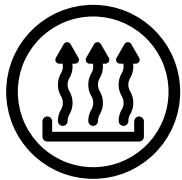




# ACTS: THE STORY CONTINUES



## WARM-UP

What was a Christmas/birthday present that you have received that made you feel known and seen?

*Pray for your time together as a group.*

*Read out loud as a group*

### 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.



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 in 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.*



What are some observations we can make about the beggar? How might these physical things represent spiritual truths?

*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. Lame from birth= born into sin. All he does is look at Peter to be healed. Friends took him to the temple= need someone outside ourselves to help/to bring us to God. Ask for something to LIVE= we try to use many things to bring life. The beggar simply looked and was healed= we do nothing to be saved just look to Jesus, it's by GRACE. The physical healing now allows the beggar to enter the temple= the reconnection with God, we can now be in His presence! The lame beggar's physical condition can be an example of our spiritual condition.*



What does the crippled man ask for and what does he receive?

*Possible answers: he asks for money but receives physical and spiritual healing. He asks for something he perceives that he needs but GETS what he truly needs which is ultimately a spiritual healing.*



How can we remind ourselves of this when we ask for things and don't receive what we ask for?

*Possible answers: may vary. Remind ourselves that God knows our deepest needs and desires so we can trust Him. He is outside of time and space and already knows our story. He has already fulfilled our deepest need through the cross! Look back on your life and remember when you didn't get something in the past and how God has used that.*

### **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.

Read out loud as a group

## ACTS 3:11-26 (NIV) CONTINUED

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."



**Peter quotes a LOT of Old Testament in his speech. 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: Answers may vary. 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).*



**What are all the ways Peter is pointing to Christ's work in the passage?**

*Possible answers: the beggar called simply to look at Peter and be healed, ie. it wasn't anything the beggar did. Peter in vs 12 reminding people that it wasn't him either, ie. not his piety that saved the beggar. Looking at the word "turn" in verses 19 and 26, God does the turning! God has all the positive action words, while the negative ones are directed at the people (and us).*



**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?**

*Possible Answers: Answers may vary. 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 the truth.*

*Read out loud as a group*

## JOHN 14:12

12 Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.



Based on our Acts 3 passage, what is the better thing referred to in John 14?

*Possible answers: Peter uses this physical healing as a platform to talk about the better thing: spiritual healing through Jesus Christ, ie. the Gospel is the better thing.*

### Optional Activity

Take 1 minute to individually go through the first 5 pictures on your camera roll, pick one that could physically represent something spiritual, go around in a circle and share what you thought of.

## DISCUSSION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY



- What perceived needs or desires of restoration can you lay at the feet of Jesus this week? Knowing yes, Jesus is good and cares deeply about these things that we carry AND we already have our deepest need met in Jesus Christ.
- 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?