

Cut to the Heart! - Part 1 of 3 (Acts 2:14-21)

The gospel, according to Paul, is the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes it (Romans 1:16). And the Holy Spirit, according to Jesus, is at work both through us to present it (Acts 1:8) and to help listeners receive and believe it (John 16:8-9). In this time of social unrest, a global pandemic, and unusual occurrences both in the heavens and on earth, we who believe in Jesus should be focused on helping people to learn about salvation. These are end times. Heaven and earth are indicating that there should be an urgency in our efforts.

But do we really believe Jesus? I am not referring to the resurrection. I am referring to His promise to be with us (Matthew 28:20; John 14:18), work through us (Matthew 10:19), and graciously help others to believe (John 16:7-8). Do we believe that we have the power to present the gospel effectively? Do we believe that Jesus is at work helping others to hear and heed what is spoken?

What follows is a brief study of what happened when the work that Jesus began to do in His public ministry was continued through His new community on earth – *the Church*. Luke recounts how a few Galileans, empowered by the Holy Spirit, step out in faith to be witnesses. What he shares about the endeavors and outcomes should embolden you and I to preach Christ with confidence. Read on for a look at Peter’s first sermon and how it changed the world.

Peter Explains the Sign (Acts 2:14-21)

¹⁴ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. ¹⁵ For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is *only* the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. ²⁰ The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. ²¹ And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.’

Refuting the Ridicule (Acts 2:14-15)

The people marveled when they heard Galileans speak with other tongues (Acts 2:7). In that marveling crowd were two camps:

- (a) The Make Sense Crowd (Acts 2:12) - These that tried to make sense of what they were seeing and hearing. This group asked aloud how this could be happening. They asked good questions. How does a group with a notoriously bad pronunciation of their own tongue suddenly learn to speak so many other tongues? The Galilean accent was still present but so was an unprecedented and baffling ability to speak in Aramaic, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and Nabatean.
- (b) The Make Fun Crowd (Acts 2:13) - These that tried to mock what they were seeing and hearing. Their explanation was simple. According to this camp the Galileans are not really saying anything. According to this camp what sounds like Galileans proclaiming the good works of God in other languages was

really the effects of alcohol. They attributed the multi-lingual witnessing to spirits – the alcoholic variety. “They are just drunk.”

Peter, the leader of the group and one with the keys to the kingdom, stands **up with the eleven**.¹⁴ The rugged fisherman **raised his voice** above the ecstatic utterances and responses of the crowd to prophesy.¹⁵ He speaks with authority as he declares the truth and an admonition. He says in effect, know the truth and take my advice (**heed my words**). Peter then says that the accusation of drunkenness is invalid based on their custom and culture:

- The Custom of the Jews – “Nine o’clock in the morning was an hour of prayer, the time of regular morning sacrifice.”¹⁶ Peter says that this accusation clashes with the customs of the Jews. Wine would only be imbibed in the evening hours. The idea that such a large group had made the collective mistake of drinking to excess at the hour of prayer was not tenable.
- The Culture of the Jews – At this time the special offerings associated with the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost would have been taking place. What would Jews be doing so near the temple drinking heavily at a time when the solemn Feast of Weeks (aka known as Pentecost) was being carried out. The idea that such a large group had made the collective mistake of becoming drunk during the feast was not tenable in light of the culture and time.

Peter says, in effect, what **you suppose** cannot be supported; it is 9:00 AM in the morning. He does not say that drunkenness was impossible. Rather, in light of the customs and culture of the Jews, the explanation of drunkenness for **these** was not reasonable (Acts 2:15). The attempt to mock the sign was based on a silly assertion: *a group of Galileans became inebriated in the morning and then began, under the influence of alcohol, to speak about God’s great works... fluently in other languages*. And then Simon goes on to put forward the real reason for the strange things that the crowd was seeing and hearing.

Explaining the Sign (Acts 2:16-20)

“But this is what it really is,” says Peter. **What was spoken by the prophet Joel** is happening here and now. He then goes on to quote Joel 2:28-32. Luke indicates that Pete spoke these words from memory. Is the former fisherman’s memory that good? Can’t say. But we know that the same anointing that inspired Joel is now at work both in and through Peter. In fact his utterance is the speaking of the Spirit through him:

¹⁷ ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ And on My

¹⁴ Those that try to gainsay the authenticity of Matthias as an apostle should note that in the newly formed church he is numbered with the twelve (Acts 2:14). Matthias will also be numbered with the twelve later in Luke’s record (Acts 6:2). The record clearly states that Matthias is regarded as an apostle. Denying his apostleship is tantamount to saying that the eleven were not able to discern the difference between a real apostle and a false apostle. Moreover, what of the fact that wonders were done through the apostles (Acts 2:43)? The account in Luke has no caveats indicating that miracles were wrought by the Spirit through everyone... ahem... except Matthias.

¹⁵ The word used of Peter’s address has been previously used in Acts 2:4. Then the word utterance (*ἀποφθέγγομαι*) was the inspired speaking of those who had been anointed by the Spirit. Luke is indicating that what formerly was manifest in the sign of Galileans speaking with other tongues is now seen in the plain speech of Peter. He is speaking truth to the crowd in the power of the Spirit (Acts 2:14; 26:25).

¹⁶ Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G., Acts – A Messianic Bible Study from Ariel Ministries, pg. 9.

menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. ²⁰ The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. ²¹ And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.’ (Acts 2:17-21)

It is important that we realize Peter was not saying that Joel 2:28-32 was seeing final fulfillment. Commentators are quick to say that. However, Peter is saying that it is the same phenomenon mentioned by Joel – *the outpouring of the Spirit*. The prophecies of Joel 2:30-31 quoted in Acts 2:19-20 were not being fulfilled. That day awaits repentance of Israel as a nation. Is it the last days mentioned by Joel? What about **the great and awesome day of the LORD** (Acts 2:20)? The day of the LORD is used throughout Scripture to refer to a day of restoration and/or reckoning for a community or nation.¹⁷ The generation that had refused to receive Messiah were facing an *a* day of the Lord but not *The* Day of the Lord.¹⁸

The Exhortation to See the Sign and be Saved (Acts 2:21)

Peter’s preaching is God’s idea. The Lord, through the Spirit, is making the most of a moment created by the Spirit. The Spirit of Christ has been poured out on the apostles and upper room community. With something to hear (rushing wind) and something to see (tongues of fire) it was indicated to those in that room that the promise of Power had been kept (John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26). People outside of that room would not see the tongues of fire and did not hear the rushing of wind. But the manifestation of speaking in other tongues was being used to draw a crowd. To what end?

