

## A Miracle that Validates the Message (Acts 3:1-10)

### Introduction:

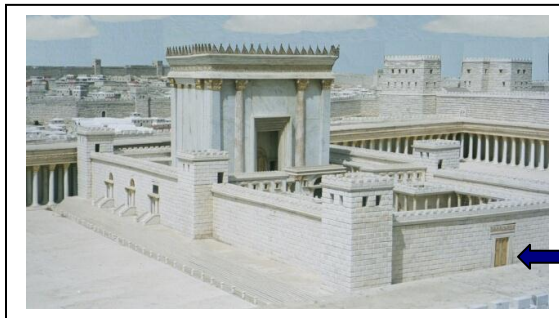
1. The church at Jerusalem was expanding and in a rather rapid fashion
2. Even though the early Christians were meeting in their homes (Acts 2:46) where they would break bread, study the Word, fellowship, and pray together, they still found themselves going to the temple courts.
  - Why would the apostles go to the temple?
  - This is a good example to us that being a Christian has two significant components that we should not ignore nor exclude one for the other:
    - 1) There is the innate desire for personal growth, fellowship with those of like mind, and the worship of God. This is witnessed in Acts 2:41-47 and testified in many ways throughout the Book of Acts and the other Epistles. This is usually accomplished where Christians meet together.
    - 2) There is an equal innate desire to share those same truths with others who are not of “like mind” by sharing with them the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This too is woven throughout the New Testament. This is usually accomplished outside the confines of the “church building” or meeting place and sometimes requires going to where the sinner is.

3. After describing to us the rapid expansion of the Church; Luke will lay out a common pattern that the Apostles and others followed. Neither one was excluded or overlooked for the sake of the other – both of these components made up to basic operation of the early church:
  - **Outreach** – accomplished through going to where the unbeliever is. This is often called **evangelism**.
  - **Declaration of Truth** – preaching the Gospel usually to those who are not believers. This is often called **discipleship**.
4. This was the common method or pattern that the Apostles followed for that is what Jesus instructed them to do.
5. As the church grew the need to organize became necessary so as to not lose their effectiveness, thus the work of the ministry would fall into the hands of those whom God would gift with various abilities and those people became known as ministers/deacons/servants.
6. It seems however that the primary task of the Apostles was in the area of preaching and teaching in which they would both; compel the unbeliever to come to faith in Christ, and also to teach or equip the believers for works of ministry.
7. Luke will now describe to us a significant event where Peter will perform a miracle that not only changes the life of a crippled man but gets the attention of other unbelievers who will then hear a clear presentation of the Gospel. Thus the act (the miracle itself) will set the stage for the message to be declared.

**Note – The following headings are taken from John MacArthur's Commentary on Acts pages 98-101.**

### Understanding the Scene (Acts 3:1-3)

1. It seems by the tense of this verb “were going up”, that there was a sense of frequency in which Peter & John would go to the temple to pray.
  - Although there were several designated times of prayer at the temple itself (9 am, 12 noon, and 3 pm), the time in which these two Apostles went to the temple was at 3 pm.
  - See the artist’s rendition of Herod’s temple below and also the attached aerial view of another artist’s rendition. The only remnant of the original rebuilt temple is what is referred to as the Western Wall or Wailing Wall.



- Most conclude that this time period (3 pm) in which the Apostles went to the temple would have been when the crowds were at their largest for they would have gathered at this time for the evening sacrifice. Perfect timing to speak to a captive audience!
2. It is while they (Peter & John) were on their way to the temple that they encounter a lame man (some versions say crippled) who had been that way since birth.
    - We don't know the specific ailment but the doctors of that day must not have developed a cure and/or didn't care enough to help him.

- Notices the fact that it was a regular routine for this crippled man to go to the gate called “Beautiful” and beg for alms (money or material assistance).
- It was pretty smart of him to position himself there for that was the common entry point.
  - 1) Historians tell us that the gate was very large (took 20 men to close it) and it was made of Corinthian brass.
  - 2) Although the crippled man placed himself there for material assistance.....what important illustration or example to you see from the future results?

### **Uncovering the Sign (Acts 3:4-8)**

1. The beggar’s cries for alms were so common place that most probably ignored him.
2. When Peter and John arrived and at least paid attention to the crippled man, he certainly was not expecting to be healed for he asked them for alms.
3. Note the distinction from what happens here (a crippled man begging not to be healed but for alms) to those who flocked to Jesus during His earthly ministry who more often than not were coming to be healed. It appears that the crippled man was interested in having his material needs met and thus may not have been aware of the Apostles power and authority to heal.

4. With that in mind; what is the significance of Peter's claim, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene – walk!"
5. What is the significance of the phrase; "In the name of Jesus Christ"? (Matthew 10:1)
6. Is there any significance to the fact that he was instantaneously and completely healed? (Matthew 8:13, Mark 5:29, Luke 5:13, Luke 17:14, John 5:9)
7. How does what is recorded here differ from some of the public healing services of modern day?
8. Does God still heal people today?

### **Unveiling the Sequel (Acts 3:9-11)**

1. The healing of the crippled man brought \_\_\_\_\_ into his life and you could barely contain his excitement.
2. What was the primary result of the healing – what did the crippled man go and do?
3. In addition to the crippled man; what was the result as far as those who stood around and witnessed the event?
4. To me this was another example of a divine appointment that had multiple purposes associated with it. The key thing however is that those gathered around to witness the miracle were now faced with a decision as to how they will respond to Peter's message.....thus the sequel to the story is written but we'll have to wait until next week to see what happens!