happens that can't be explained by natural causes.

Leaders' Note: You can also point out to your group that this is the first miracle the apostles have done in the book of Acts, depicting how the Holy Spirit was going to use them in later chapters.

? In this passage, we see a lame man suddenly able to walk. Beyond his physical healing, what other "miracle" can we see in this man?

Possible Answers: He had the greatest miracle of a transformed heart.

? In this passage, how do we see the apostles performing these miracles?

Possible Answers: They were obedient to God and modeled what Christ did while on earth. Peter made the beggar focus on him. He pointed him to Christ instead of money. He used the name of Jesus to have the person get up and walk—showing that the authority and power of healing was through Christ alone.

Leaders' Note: "The reference to 'the name' is not incidental. In the biblical sense a name is far more than a label. It represents a person and is an extension of that person's being and personality. To invoke the name of Jesus is to call upon his authority and power." (John B. Polhill, Acts, vol. 26, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 128.)

? The beggar's response to his healing was to go into the temple and praise God. Can you think of a time in your life when you saw God move and it caused, "walking, and jumping, and praising God?" (vs. 8) What happened?

? As believers, what can we do today to show the glory of God so that people are "filled with wonder and amazement?" (vs. 9)

PART TWO: Peter's Message

Read Out Loud: Acts 3:11- 26 (NIV)

¹¹ While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. ¹² When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if 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, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. ¹⁴ You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵ You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶ By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

¹⁷ "Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. ¹⁸ But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer. ¹⁹ Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ²⁰ and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. ²¹ Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. ²² For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. ²³ Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from their people.'

²⁴ "Indeed, beginning with Samuel, all the prophets who have spoken have foretold these days. ²⁵ And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.' ²⁶ When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

Questions For Discussion

? How many Old Testament references can you find in Peter's speech?

Possible Answers: It depends on how you count them, but: 1) The God of Abraham, 2) Isaac, 3) Jacob, 4) the God of our fathers, 5) Holy One, 6) Righteous One, 7) author of life, 8) all the prophets, 9) that the Messiah would suffer, 10) Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets, 11) Moses said, 12) Samuel and all the prophets foretold these days, 13) you are heirs of the prophets and covenant, 14) God said to Abraham, 'Through

your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.’ 15) When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.”

? Each Old Testament reference is pointing to the promises God made to His people. Which of these promises resonates the most with you and why?

Possible Answers: God will refresh us with an overwhelming sense of how present He is in our lives (vs. 20). Restoration (vs. 21). Healing comes through faith/the name of Jesus (vs. 16). In Christ, our sins are wiped out (vs. 19).

? Optional: One of the promises in this passage is that God is going to restore all things (vs. 21), much like He restored the beggar. How have you seen God restore people’s lives around you? In what ways has God been restoring you?

? Throughout history the Israelites had people who would speak to them about the promises of God, one of those promises being that the Messiah would come. How have the people around you helped to tell you about Jesus as the Messiah?

? Part of the beggar’s miracle was a transformed heart and joining God’s family! Verses 24-26 talk about how God blesses those who are a part of His family. In what ways have you seen God bless you so you can bless others?

Possible Answers: The main way God has blessed us is by enabling us to turn from our wicked ways (vs. 26). He has given us the Holy Spirit who empowers us and gives us boldness. He has given us every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3-14). We should share with others the Gospel, be merciful and loving in return, point others to truth.

Leaders’ Note: We’re talking about general blessing here (mercy, love, power in Him, etc.)—not any sort of material blessing. Keep things broad.

For Discussion And Accountability

? One of the greatest miracles God has done in our lives is that He saved us from our sins and gave us new hearts. What do you need to do this week to remind yourself of this great miracle so that you can praise Him?

? Verse 19 discusses putting our faith in Christ because of the beautiful promises He has given His people. Which promises of God do you need to cling on to this week to remind you of God’s unfailing love?