The Spirit has come to promote the plan of God for saving the world (John 3:16). This is the kickoff of doing that through the Church. Peter, speaking with unction, has indicated that the sign of Galileans speaking with other tongues is the outpouring of the Spirit before judgement like what was mentioned by Joel. The day of the Lord is near for the **men of Judea** (Acts 2:14). To be saved from the wrath to come they must **call upon the name of the Lord** (Acts 2:21). What would his hearers have been thinking at this point? That is, what would have been going through the mind of a Jew seeing and hearing all of this? Think about it.

Peter, when he began speaking, told the Jews to heed his words. He is calling them to more than just paying attention. There is an exhortation. If he is telling his audience to call on the name of the Lord. I think they may have had questions. I believe that they would have thought something like this:

It is 9:00 AM. Drunkenness does not explain this phenomenon. This Galilean fisherman is making sense; this really is what the prophet Joel wrote about. We are seeing the outpouring of the Spirit in a way that cannot be denied. Galileans are speaking about the wonderful works of God... in languages they don’t speak. But if this part is happening then what about the great and awesome day of the Lord that this guy just quoted. Won’t that part happen as well? If we want to be saved in that day of the Lord we need to call upon His name. Wait. What is His name? WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE LORD? I am trying to heed his words but I have questions.

In the next chapter we look at how Peter’s sermon deals with questions that did or would have.

¹⁷ The “day of the Lord” is seen throughout the prophets in reference to Divine restoration of His people and judgement of the nations that oppose Him (Amos 5:18-20; Malachi 4:5; Isaiah 13:5-10).

¹⁸ In 70 AD the Roman general Titus would have his armies surround Jerusalem and then raze it. The inhabitants would experience a day of the Lord that had been mentioned by Jesus (Luke 21:20).

Questions for Missional Community Discussion

1. What is the real reason for the group of Jesus followers speaking in other tongues? Why would God have done that through them? (Acts 2:5-12)
2. What part of the Joel prophecy would have been comforting to Peter's listeners? (Acts 2:17-18)
3. What aspect of the Joel prophecy would may have been disturbing to Peter's listeners? (Acts 2:21; Joel 2:31-32)
4. When you are confronted by things you do not understand are you more likely to make fun or make sense of it? What should you do? (Acts 17:11)

Cut to the Heart! - Part 2 of 3 (Acts 2:22-36)

Peter has started preaching to the crowd. He explains that the sign of Galileans speaking with other tongues is the outworking of the Spirit. And, contrary to what some have said (Acts 2:13), the spirit is not new wine. Peter says that it is the Holy Spirit. He explains the sign with quotes from the prophet Joel. His quote ends on a part of the prophecy that suggests that dire consequences await those who do not take the sign to heart. The sign is an indicator that (1) the Spirit has been poured out and (2) a day of the Lord is eminent.

If the listeners want to be saved in the mentioned day of the Lord then they need to call on His name (Acts 2:21). But what is His name?¹⁹ For those with questions like these Peter, speaking under the influence, has answers. Specifically, he is being used by God to help the **men of Judea** (Acts 2:14) to see (1) the relevance of the recent resurrection, (2) the tie to the outpouring of the Spirit, and (3) what the name of the Lord is.

Peter Introduces a Seemingly Unrelated Character (Acts 2:22-24)

²² **“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—²³ Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; ²⁴ whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.**

Instead of simply stating the name that his listeners need to call upon Peter starts talking about something else. At first it seems orthogonal to the matter of being saved in the day of the Lord. But it will soon all make sense.

The Segue to Jesus (Acts 2:21-22)

The **men of Israel** are told to pay attention to what is said next. He says, **“hear these words.”** After this Peter goes into a brief review of the ministry of **Jesus of Nazareth**. The events of most recent weeks would have been fresh in the minds of everyone in Jerusalem. Regarding this Jesus there had been a triumphal entry (Luke 19:28-44), a cleansing of the temple (Luke 19:45-48), public confrontations and conflict (Luke 20:1-8; 20:19-26), unfair trials (Luke 23:13-25), and finally an execution (Luke 23:26-49). High hopes and abysmal lows had all taken place just before and during Passover. Before the most recent events news about the wonderful works of Jesus had been spreading throughout the region for a few years. By the **miracles, wonders and signs** that were performed it had been shown that Jesus had God’s approval. And more than His approval. Peter explains that those supernatural activities were actually being done by God through Jesus (John 14:10). The **miracles, wonders, and signs** were performed by and **through [Jesus] in [their] midst**. Those things were so well known Peter speaks about them as things that his readers **also know** (Acts 2:22).

Their Crime against Jesus (Acts 2:23)

Peter now unveils shocking news. First, an innocent **Man attested by God** had been had **taken** (arrested), **crucified, and put to death**. Their murderous actions against **Jesus of Nazareth** were **lawless**; He was falsely accused and sent to the cross even when it was determined by Pontus Pilate that he was innocent (Matthew 27:24; Luke 23:4; John 18:38; 19:4,6). A man of their own, approved by God with miracles, wonders, and

¹⁹ Or His Son’s name if anyone knows (Proverbs 30:4)?

signs, was killed in a way that was reserved for criminals. In fact, among the Jews, his dying on a cross was especially ignominious – it was reserved for the cursed (Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13). And then there is the second part of the news; the delivery of Jesus into their hands was known and planned by God. The bitterness toward Jesus was not God’s fault; but it also was not wasted. God used it to provide a means by which the Passover Lamb of God would be slain by the priesthood. God the Father was moved by love to offer His own Son against the debt incurred by the nation:

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:10, NKJV)

The Vindication of Jesus by God (Acts 2:24)

To prove that Jesus of Nazareth was approved by God He was raised up from the dead. The horrors and birth pangs of death eventually gave way to Jesus being released through resurrection back to life.²⁰ At this point Peter says a curious thing: **because it was not possible that He should be held by it.** The **because** (καθότι) is a marker indicating that what follows is a reason or rationale for the resurrection. Peter says that, logically speaking, it was not possible that Jesus should be held by death. Why? He then goes on to explain why it would be illogical for Jesus to remain dead.

Peter Explains the Significance of the Resurrection (Acts 2:25-36)

²⁵ For David says concerning Him: ‘I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. ²⁶ Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. ²⁷ For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. ²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.’ ²⁹ “Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, ³¹ he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. ³² This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. ³³ Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. ³⁴ “For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: ‘The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, ³⁵ Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” ’ ³⁶ “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

David Foresaw Jesus’ Resurrection (Acts 2:25-28)

Peter says that David spoke **concerning the Jesus of Nazareth.** The quote is from Psalm 16; that psalm is regarded in Christendom as being messianic.²¹ In the psalm David attaches his hope of being made to know the

²⁰ The word translated pangs (ὠδίν) is actually the word for birthing pains. It used elsewhere in Scripture to indicate that the difficulty of a moment is giving rise or birth to something else (1 Thessalonians 5:3; Matthew 24:8; Mark 13:8).

