

ACTS 3:1-11

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The Way College of Emporia

Well we go into a record tonight that is so much like God's Word, simply amazing, dynamically revealing of the greatness of the first century church and a section again of God's Word that has been pretty well hidden. For the most part it's just been another nice story to people. Something that occurred in the first century that passed away with the apostles, and consequently this is the kind of thing that you no longer believe for. See, I came through the same kind of background that the men my age came through that were trained in the theological seminaries, and that is that in Peter and John's day they didn't have the "smarts" of the medical profession. And therefore, they needed Peter and John and God to help them. But since that time we have developed science and the medical profession, and it's the medical profession that has replaced the power of God and the greatness of that which is made known in the Word. So the medical profession with their hospitals took over the days of Peter and John. You just can't get rid of God's Word that easily, because if one thing in the book of Acts is dropped out, then you drop out anything you want to drop out and then you lose the new birth, you lose everything. It's either the church in action with the greatness of the power of God all the way through or it isn't. The greatness of Jesus' ministry was manifested in its maximum with the healing of the man born blind in **John 9**. The greatness of the power of God in the believers in the early church was made manifest here in the third chapter of the book of Acts. This is the first record in the Word after the birth of the church regarding the deliverance of someone who was born incapacitated, or as I say, who came from the factory with parts missing.

You see, in the last session, I think I told you that when people were born again of God's spirit, they immediately spoke in tongues, and I showed it to you from the text. Having continued in the apostles' right believing, doctrine, they not only spoke in tongues, but they operated the manifestations. I believe that they interpreted and prophesied. I believe they operated word of knowledge, word of wisdom, discerning of spirits, faith, miracles and healing. Before the Lord Jesus Christ ascended in those days when he was with the apostles, he must have taught them many things because they spent approximately 40 days together, things that of course are not recorded in the Word of God. And I'm sure they didn't spend much time talking about the social problems in Palestine, nor who was going to be the next governor elect of the Judean territory. By sheer logic from the integrity and accuracy of God's Word, I'd say that those were great days of instruction and teaching. He must have just opened his heart spiritually speaking and taught them things to look for and what to do when certain things occurred, which they did on the day of Pentecost. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if he taught them the advanced, advanced class then; how the manifestations would operate. We have no proof of it text wise, but when you get into the inner depth of God's Word and you see the greatness of that Word and you just know that nothing ever happens by chance or by accident, that people are not good baseball pitchers because they read a book, but because somebody instructed them properly and taught them.

When you understand this, then you have to realize that certainly there must have been some fantastic teaching to a group of men. I think the greatness of all of this shows up in the third chapter of Acts.

Acts 3:1

"Peter and John" - I believe these words are used seven times in the book of Acts. Peter is always the one that is mentioned first.

“ninth hour” - approximately 3:00p.m.

Acts 3:2

One would have thought that such a tremendous occurrence as we're going to witness here tonight that at least they could have named the man. One would have thought that when Jesus Christ healed the man born blind, the least they could have done was put his name in. I think some of the greatness of God's Word is in things like this. What difference does it make if you never know the man's name as long as he got the deliverance, as long as he was a man who was committed to God and the things of God, what difference does it make. History, for the most part, is unjust; very brief in mind. The God we serve is just and long in remembrance of the good things. He keeps the records. I do not know this man's name, nor does anybody else. He was just a certain man, but he was not a second rate certain man. He was a certain man who was laid at the temple gate Beautiful. He did not need money. According to the record here, in the inner depth of it, I would say that he had plenty of money. If he had needed money they wouldn't have laid him at the temple gate, Beautiful. They would have laid him at the entrance to the city where all the people came in through the main gate. At this place you couldn't collect as much money. If you were poverty stricken you wouldn't go there. From the context, I believe it indicates that here was a man lame from his mother's womb, who perhaps belonged to a very outstanding family and even had some great religious connection with the temple. But because he was crippled, he automatically could never have been of service in the temple, because those men who served in the temple could not be physically maimed.

“the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful” - Some people believe that was the eastern gate.

