

The Message – Jesus Christ is the Messiah (Acts 3:11-26)

Introduction: (Acts 3:11-12)

1. The healing of the crippled man brought about a unique opportunity for Peter to declare what should have been obvious to those who witnessed the healing.
 - We're told they; ran together at the portico of Solomon (porch of Solomon – columns that ran the length of the east side of the outer court), and were full of amazement.
 - It does seem odd that these people (Jews) would be so amazed for their very own Scriptures speak of a time when such healings will take place. (Isaiah 35:6)
 - 1) What are some of the obvious connections between this event (the healing of the crippled man), as well as some of the past events (the coming of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues etc.) that should have connected the dots to Jesus being the Messiah?
 - 2) After this sermon Peter will boldly declare in Acts 4:12 without reservation the undisputable fact that; "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved".

2. What should have been obvious was that Peter and the other Apostles were a living illustration that the power of God rested on them. To clarify any confusion Peter asks two questions:

- The first question was; “Why do you marvel at this....or why are you so amazed”?
 - 1) Throughout the Old Testament there are documented stories that describe God as one who performs miracles. Case in point.....how about marching around Jericho, then shouting, and then the walls came tumbling down.....hello – anyone home?
 - 2) Many of these same hearers probably witnessed miracle after miracle performed by Jesus during His earthly ministry.....and **gee does the resurrection count for anything!**
 - 3) So how about a big DUH! This question is a mild rebuke at those who should have known better!
- The second question was a little more penetrating and to the point; “Why do you gaze at us as if by our own power or piety (godliness) we had made him walk”?
 - 1) These were two men whose trade was fishing.....they could not have performed this miracle on their own.
 - 2) Here was the rub and the dilemma for the hearers: **If God alone has the power to do miracles; who gave these fishermen the authority to heal (Matthew 10:1-15)? On this basis can any other conclusion be drawn that Jesus is God?**
 - 3) Peter intentionally directed all attention away from himself and John and points to Christ as the Messiah!

The Explanation (Acts 3:13-18)

1. Jesus is described as a “ _____ ” (Vs 13a)
 - He first gets their attention by choosing a familiar description of God; **“The God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the God of our fathers”** (Exodus 3:6, 15-16, I Chronicles 29:18, Matthew 22:32)
 - Peters’ emphasis on the word servant is significant for it was a familiar designation of the promised Messiah. (Isaiah 42:1, 49:5-7, Isaiah 52:13-53:12)
 - Even Matthew makes the connection between what Isaiah proclaims to who Jesus was – the servant! (Matthew 12:18-21, Isaiah 42:1-4)
 - Jesus Himself states; **“The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve”** (Matthew 20:28, John 6:38, John 13:1-7)
 - **“When His suffering was over, God glorified Jesus, exalting Him to the position of honor at His right hand.”** (Acts 2:33, 5:31, Philippians 2:9-11, Hebrews 7:26) – John MacArthur’s Commentary on Acts page 107)

2. Another important name or identification that Peter uses is the name _____ (Matthew 1:21). Interestingly the Hebrew equivalent is **Joshua** which means; _____.
 - They knew this name well for many of them probably witnessed the healings and miracles performed by Jesus during His earthly ministry.
 - Just in case they forgot who he was; Peter reminds them that Jesus was the one whom they disowned and delivered up to be crucified.
 - Because they loved the darkness rather than the light (John 3:19), Peter will remind them of the enormity of their sin!

3. A third and very significant name that Peter uses to describe Jesus is the _____ and _____ one. (Acts 3:14)

- First let's understand this name attributed to Jesus:
 - 1) **Holy (One)** is a messianic title (Psalm 16:10), that is clearly shown in these texts (John 6:69, Luke 4:34) to be Jesus.
 - 2) **Righteous (One)** is mentioned to ensure everyone understands that Jesus was innocent of any crime or sin (Hebrews 7:22-26) for he was a sinless, spotless sacrifice. Even the unbelievers understood this. (Matthew 27:19, Luke 23:47)
- Notice the second part of Acts 3:14; as Peter contrasts the holy and righteous life of Jesus to that of Barabbas the murderer. What does this say about those who cried for Jesus (a righteous man) to be crucified and Barabbas (a sinful man) to be released?
- This alone should have caused them to shake in their boots for they killed the Messiah....the very One they longed for. Unfortunately many hearers (in this case) did not heed Peter's words for they will go on to persecute Peter and the other Apostles.
- Not much has really changed in 2000+ years for even in our day and age there is often a willingness to accept God; but to accept Jesus as The Christ, The Messiah, or God in the Flesh remains at the heart of many disputes.
- The fact remains however; to reject Jesus means to reject God! (Matthew 10:32-38)

4. A fourth name that Peter uses to describe Jesus is the _____ of _____. (Acts 3:15-17)

- **It is rather ironic that they put to death (the author or giver of life) and requested the release of a murder (one who took life)!**
- “The name Prince of life (*archegos*) refers to the originator, pioneer, or beginning of something” (John MacArthur, Commentary on Acts page 110)
- Is Jesus the source of life? (John 1:1-4, John 5:26, John 11:25, John 14:6, I John 5:11, 20)
- Since Jesus is the Prince of Life it doesn't make much sense that He be dead!
 - 1) What important statement does Peter make in this text (Acts 3:15) that supports the argument that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life?
 - 2) What would have happened had the Jewish leaders been able to produce Jesus' dead body?
- Thus the conclusion is drawn that Jesus is Life and on the basis of faith in Christ this crippled man is healed.
 - 1) If Jesus were dead.....how could this man be healed?
 - 2) It would defy all forms of logic and reason to conclude that this man was healed by the power of someone who is dead! Can I hear a big DUH!