²¹ Even some rabbis hold this view. Not the majority.

ways of life and joy in God's presence to the expectation that Messiah would be raised from the dead. Two things are mentioned that indicate a rise to eternal life for the Messiah:

1. The soul of Messiah will not be left in the abode of the dead (Hades).
2. The Holy One of God will not be allowed to suffer decay.

Some might say, "David was talking about himself." Peter anticipates such an objection and goes on to show that is not the case.

David Was Talking about the Son of David (Acts 2:29-31)

Before proving that David was not referring to himself Peter takes a moment to prepare his audience for strong words. They needed to know, before the statements were uttered, that the apostle was not being disrespectful to the patriarch David. He asks for their permission to speak with candor that might, without the forewarning, be seen as disrespect for the former king.

Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.
(Acts 2:29)

David is dead. If he were talking about himself his prayer was not answered. Peter says, "Regarding his mention of not allow God's Holy One to see corruption, the dead man's body was in a tomb that is with us to this day. In other words, David's body has already seen corruption. Obviously, then, he was not talking about himself."

Who was he talking about then. David, **being a prophet**, was speaking prophetically regarding someone else. Who? Based on the promise of a son to sit on the throne David was speaking about his Son. Solomon? No. **He (David), foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption (Acts 2:31).**

Peter is saying that David, by the inspiration of the Spirit, had put together the promise of a son on the throne (2 Samuel 7:12) and the vision given him by God. David, says Peter, foresaw the resurrection of the Christ. In the light of this prophecy it was not logical that the Christ would remain dead. His resurrection is the only thing that makes sense!

We Are Witnesses to the Resurrected Jesus (Acts 2:32-34)

It is beginning to come together. What seemed like an unrelated digression was actually the point that had to be made. The **Jesus of Nazareth** mentioned earlier has been **raised up** from the dead. The people speaking with tongues are witnesses to that fact.

Jesus is now reigning. He is seated in the heavenlies at the right hand of the Father. From his exalted position at **the right hand of God** He reigns and is able rain down what He had received (the Holy Spirit) upon His people. Peter tells them that what they now see and hear was caused by the exalted Jesus.

The Point: Jesus is the Name of the Lord That You Should Call On (Acts 2:21, 35-36; Psalm 110:1)

David did not ascend into heaven. But David, who had no earthly Lord, said that the LORD had said to his Lord, “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” Who *is* David’s Lord? Everyone knew that the Christ would be the Son of David (Matthew 22:41-42) and that the Christ was David’s Lord (Matthew 22:43-44). David also foresaw the exaltation of the resurrected Christ. Peter puts it all together when he summarizes: **Let all the house of Israel know that God has made Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.**

Peter’s sermon has set before the hearers the problem and solution. Salvation is needed so that the day of the Lord is not one of retribution (Acts 2:21). The solution is found in calling on the name of the Lord; that person shall be saved. That name, he has shown, is Jesus.

It is a lot to take in. Here below are the main points:

1. The Sign of Galileans Speaking in Tongues
 - 1.1. Joel talked about the pouring out of the Spirit and prophesying.
 - 1.2. Joel also talked about a day of the Lord and that being saved in that day required calling on the name of the Lord.
 - 1.3. Main Idea: Promised refreshing and retribution are at the door.
2. The Sign of a Nazarene Raised from the Dead
 - 2.1. Jesus of Nazareth is attested by God with signs, miracles, and wonders. that they have been waiting for.
 - 2.2. They had murdered Him.
 - 2.3. But God raised Him from the dead and exalted the Son of David to His own right hand.
 - 2.4. Main Idea: Proof of Jesus being Messiah was in the signs, miracle, wonders, and resurrection.
3. The Significance of Both Signs
 - 3.1. David makes mention of a soul not being left in hades and not being allowed to see corruption.
 - 3.2. David was not talking about himself. After all, he is dead and his corrupted body is in a tomb with us today. He was talking about Jesus. See 2.3.

- 3.3. David makes mention of his Lord being ascended and seated at the right hand of Yahweh.
- 3.4. He was talking about Jesus. Jesus has ascended and is seated at the right hand of God. Jesus has poured out the Spirit that caused the tongues and prophecy. See 1.1.
- 3.5. Main Idea: David foresaw the death and resurrection of his Son.
4. Concluding Thought and Exhortation
 - 4.1. The name of the Lord that the need to call on in order to be saved is *Jesus*.

In the next chapter we look at the result of Peter's preaching.

Questions for Missional Community Discussion

1. Why does David say that his soul would not be left in Hades? Why does he say that his body would not be allowed to experience corruption. How is this fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth?
2. Jews were waiting on Messiah to deliver them from oppression. What do you think was going through their mind when they heard they had killed him?
3. Why did God allow them to take Jesus with lawless hands, mistreat him, and crucify Him? (Romans 6:23; Isaiah 53:1-6; John 1:29)

Cut to the Heart! - Part 3 of 3 (Acts 2:37-41)

Peter has proclaimed the truth about Jesus. He has been a witness (Acts 1:8). But how are the people going to respond to the truth they have heard? The message has been logical, confrontational, and candidly critical. You might think, “Too harsh. That is not going to work. Say something positive, warm, and about how they can have everything they want if they would just trust Jesus.” Such a contemporary approach sounds good but overlooks the fact that the message is inspired by the Spirit. Whether or not the people like what they are hearing, it is what God has deemed necessary. A positive sounding message would also ignore the fact that their murderous actions had crucified the Christ. They need a confrontation.

The response of Peter’s audience is another gracious work of the Spirit that was mentioned by Jesus. The same Spirit inspiring the message is also at work inspiring proper response. Jesus said it would be this way. That is, He said that the work of the Spirit in the world would be to cause people to truly feel the discomfort that should come with disobedience and rejecting His right to reign in our lives:

⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ of sin, because they do not believe in Me (John 16:8-9, NKJV)

Cut to the Heart (Acts 2:37-41)

³⁷ Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?” ³⁸ Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” ⁴⁰ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” ⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*.