“to ask alms of [from] them” - The asking of alms was not because he needed money but because it indicated his humility, because for you to go out and beg, sense knowledge wise would be humiliating. Here was a man who came born this way, lame from his mother's womb, of prestigious background, family of note. So in order to show how humble he really was, how badly in need he was of deliverance, he humbled himself to ask alms from those who entered into the temple.

Acts 3:3

One of the great and wonderful things about this record is why did Jesus Christ not pay any attention to this fellow? Didn't Jesus Christ love him? Whenever Jesus Christ went into the temple, this man was laid at the temple gate daily, so then when Jesus went in, he must have seen him, and he must have known he was there. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if he called him by name. Yet he never ministered to him.

John 5:2-9

Verse 2 – “Bethesda” – means mercy, like Mercy Hospital.

All of these believed in healing, for that's what they were there for. Here were a whole multitude of sick, and they all believed in healing. Jesus Christ was there. Why did he not deliver every one of them? No revelation. So he delivered just one.

Here's a man in Acts laid at the temple gate Beautiful daily yet Jesus Christ never stopped to deliver him. Why? No revelation. See, without that knowledge of God's Word you just guess. Then you have to go to chance or by accident. It was just by chance that Jesus healed the one among the many. It was just by chance that Jesus did not get involved with this man at the gate Beautiful. That's a cop out and a stupid answer. God's not that stupid. He doesn't work that ignorantly. In the one instance Jesus had revelation to minister just to that one person. In this particular instance Jesus Christ never had any revelation. By the way, this was not the first time that Peter and John went by him. Why did they not minister to him earlier? No revelation. But today is the day.

I do not know what it is that brings a man or a woman to that point of decision where it is there, when it could just as easily have been there a year before as far as God is concerned. But why is it that it takes some so long to get to this point? I don't know. I am sure Jesus Christ would have been delighted to heal him had it been the time, as far as the man was concerned, because it's always God's time. God's time is always a now. Man's time, many times, is future. But when man in the future gets to the now time, God is now presently available to meet that need. Here was this man who saw Peter and John and he asked alms.

Acts 3:4

“and” - but

“Peter, fastening his eyes upon him” - This means a lot more than just casting a glance over. It tells me that he had revelation. Peter fastened his eyes. He looked straight at him, straight In the eyes. Get the word “fastened” – tied to. So did John.

“Look on us.” - Peter said to the man, “Look on us. Quit trying to be so humble by begging alms. Get your eyes up. Quit looking down, look up.” And Peter said, “look at us.” Boy, what a revelation. First time in the history of the Christian church that this comes to pass, Because God in Christ is in Peter and John, so when they look at Peter and they see Peter with the greatness of that Word living in him, they see the living Christ. When they look at John, they see the living Christ. And we've got to again let people see that living Christ.

Peter said to look at us, and boy, what a tremendous thing, because until people see the Christ in you, you will never be able to deliver or help people. As long as they look half way at the world, half way at you, you're never going to get the job done. People have to start looking at you. Well, bless God; give them something to look at. Stand up, throw your shoulders back, and walk like a man or woman of God. Peter and John walked toward that temple with the spring of God in their souls. You have to get people's attention before you can help them. Before you can minister God's Word you have to get their attention or you are just spinning your wheels. Before you can set people free, you have to get their attention. If they do not believe that you can do it, you cannot do it. (reference made to **Matthew 17:14-21** or **Mark 9:17-29**)

This looking on us is not an ego trip. It's the truth of the greatness of God's Word. Men and women have to have confidence in your ability to heal them with the God in Christ in you. Understand? If they do not believe that, you can't do a thing for them. That's right.

Acts 3:5

“he gave heed unto them” - He looked at them, but his expectation was far below par. He needed healing, but he expected at this time to only receive alms.

Some, place between **verse 5** and **verse 6** is a full length sermon, full length teaching.

“receive” – *lambano* – which is the matter of giving alms.

Acts 3:6

“Silver and gold have I none” - They love that one, because now we can have a whole group of priests who have renounced everything, the poverty gang, the St. Peter's heralds. There is a group that absolutely declares that they don't own anything, and they do it based on this scripture, that they own no material things.