- This healing of the crippled man should not be overlooked for he was “living proof” that their evaluation of Jesus was completely wrong!
 - 1) An important item that we need to make note of is that the hearers did not dispute Peter’s claims!
 - 2) Why is this so significant?
 - 3) Since it was not disputed; what important conclusions can we draw?

- 5. The fifth name that Peter uses is “_____” (Acts 3:18) which solidifies the fact that God’s eternal plan of redemption was not stopped by human hands.
 - The crucifixion in no way altered God’s plan nor did it disqualify Jesus as the Messiah.
 - This act of crucifixion was foretold by the Prophets and fulfilled by Jesus (The) Christ! (Isaiah 53, Psalm 22)
 - Although their actions were inexcusable and brought shame, reproach and guilt upon the nation of Israel – God uses those evil intentions to fulfill His own purposes! (Acts 2:23)
 - Although they “acted in ignorance” (Acts 3:18); they, their rulers and even ourselves are required to “repent and return” (Acts 3:19) “so that our sins may be wiped away”! This will be the focus of the balance of his sermon.

The Exhortation (Acts 3:19-26)

1. Peter wastes no time in making an appeal for the hearers of his sermon to _____.
 - What did they need to repent of?
 - What does it mean to repent? (Matthew 3:6-8, I Peter 2:21-25, I Thessalonians 1:9)
 - What causes us to repent?
 - 1) The _____ of God's revealed truth. (John 20:30-31, Luke 16:30-31)
 - 2) An internal _____ for sin (II Corinthians 7:9-10)
 - 3) God's _____ and _____ (Romans 2:4, Matthew 5:45)
 - 4) _____ of a final judgment (Acts 17:30-31, Hebrews 9:27, Hebrews 2:1-4)
2. What are the results of repentance?
 - God will _____ their sin (Acts 3:19)
 - 1) Receiving God's forgiveness comes through _____ in Christ. (Acts 4:12, 5:31, Acts 10:43, Ephesians 1:7)
 - 2) Is there any other system other than faith in Christ that will bring about God's forgiveness? (Hebrews 10:4)
 - 3) Can we be confident that our sins are forgiven by trusting in Christ by faith? (Romans 6:4-5, Colossians 2:14, Romans 8:1)

- Another result of repentance and something that every Jew longed for – The _____ will come! (Acts 3:19)
 - 1) The collective blessing that will come to all believers (children of God) is called here; **a time of refreshing.**
 - 2) The hearers of Peter’s sermon would understand his meaning of “a time of refreshing” to be the long awaited kingdom that the prophets spoke of. (Isaiah 11:6-10, Isaiah 35:1-10, Ezekiel 34:26, Isaiah 44:3, Joel 2:26)
 - 3) This kingdom will come, not by mans actions but by the sovereign will of God! (Revelation 5, Revelation 20:4-6)
 - 4) What is holding back the establishment of the kingdom or what has caused its delay? (Luke 19:41-44, Romans 11:2, Zechariah 12:10-13:1, Zechariah 14)

- A third result of repentance is Jesus (The Messiah) will _____ (Acts 3:20-21)
 - 1) John MacArthur makes this claim; “There can be no kingdom without a King” (Revelation 19-20)
 - 2) All that the prophets spoke of concerning the kingdom will come to pass and this world as we know it will be dramatically changed for God will rule and reign just as He promised! (Matthew 19:28)

- A fourth result of repentance is _____ will be avoided. (Acts 3:22-24)
 - 1) There are consequences of rejecting the words of a prophet (Deuteronomy 18:18-19)
 - 2) Peter's claim here in Acts 3:22 is that the Prophet has come (Jesus Christ) – a New Testament Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15-19, John 6:14), who will both deliver those who follow Him and judge those who do not!
 - 3) The fact is; those who continue or persist in rejecting Jesus Christ (be they Jew or Gentile) will find themselves outside of the covenant blessings of God and suffer judgment.
 - 4) None of this should have been a surprise to the hearers of Peter's sermon for the prophets (since Samuel) have not ceased to warn Israel that this day was coming!
 - 5) Thus to embrace Christ means judgment will be avoided

- A fifth result of repentance is that _____ will be realized. (Acts 3:25-26)
 - 1) Although it is true that they rejected the Messiah; It was not too late to repent and receive the blessing promised by God.
 - 2) They (the Jews) were heirs of the promised covenantal blessing and such was still available because God had not permanently rejected them. (Romans 11)
 - 3) What then is the requirement to receive God's blessings? (Acts 3:26)

Conclusion:

1. The entire theme of Peter's sermon was that the hearers know that no matter what their familial standing as Jews; the requirement to receive the promised blessings of God was repentance! They must turn from their wicked ways (rejection of Jesus as Messiah) and embrace Jesus as Lord and Savior.
2. Peter's message proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah and those who heard it had to decide whether his words were true or false.
 - To consider his words true meant to embrace Christ as Lord and Savior resulting in rejection from those who did not follow Him.
 - To consider Peter's words false meant eternal damnation in hell no matter what their birth status was; for rejection meant they placed themselves outside of the covenantal blessing of God!
3. Most commentators conclude that the hearers of this message were less responsive to Peter's words and thus the tide began to turn towards a silencing of this message by the religious leaders of their day.
 - Because of this rejection the Jewish community will lose (for a long time) their national identity and be dispersed throughout the Roman Empire.
 - Another significant result from their hardening of their hearts (refusing to repent) will be the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and the further dispersion of the Jews. This event will probably be witnessed by many of those who heard Peter preach this message of repentance and you have to wonder if his words will ring in their hearts as they see the results of their rejection.
4. This same fate awaits all those who refuse to repent and reject Jesus as Lord and Savior. The offer of salvation awaits those who willingly embrace Jesus as Lord! (Hebrews 2:3)