The Sermon Makes Sense (Acts 2:37; John 16:5-15)

The Spirit of God caused the message to make sense. The same Spirit who produced the preaching was at work in the hearers enabling them to understand and feel convicted. The words translated **cut to the heart** indicate an injury that stings. When Peter is preaching the Spirit is pushing the matter beyond just intellectual ascension to the facts. He is making it what it really needs to be - *a matter of the heart*.

The outworking of the Spirit’s inworking was the question: **Men and brethren, what shall we do?** Again, the work of the Spirit is to both present the gospel through Christ’s disciples and to make it understood by as many as the Lord will choose. Salvation begins with God’s initiative and is enabled entirely by Him. Salvation is grace!

The Call to Confidence in Jesus as Christ (Acts 2:38-40)

Peter answers their question: **Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.** There are two things for them to do. First, there is the need for them **to repent.** To repent (μετανοέω) is the change the mind. Change your mind, says Peter, about Jesus of Nazareth. Instead of regarding him as demon-possessed (John 7:20; 8:48-49, 52)²², realize and admit that He is good, that He is God, and that He is Lord (Acts 2:36)! The blasphemy of saying that Jesus' ministry was demonic is an unpardonable sin for the nation (Matthew 12:31-32; Mark 3:28-29).

The Unpardonable Sin Defined

The unpardonable sin was the national rejection by Israel of the messiahship of Yeshua on the grounds of being demon possessed. I repeat: It is Israel's national rejection of His messiahship while He was present on earth on the grounds that he was demonized.

Interview 5 May 2020 with Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum
by Pastor Roderick L. Barnes, Sr. of Communion Chapel EFCA
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eo2Bvy0jPLM&t=371s>

However, for the individuals there is hope. Peter says that they, as individuals, can be saved from this **perverse generation** (Acts 2:40). And they were. The ministry of the Holy Spirit, the same Holy Spirit that resides today in people that have repented of placing their confidence in something other than Jesus (Ephesians 1:13), made the preaching effective. He will do that through your presentation of the gospel as well.

The second thing they were to do was to change associations. Being baptized is a change of association. Anyone **baptized in the name of Jesus Christ** would be changing their association from being in league with the people that had murdered Jesus to being one of His followers (Acts 2:38). It would be a public identification with the ministry of Jesus, the community of Jesus, and a public declaration that Jesus is believed in and on as Christ.

Partaking of the Promises Made to Them (Acts 2:39-41)

They should take the offer that is being made. It would be their own salvation in the day of the Lord (Acts 2:20-21). It would be a refreshing by virtue of the Living Water that would be poured out on them (Joel 2:28-32; John 4:10-14). But it was their right by a promise from God Himself to the Jews. The promise of salvation was to the Jew first; God has promised this to Abraham and his descendants (Romans 1:16). This opportunity is the long-awaited promise of God to His servant Abraham. Take it!

It is also a promise to those who are afar off. If you are not a Jew you are afar off. The promises made by God to the Jews are not automatically ours. But if we are baptized into Jesus, Himself a Jew, we become heirs of the promises as well. We who are afar off, if we call on the name of the Lord, can receive the promises made to the Jews. In Christ the division and distance are gone. It is as Peter is saying: **For the promise is to you and to**

²² ⁴⁸ Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" ⁴⁹ Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. . . . ⁵² Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.'" (John 8:48-49, 52, NKJV)

your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call. Another Jew who becomes a Jesus follower will put it this way:

¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. (Ephesians 2:14-18, NKJV)

Peter did not stop there. Luke says, “**with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”** And, notice this Jesus follower, it worked! People were not just cut to the heart. They made a decision to place their faith in Jesus of Nazareth. What they were hearing was not negative. It was good news. It was gospel! They **gladly received his word and were baptized**. How many? Thousands!²³ There were more people added to the Jesus community on that day than during Jesus public ministry. Peter’s preaching had drawn in more to salvation than ever happened during the preaching of Jesus. Is that a problem? Not at all. Jesus said this would happen:

¹² “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. (John 14:12, NKJV)

It was what Jesus had in mind when he selected the disciples to become apostles (Mark 3:14). Are you in that number of people that has been added to the Jesus community? What is holding you back?

Questions for Missional Community Discussion

1. How did the people feel about what Peter had said? (Acts 2:37)
2. Was the preaching effective? (Acts 2:37)
3. What caused the result seen in the people? (John 16:7-9)
4. Are you confident that the Holy Spirit can use you to lead people to salvation in Jesus? Why or why not?
5. If you do not call on the name of the Lord, whether you are a Jew or a Gentile, you are still afar off? What is your reason for not putting your confidence in Jesus?
6. If you place your faith in Jesus as Lord you should make it known. The way to do this is public baptism. It does not save you but is evidence of saving faith. When are you going to publicly make it know that you have placed your faith in Jesus?

²³ From time to time I will hear people say that numbers do not matter. That is clearly not true. Had it not been relevant the Spirit would not have inspired Luke to record the number.

Making the Most of Each Moment (Acts 3:1-26)

Chapter Background – On A Losing Streak

I am sitting in my office listening to soaking music.²⁴ It is a part of my attempt to soothe myself after some painful losses. Over the past few weeks my attempts to create study group notes for our fellowship have been foiled by technical problems. What problems? In one case it was Saturday night and I had not only finished my sermon notes but was able to go to bed without the nagging feeling that there were loose ends in the message. When morning came I returned to a machine that had rebooted as part of a software upgrade.²⁵ My notes were gone. I know what you are thinking: “Why didn’t you save them?” Actually I thought the same thing. And then I noticed that the AutoSave feature of the editing software had been turned off. After some investigation I also found that there were no versions that could be recovered. Really? (When I checked for older versions of the notes there were none.) To me it all seemed a bit odd. Why was it odd? I am a bi-vocational pastor. When I am not preaching I am programming. Programmers save all the time! It was hard for me to believe that over the course of more than a few hours I had not saved my work... even once. That was the first time.

At the time this is being written it is the Summer of 2020. In our preaching calendar we planned for me to be out of the pulpit for a few weeks. The worship pastor at our church, Dan Strader, would deliver a two-part series on worship. For me it was a much needed respite from a way of serving that I love. Two weeks after the loss of my notes on Acts 3:1-26 I was going into the pulpit again. I had finished my notes for Acts 4:1-12. And it happened again. The notes were not saved and could not be recovered. It was demoralizing. And, if the machine is to be believed, I did not save my work the whole time.

So here I am 30 July 2020 in my office at the church working to reconstitute notes from Acts 3:1-26 and Acts 4:1-12. There are more than a few people at our great fellowship who think that I am either incompetent or not telling the truth. God knows. What follows is my prayerful attempt to put the notes back together. May God be merciful on me as I try to compensate for either my own ineptitude or the subversive activities of the devil’s imps.