Peter was not poverty stricken. He just said, “silver and gold have I none.” Just because you don’t have any money with you tonight, that doesn’t mean that you are poverty stricken. Where were Peter and John going? To the temple. What were they going to do? Pray. You were not allowed to carry any money into the temple to do that. It’s an old rabbinical law. He just left his wallet home. The devilish teaching that Peter and John were poverty stricken is contrary to God’s Word. (reference to **Psalm 37:25**)

The pope made an emperor stand outside in the snow barefoot. The records indicate that the pope said to him, that Peter and those had to say silver and gold have I none, but we don’t have to say that; just look over here in the Vatican. The emperor said, neither can you say, “In the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk.”

Silver and gold have I none - not because they were poverty stricken but because they were on their way to the temple to pray. The man sat there for alms.

Now, if this is true rabbinically, and I know it is, why would they have laid the man at the temple gate Beautiful asking alms? They didn’t lay him there for money. He was laid there to indicate his poverty, his spiritual in-depth need, so to speak. Physically he needed something. And, of course, most of the teaching of those days by the spiritualists was that if you were crippled from your mother’s womb, you must have done some-thing very badly in the previous incarnation. Remember, the rulers of the temple were born of the seed of the serpent. (**John 8:44**) That group has always taught reincarnation. All spiritualism teaches reincarnation. And therefore, this fellow in the previous incarnation, something must have been radically wrong, that’s why he was born this way. So now to show how badly he felt he had to sit around with his tin cup.

“such as I have give I thee” - You can’t give anything if you don’t have it. In the ministry of healing, which this is, in operation, the man ministering has to always give of himself. A woman walked up to Jesus Christ and stole her healing. (**Mark 5:25-34** or **Luke 8:43-48**) The Word says she followed in the press behind and reached out and just touched the hem of his garment, and immediately she was made whole. It was revelation, not the touch of the hem of his garment that he felt. She had just reached up believing that if she touched the hem of his garment she would be made whole. It says in the text that Jesus felt “virtue” going out of him. The word “virtue” is *dunamis*, power. Never is there a time when somebody believes for deliverance from you that it doesn’t cost you something in your life to give. You have to give for them to receive. That’s part of the law of deliverance. Their believing will draw it out of you, but your believing works with theirs in order to bring it to top fruition. It’s really something.

“In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk” - That’s an impossibility because, number one; the man came lame from his woman’s womb. Secondly; Nazareth is a defamed city. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? All strikes against the man. It’s really something.

Proverbs 3:27

When it’s in the power of your hand to do it; like here in Acts. Don’t withhold it if you have revelation. Do it!

“In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth” - in that name - **Acts 2:38** – “baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.” **Acts 2:22** – “Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God” – impossible – no good thing comes out of Nazareth. Maybe it’s impossible with people but it’s not impossible with God.

What a fantastic thing. In the name - what name? Jesus, the Christ. It puts the Word "Jesus" first because it emphasizes his humility, his earthliness, and that's exactly where the man needed healing, right here upon earth. That's where our savior is to deliver people. Jesus Christ of Nazareth. It never says Christ Jesus of Nazareth, as far as I know, in the Word. The Christ part is the heavenly part. Jesus is the earthly part. The two are put together here in a remarkable way. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. This is inspired utterance. This is not tongues with interpretation. This is a man having revelation and just inspired utterance. He just simply said, in the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk.

Acts 3:7

"he took him by right hand and lifted him up" - This is inspired action. Peter took him by the right hand; inspired action. You never grab anybody in healing unless you have revelation. You don't lay hands on people if you don't have revelation. God showed Peter everything in a moment of time and there he is ministering. He lays the Word until he builds believing enough for the man to be delivered. He lifted him up.

"immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength." - Boy, imagine healed in a name that is a defamed type of name, of Nazareth, yet in that name he was healed. People laugh at the name of Jesus Christ today, and all they get is the consequences. We believe and get the results of that name. Let them have the consequences. Some of us would rather go the other route.

