

## The Power of Jesus' Name

1. Review
2. Overview of Acts 3 and 4
3. Observation and exposition of Acts 3:1-10
4. The take-away for us

### Review

1. In **Acts 2:43**, which we covered last week, we read that “many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.” In **Acts 3 and 4**, Luke gives us a detailed look at one of these signs, and what happened as a result of the sign.

### Overview of Acts 3 and 4 (3:1-4:31)

1. **3:1-10** - Peter and John go to the temple and while there they heal a man who was born lame.
2. **3:11-26** - Peter's speech to the people who gathered around them as a result of the miracle healing (several thousand? see 4:4).
3. **4:1-22** - Peter and John are arrested by the Jewish authorities, the next day they stand trial before the authorities, Peter makes another speech, and they are threatened and then released.
4. **4:23-31** - Peter and John return to their friends where they tell them what happened, pray to God for courage and boldness, and God answers their prayer.

### Observation and exposition of Acts 3:1-10

1. **Acts 3:1-10**
2. The setting? The temple in Jerusalem **[SLIDES]**
  - a. Which gate? There is some debate among scholars over this detail.
3. The time of day?
  - a. The “ninth hour,” or 3 p.m.
    - i. Explain how the “hours” worked
  - b. Why were they going to the temple?
    - i. To join in the hour of prayer, or corporate prayers (prayer service?)
    - ii. Why were they doing this? Weren't they Christians at this point?
      1. Several possibilities:
        - a. They were still in a period of transition from Judaism into Christianity - still figuring things out.

- b. They still saw themselves as observant Jews - think about Peter and his meeting with Cornelius and other Gentiles in **Acts 10**.
      - c. They wanted to be where lots of people were gathered so they would have a large audience for their evangelistic efforts.
- 4. The man, lame from birth, who had never walked
  - a. How old was he?
    - i. More than forty years old (**4:22**)
  - b. Who brought him to the temple each day?
    - i. "They" - friends, family, neighbors?
  - c. Why did he go to the temple?
    - i. To ask (beg) alms from the people going into the temple - this is how he made his "living"
- 5. The healing (**3-7**)
  - a. He asked Peter and John for alms
  - b. Peter tells him "he has no money to give him, but what he does have he will give him."
  - c. Peter invokes the name of Jesus and commands him to get up and walk.
  - d. Who has faith here?
    - i. Peter and John
      - 1. Peter demonstrates this by reaching down and taking the man by the right hand and helping him up.
    - ii. The lame man
      - 1. He demonstrates this by taking Peter's hand and standing up.
  - e. The man is instantly healed. Think about this - he had never stood or walked for one moment in his entire life.
    - i. Verse 7 tells us that his "feet and ankles" were the problem, and they were "immediately made strong."
    - ii. He did not have to learn how to stand up, or walk, or jump, or run. When God healed him, he gave the man those abilities - motor skills, muscular strength, skeletal strength, neurological pathways, balance, etc.
    - iii. How long does it take a child to learn how to do these things? God gave him these abilities instantly.
    - iv. There are one or two other people in the history of the world who didn't have to learn these things the way the rest of us do. Adam and Eve, and for that matter, all the creatures that God created. When God created them, they were fully functioning, fully alive.
      - 1. Fish, birds, etc. I think when God created the fish they were swimming and doing what fish do at that moment of creation.

Same with the birds - created mid-flight? Why not?

6. The name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth (6)

- a. Compare a similar healing in **Luke 5:17-26**
  - i. However, Jesus did not have to invoke his own name to perform miracles.
- b. Peter healed the lame beggar in “the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth”
  - i. Is “Christ” part of Jesus’ name, or is it his title? Yes!
- c. The power in a name
  - i. See **3:16, 4:1-2, 7, 8-10, 17-18**
  - ii. Even the Jewish authorities recognized that there was power in a name.
- d. Why didn’t Jesus heal this man while he was on earth?

7. Reactions (8-10)

- a. The man’s reaction?
  - i. He entered the temple with Peter and John - something he had never done on his own two feet.
  - ii. He was walking and leaping and praising God
    1. Did he know Jesus yet? Probably not, but he was about to hear all about him in Peter’s speech
- b. The people’s reaction?
  - i. They recognized the man as the beggar who had been begging at the “Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms,” for years (decades?)
  - ii. They were “filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened”
    1. Does this mean they were now followers of Jesus? No, not yet anyway. After Peter’s speech many more believed and were saved (4:4).

**The take-away for us**

1. At least one commentator pointed out how this healing is an illustration of “the sovereign grace of God, acting through Jesus Christ to rescue and restore those [who are] powerless to save themselves,” much like this beggar was powerless to heal himself. He wasn’t looking for healing that day, and you and I were not looking for salvation when God saved each one of us. (Peterson, 169)
2. Even though Peter seems to mildly rebuke the people in **3:12** for their “wonder” and amazement, I don’t think it’s out of place to be amazed and filled with wonder at what God did in the life of the lame beggar, and what he has done, is doing, and will do throughout history and into the future.

## Resources

1. *The Acts of the Apostles*, F. F. Bruce
2. *The Book of the Acts*, F. F. Bruce
3. *The Acts of the Apostles*, David G. Peterson
4. *The Message of Acts*, John Stott
5. *The Acts of the Apostles*, Ben Witherington III