Fixing(Acts 3:1-3)

¹ Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. ² And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; ³ who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms.

It seems that they are always together. When the Lord is transformed on the mountain Peter and John are there together with the Master (Matthew 16:27-17:13).²⁶ Near the end of Jesus’ public ministry Peter and John are together with Jesus as He is deep in sorrow (Matthew 26:36-37).²⁷ And, upon hearing that the body of their Rabbi had been taken, we see Peter and John running to the tomb to see for themselves (John 20:1-4). They are

²⁴ It is an instrumental that has intimations of worship songs. It is hard to listen to music with lyrics and not be drawn into either singing along or thinking about the meaning of the words. With an instrumental I can have the melody of How Great Thou Art but not be drawn into the contemplation of ideas that are not necessarily related to the work at hand.

²⁵ The software upgrade was an upgrade I did not request for a for a browser that I do not use.

²⁶ James, the brother of John, is also there with them (Matthew 17:1).

²⁷ In this passage it mentions Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. Who are they? Based on Matthew 4:1 they are James and John.

together in a boat when Jesus appears to them on the shore after His resurrection (John 21:7). Finally, when Jesus would talk with Peter alone these two men are not entirely separated; the disciple whom Jesus loved was could not stay away and followed them (John 21:20-21). And so we are not altogether surprised to see that Peter and John will be frequently found together in *The Acts of the Apostles* (Acts 3:1, 3, 11; 4:13, 19; 8:14).

They are a dynamic duo. Peter tends to be the speaker but John is always there, also with power, supporting the actions and words of his friend and fellow apostle. Their pairing may have been merely the outworking of their friendship. More likely it was also their commitment to the earlier commands and ministry conventions of Christ; He sent them by twos (Luke 10:1). And it is by twos that they are going to pray... and to preach if given an opportunity. It is by twos that Peter and John, still Jews and still practicing Judaism, are going to the second and last offering of the day. Luke says that it was **the ninth hour**; by our reckoning it would have been 3:00 PM.

The time of the apostles' visit was the "ninth" hour, three in the afternoon, i.e., the hour of prayer. It was also the time of the evening *Tamid*, one of the two sacrifices held daily in the temple.³ These had become prescribed times of prayer, and people would come to the temple at the sacrifice times to observe the ceremony and pray. Polhill, John B. (1992). *The New American Commentary: Acts* (Vol. 26, p. 126). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

The apostles continued to live as observant Jews, attending the set services of worship in the Jerusalem temple. The two principal daily services accompanied the offering of the morning and evening sacrifices. One afternoon, as two of the apostles, Peter and John,⁶ went up the steps leading from the outer court to the inner courts,⁷ in order to be present in the Court of Israel for the service of prayer which accompanied the evening sacrifice (about 3 p.m.),⁸ they were arrested by the sight of a cripple who lay begging at the "Beautiful Gate."
Bruce, F. F. (1988). *The Book of the Acts* (p. 77). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

At this point Luke introduces another character and thereby a problem: **a certain man lame from his mother's womb**. In the John's gospel were introduced to a man with the problem of blindness from birth (John 9:1-7). In that record we are witness to the power of the Lord to help or heal in a way that was (1) unprecedented (John 9:30-33), (2) readily recognized as a sign, and (3) the cause of controversy (John 9). This man, carried to the temple to beg, was laid at a gate of notable beauty. As people entered the temple to pray and to observe in reverence the sacrifice many would have had a heart that was prepared to honor God in giving to the poor (Proverbs 19:17; 28:27). This man's placement and timing was aimed at making the most of the moment.²⁸

The rabbis taught that there were three pillars for Judaism – the Torah, worship, and showing kindness. Giving alms was the primary means for showing kindness; when carried out according to the prescriptions given in the Torah it was an act of reverence and the outworking of sincere devotion to God. People entering the temple for prayer and the evening sacrifice, whether for showy pretense or sincere reverence for Yahweh, would have been in the mindset for almsgiving.

²⁸ They say that beggars cannot be choosers. However, those that would beg successfully must be careful in choosing the time and place when asking for alms.

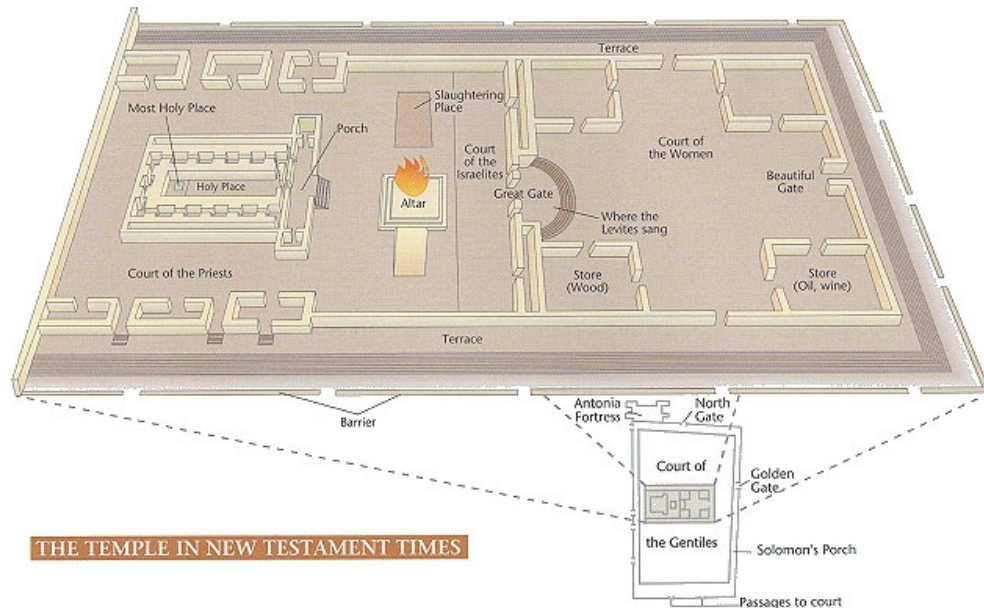


Figure 1: Diagram of the Temple showing the Beautiful Gate on the east side.

The man, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked them for a gift. It is certain that he did not expect anything more than financial assistance (Acts 3:5). But for that he had petitioned the wrong men (Acts 3:6).