Acts 3:8

If this would occur in our meetings today they would call the psychiatrists; do something to throw you out. Couldn't afford to get that excited about your deliverance. Here is a man only physically delivered and look what he did. He leaped up, stood, walked, praised God, etc. When we get born again of God's spirit and filled with the holy spirit in manifestation, people think we are a little "rocky" if we sing loud. It certainly is a lot bigger when you are dead in trespasses and sins, to get born again, than it is to get an ankle bone put in. This man only had an ankle bone put in and he had the audacity to defame that famous temple by walking and leaping in it and praising God. He was a good Pentecostal or something; "holy" jumper. I suppose if you were about 40 years old and had never walked you'd be happy. Why can't we be just as happy, and happier, when we are born again of God's spirit because we were dead and now we're alive? Boy, you see how we've been talked out of the greatness of the new birth and what it is all about. Boy, when you are first born again you sure like to go out and tell everybody because you are hotter than a firecracker. When you are born again of God's spirit you want to tell it. Don't ever deny a person the joy and enthusiasm of believing and sharing the greatness of God's Word. They'll grow up soon enough. Let them have the fun of children holding forth the greatness of the Word. And the life is down in that children's level anyway. Everybody wants to get so intellectual after being born again. You have to learn more so no one will back you against the wall and pin your ears back. Shoot, you'd look real pretty with your ears pinned back.

Acts 3:9

"All the people saw him" - that's the worst part. Oh my goodness!

Acts 3:10

They knew who it was and were filled with wonder and amazement.

Acts 3:11

"held Peter and John" - You know; went right along with him.

“greatly wondering” – Isn’t that something? People are like this.

Verse 12

begins the second great sermon in the book of Acts. In between the first great sermon and the operation and outcome of that ministry and how it worked in the early church, there sits this record of the healing of the man born lame.

It says in the book of Acts that on the day of Pentecost, Peter and John and all the apostles spoke in tongues. No place does it say that they interpreted and prophesied. But it says they held their meetings daily; they went from house to house and they worshipped and prayed together. It doesn’t say that they interpreted and prophesied but it doesn’t say that they spoke in tongues either. But they did speak in tongues previously. It says so, on the day of Pentecost. Then when they went from house to house by sheer logic, what do you think they did? Less than what they did on the first day? I don’t. Now speaking in tongues builds up the Christ in you, the hope of glory, and the more you build up the inner man, the bigger and fatter you are spiritually to receive revelation. Interpretation and prophecy builds up the body of believers. When the individual is built up and the body of believers is built up, then the signs and miracles follow. Word of knowledge; receive from God the facts about the situation that he could not know via his senses. The word of wisdom; the what to do about it. The discerning of spirits; to know whether this situation with this man was due to a spirit possession or not. Once he had the revelation of what it was all about, he had to operate the manifestation of believing so that ‘such as I have, I give unto thee’ would come to pass. He had to believe that when he took him by the right hand he would rise up and walk. That’s the manifestation of believing.

Verse 7

“immediately” - that makes it a miracle of healing. It was a healing because his feet and ankle bones received strength. In this, the first great record of the deliverance a man born lame, you see very clearly throughout that all nine manifestations had to be in operation in Peter to do this one piece of work. He had to have spoken in tongues to build himself up. In a believer’s meeting, he must have interpreted and prophesied. He had to have word of knowledge to know what the score was and word of wisdom to know what to do about it, discerning of spirits to know if it was spirit or non-spirit, the manifestation of believing to hold on until it comes to pass, it was a miracle because it was instantaneous, and it was healing because the man was born lame; all nine manifestations in the deliverance of one man. That’s why I know Jesus Christ must have taught a great deal more in those 40 days than that which is recorded in the Word, and yet here in this opening portion of this chapter, you can see that all those manifestations have to be evidenced for the deliverance of one person. Therefore, all those manifestations must have been latent in Peter and John from the day they were born again. The same Christ is in you as in Peter; therefore, those manifestations, all nine, must be latent in every born again believer. That I think is a little bit of the greatness of that record in the book of Acts.