Seizing the Day (Acts 3:4-9)

⁴ And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, “Look at us.” ⁵ So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶ Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” ⁷ And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

Peter's eyes are fixed on the man. Why? Because he has been with Jesus and has learned to look at things differently. Where some will see only the obstacle Peter has learned to see the opportunity. Where some see only the problem Peter has learned to see the possibility. Where some see only a crippled man asking for a handout Peter sees the chance for Christ to provide some help up. The big fisherman can remember leaving the temple with Jesus and coming across a man who was born blind and seeing his Teacher make the most of that moment (John 9:1-11).

It was not too long ago that his Teacher taught him that the tragedy of a congenital defect can become the triumph of Christ's power on display. This apostle sees that this man's handicap is a help; it can become the means by which people see Jesus' ability to help the hopeless or the dead (John 11). Does Peter have all of this in mind at the moment? Whether he does or not, the Spirit does. At any rate it seems to me that Peter is intent or creating a little drama. Peter said, “Look at us.” The man responded by giving them his undivided attention. He thought he was going to receive something monetary from them.

Although they lead a church of thousands (Acts 2:41) the apostles have not achieved affluence. **Silver and gold** were precious metals for them just like they are for us today. If you were going into the temple and intend to pray and show charity then you were likely to have silver or gold coinage on your person. Peter and John are going in to pray; they have what they need but neither of them has money.

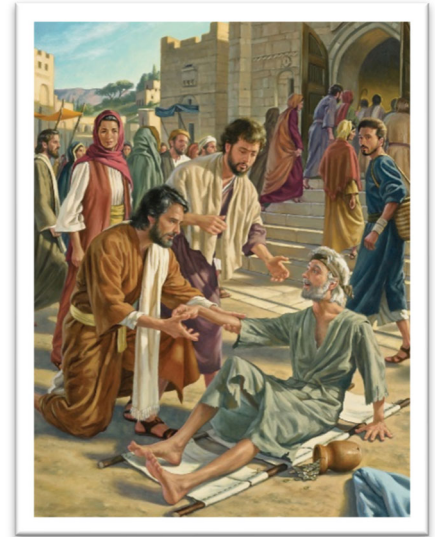
⁴⁴ Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. (Acts 2:44-45)

What Peter lacked in funds he had abundantly in faith. That faith was now going to be used to access kingdom power for kingdom purposes. Peter then says aloud what is needed to ensure that credit goes to the right place:

In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. What happens next, for those around them that are paying attention, will be associated with **Jesus Christ of Nazareth**. When something is done in the name of someone it is executed with the goal of promoting that person's program or making them known. In this case it was both.

Peter then seizes the man by the right hand and pulls him to his feet. The text indicates that the healing took place as the man born lame was being pulled to his feet. Some commentaries indicate that it was the faith of the man that had made him well. This is not the case. For three reasons we should see the healing as being a work of Peter's faith:

- Peter was Giving – Peter had already said that he did not have money but was going to give what he had. The man was being given the gift of healing apart from his own belief or unbelief. This would be similar to the man who had been born blind; the blind man's faith had not been used to effect his healing. In the same way this lame man's faith was not in play as the miracle was wrought.
- The Man was Ignorant – The man did not know that he was begging from broke folk. Until Peter said something he thought he was going to get money. This is the clear meaning of **he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them**. He did not expect to be healed. Most likely he was holding his hand out to receive something from Peter and John. The name Jesus had meaning in the region; He was a Galilean rabbi that had been recently crucified. Nothing in the text implies that the man was a follower of Jesus or that he had the mental agility to conclude that the Christ had risen and that His power was now going to be used to make him well. Those things are going to be made clear by Jesus' witnesses Peter and John.
- The Man was Uninitiated – If you have been born lame, have never seen anyone healed from your own affliction, and have never been pulled onto your feet why would you be expected to believe that this was going to be a moment of healing. The man is like the wine at the wedding (John 2:1-11), like the nobleman's son (John 4:49-54), like Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:49-56), like the man born blind (John 9:1-11), and like Lazarus (John 11). The work is being done on him but not by him. It is entirely an act of grace!



It says that **immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength**. The strengthening is happening as he is being pulled by Peter onto previously unused feet and ankles.

Makes Me Wanna Holler (Acts 3:8-10)

⁸ So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God. ⁹ And all the people saw him walking and praising God. ¹⁰ Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.



The man that had been born lame from his mother’s womb is now doing something new: **walking, leaping, and praising God**. Had he ever praised God? We might guess that he had. But he had never done it while walking and leaping.²⁹ If it were not enough that he is walking and then sporadically hopping for joy, he is also exclaiming praises unto God for the great grace he had received. He is an attention grabber for sure. And that is what Jesus wanted.

People looking and listening begin to have a common epiphany: the praising man hopping all over the place is **he who sat begging alms**. Here below is my fictionalized account of what some of them may have been saying:

Fictional Character	Fictional Dialogue
Amos	Hey, Seth!
Seth	Yeah, man.
Amos	Look at Jehoshaphat! Bruh, he’s walking.
Seth	He is also jumping and... wait! How in the world is he doing that? That can’t be him. He was born...
Amos	Born lame. I know. But Seth, look. It’s his face and voice!
Seth	This is amazing. I wonder what is going on. How is Jehoshaphat jumping?

Luke says that the surrounding people **were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him**. It was a sign. Isaiah prophesied about a time when the blessing of the messianic kingdom would come upon Israel.

Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert. (Isaiah 35:6, NKJV)

But did Luke intend to give that impression? He certainly did. Listen to Polhill and Bruce as they describe the significance of the attention-grabbing leaping of the man who had been lame.

²⁹ Do not miss the fact that the neurological development required to walk, leap, and coherently praise God at the same time is part of the miracle. That is, the miracle of walking is not just a matter of restored soundness in weak legs. His nervous system has been corrected as well; he would need growth, development, and training of nerves to make it possible to coordinate his muscles in actions that he had never done before.

Luke perhaps gave a veiled reference to the man's healing being a sign of the messianic times that had come in Jesus. He used a rare word (*hallomai*) for the man's jumping, a word found in the Septuagint text of Isa 35:6 with reference to the messianic age: "Then will the lame leap like a deer." Polhill, J. B. (1992). *Acts* (Vol. 26, p. 128). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Again, on the present occasion, the very conduct of the former cripple was itself a token, to those who had eyes to see, of the advent of the new age.¹⁵ Of the new age it had been said long before, "then shall the lame man leap like a hart" (Isa. 35:6). Bruce, F. F. (1988). *The Book of the Acts* (p. 79). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

The fulness of the messianic kingdom had not come. But confirmation is being seen in the man that the power of the messianic kingdom was present in and through the apostles. The time indicated by Isaiah was intimated in the lame leaping like a deer (Isaiah 35:6).

A Word About Their Guilt (Acts 3:11-16)

¹¹ Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed. ¹² So when Peter saw *it*, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though 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, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *Him* go. ¹⁴ But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, ¹⁵ and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

The walking, leaping, and praising God ran its course. Seeing a man lame since birth leap and praise God caused **all the people** to run **together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's**. Peter is ready to pounce on this opportunity. He sees it for what it is. Here is a principle of missional living:

Success or suffering is a segue to say something about salvation through Jesus. Life's pinnacles and pits are both stages for preaching Christ.

He had watched His Rabbi do it for years. Every miracle was simultaneously an act of mercy and marketing for the mission. Each display of divine power was a promotion of heaven's program for saving the lost. **Peter saw it**. He saw the opportunity to give the glory to the only wise God and to advocate for faith in Jesus. He saw the opportunity and he acted on it; Luke says he **responded to the people**. Are you making the most of your moments, whether they are good or bad, and glorifying Jesus? The opportunity has arrived and now the preacher is going to preach; he was chosen and charged for this (Mark 3:14; Acts 1:8).

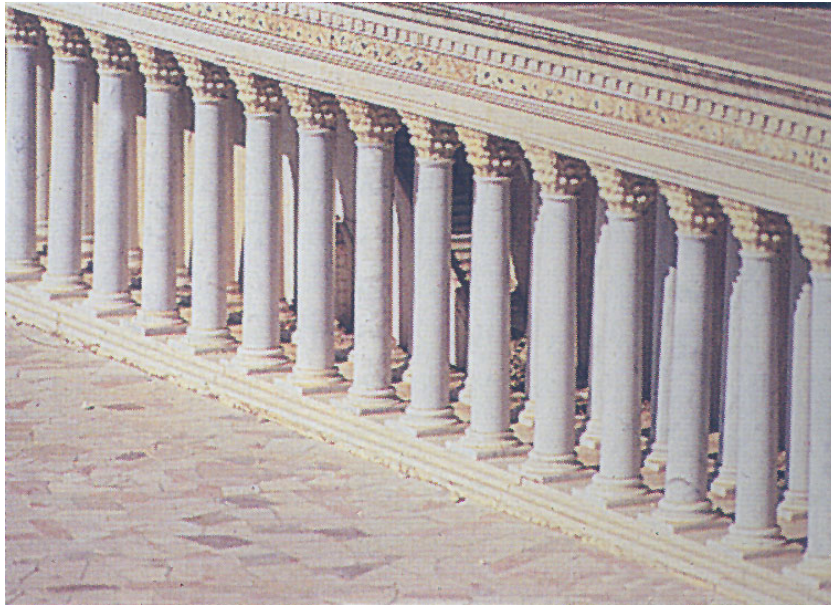


Figure 2: Model of Solomon's Portico. The term porch is often used but is inaccurate. A porch is covered but external to the structure. A portico is a column-supported structure considered part of the building. The collonade was a double columned portico.

As he opens his message Peter is standing there with John - and the healed man. The crowd is staring intently trying to discern the means of the miracle. In the opening of the message Peter directs all attention away from the lame man and the apostles. He says that the power and piety required to pull off such a feat was not in them (Acts 3:12). Another principle missional living jumps out of the text:

The missional living mindset is clear on the matter of praise and attention. The glory belongs to God, the praise is for Heaven's prince, and the crowns are to be cast at Christ's feet. Our thinking is right when we readily recognize our moment in the spotlight as an opportunity to redirect the attention, applause, and accolades to Jesus. Our heart is right when we do it gladly.

Why did Peter say this? Because it was the truth. This is done in order that all of the attention might go to Jesus. Peter is answering the burning question – *How did this man get healed?* The main points of the sermon are listed below:

Peter's Message Part 1 – You Are Guilty	
<u>What God Did</u> (Establishing Identity of Jesus as Messiah)	<u>What The Jews Did</u> (Establishing Guilt)

God glorified Jesus. (Acts 3:13)	You delivered Jesus. (Luke 23:1-3) You denied Jesus. (Luke 23:18-22) You disowned Jesus. (John 19:13-21) You dealt death to Jesus. (Luke 23:23-25)
God resurrected Jesus. (Acts 3:15)	
We are witnesses. (Acts 3:15)	

By the end of the sermon the question of *how* had been answered? The power and person of the One they had rejected was responsible for correcting what was wrong in the man who sat begging. Peter says that Jesus’ name had made the lame man strong. What does that mean? The name of Jesus represents all that He is. It is His person, His program, and His power. When seen this way Jesus, through the disciples, was continuing the work he **began** during his public ministry (Acts 1:1).

A Word About God’s Grace (Acts 3:17-26)

¹⁷ “Yet now, brethren, I know that you did *it* in ignorance, as *did* also your rulers. ¹⁸ But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, ²⁰ and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. ²² For Moses truly said to the fathers, ‘*The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.*’ ²³ *And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.*’ ²⁴ Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. ²⁵ You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘*And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*’ ²⁶ To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one *of you* from your iniquities.”

The people had not acted with a high hand against the Son of God; to be sure, the Jews, the **brethren** of Peter, had killed the Author of life. But **they did it in ignorance**. In this way Peter is pointing out that there is hope for them. In fact, although they had meant it for evil, God ordained that it would ultimately be used for good (Genesis 50:20). **God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets that the Christ would suffer.** Just a few of the prophecies (or excerpts) that Peter would have had in mind are listed below:³⁰

Passage Reference	Passage Text
About Christ Suffering	

³⁰ Some may wonder why I put such large passages in this chapter. Because I know that the likelihood that you will look them up goes down if you have to go to another book. It is very important that we see that the suffering of Jesus was foretold and that he suffered for our sakes. It may take a moment to read through this table of suffering passages. But if you have not read them it is worth it. Become familiar with passages that predicted our Savior’s passion. I have been preaching and writing for years. After I put the passages here... I read them again.

Isaiah 52:13-53:12	<p>¹³ Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. ¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men; ¹⁵ So shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider. ¹ Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, <i>There is</i> no beauty that we should desire Him. ³ He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, <i>our</i> faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. ⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He <i>was</i> wounded for our transgressions, <i>He was</i> bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace <i>was</i> upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. ⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. ⁹ And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor <i>was any</i> deceit in His mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put <i>Him</i> to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see <i>His</i> seed, He shall prolong <i>His</i> days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. ¹¹ He shall see the labor of His soul, <i>and</i> be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.</p>
Jeremiah 11:19	<p>¹⁹ But I <i>was</i> like a docile lamb brought to the slaughter; and I did not know that they had devised schemes against me, <i>saying</i>, “Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be remembered no more.”</p>
Zechariah 12:10	<p>¹⁰ “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for <i>his</i> only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.</p>
Zechariah 13:7	<p>⁷ “Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion,” Says the LORD of hosts. “Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.</p>
Psalm 22	<p>To the Chief Musician. Set to “The Deer of the Dawn.” A Psalm of David.</p> <p>¹ My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? <i>Why are You</i> so far from helping Me, <i>And from</i> the words of My groaning? ² O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent. ³ But You <i>are</i> holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel. ⁴ Our fathers trusted in You; They trusted, and You delivered them. ⁵ They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed. ⁶ But I <i>am</i> a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people. ⁷ All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, <i>saying</i>, ⁸ “He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!” ⁹ But You <i>are</i> He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust <i>while</i> on My mother’s breasts. ¹⁰ I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother’s womb You <i>have been</i> My God. ¹¹ Be not far from Me, For trouble <i>is</i> near; For <i>there is</i> none to help. ¹² Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong <i>bulls</i> of Bashan have encircled Me. ¹³ They gape at Me <i>with</i> their mouths, <i>Like</i> a raging and roaring lion. ¹⁴ I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. ¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. ¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; ¹⁷ I can count all My bones. They look <i>and</i> stare at Me. ¹⁸ They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots. ¹⁹ But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me! ²⁰ Deliver Me from the sword, My precious <i>life</i> from the power of the dog. ²¹ Save Me from the lion’s mouth And from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me. ²² I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. ²³ You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! ²⁴ For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard. ²⁵ My praise <i>shall be</i> of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. ²⁶ The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever! ²⁷ All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall</p>

worship before You. ²⁸ For the kingdom is the LORD's, And He rules over the nations. ²⁹ All the prosperous of the earth Shall eat and worship; All those who go down to the dust Shall bow before Him, Even he who cannot keep himself alive. ³⁰ A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the *next* generation, ³¹ They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done *this*.

Although they had done it in ignorance, repentance was still needed. They had rejected the Messiah, slandered His ministry, and put Him to death. To **repent** at this point would be to change their mind about Jesus' identity; it would be to accept that He is Messiah and admit the guilt of crucifying the Christ.

To turn and **be converted** would have been an outward change; it would be seen in the intentional association with the community of Jesus followers. People who had already made this decision were publicly baptized and were regularly found breaking bread with the Jesus community (Acts 2:40-41); people who had converted participated regularly in the communion table of the new community (Acts 2:41). To turn and **be converted** would mean a new life that was aimed at keeping the commandments of Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20).

But why would they do such a thing? That is, why would the listeners willingly admit their guilt in the murder of an innocent man, associate themselves with a new cult, and adhere to the teachings of its founder? The answer is simple. If the explanation of Peter regarding the means by which the miracle was performed is true, then Jesus' had suffered for their sins and had been exalted. If what Peter says is true Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ and Peter, capable in using the power of Jesus to help others, is a credible witness. So then by repenting and converting they could have the following:

- Forgiveness – If they would change their mind about Jesus and be associated with Him and His community they would receive forgiveness. They would have forgiveness for their crime against the Christ. Moreover, they would have forgiveness of all sin committed. To repent would be turn from faith in other things and to place their faith in Jesus. Such a decision to put the treasure of their trust in Jesus Christ of Nazareth would be an appropriation of His shed blood to their own account. The application of that blood would have the incontrovertible consequence of seeing their sins **blotted out**.
- Favor – If they would change their mind about Jesus and be associated with Him **times of refreshing could come from the Lord**. A sample of such times had been seen previously in the miracles of Jesus public ministry, more recently in the pouring out of the Spirit on Pentecost, and now in the healing of a man born lame (Isaiah 35:6). More such times of refreshing would come if they would repent and be converted.
- Hastening His Return and Restoration – When Israel welcomes her King the ultimate restoration can happen. In that day when Jesus' people receive Him we can look forward to the reverse of the curse on all creation. To this end we should all encourage the Jews to receive Jesus and thereby do our part to hasten the day of His return.

In this second part of the sermon Peter is laying it on heavy. The message of grace was first mentioned by Moses. The revered and famous leader prophesied that God would raise up a Prophet like himself from among them. What did Moses mean by **raise up**? The idea of him being born and raised among the people as a Jew was certainly in mind. But in the wording **raise up** applies to Jesus like no one else.

Jesus was the Prophet that had literally been raised up as a Son of David among them, raised up through resurrection, and then raised up to the right hand of the Father.

Grace was offering the opportunity to receive the Prophet even after they had killed him. But if they would not hear him now as He appealed to them through His witnesses Peter and John, **they would be utterly destroyed from among the people.**

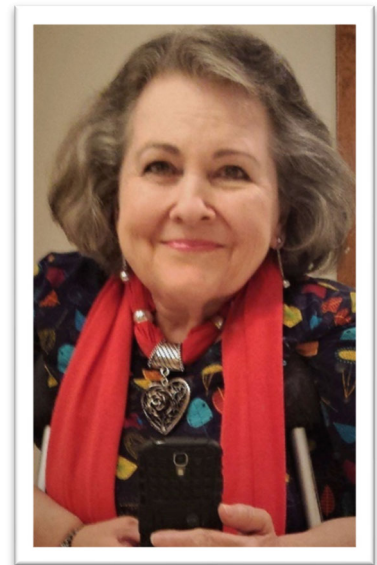
Where they were looking primarily for relief from Roman oppression Jesus had come to save them from their sins (Matthew 1:21). The promise to them through Abraham was that all the families of the earth would be blessed through His seed.³¹ The gospel, in the grace of God, was coming to them first. In fact, though it is for all of us, it is first for the Jew.

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. (Romans 1:16, NKJV)

Questions for Missional Community Discussion

1. What does Peter do with the opportunity occasioned by healing the man born lame? That is, when the crowd formed as a result of the wonder and amazement of the healed man what did Peter do?
2. Why does Peter direct the attention away from the lame man, John, and himself (Acts 3:12; Revelation 4:4, 10)? Am I using my moment to magnify the Lord?
3. Ultimately Peter preaches the gospel. For the apostles this was the mission. Everything was about making the Master known. And making Him known according to Jesus was about presenting the gospel. Are you getting to the gospel?

This chapter is dedicated to Joy Easley Postell. She was missional in her thinking. In the brief time that I knew her the attention she received was directed to Jesus Christ of Nazareth.



³¹ Paul would later, inspired by the Spirit, say that the Seed is not many but one – Christ (Galatians 3:16, 19).