

“May I have your attention, Please?”
May 25 and May 26, 2024
Mr. Ken King

Will you please take a moment and pray for me, and ask that the Holy Spirit bless today's message.

Scripture: Acts 3:1-10 NIV One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon.²Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts.³When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money.⁴Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!”⁵So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. ⁶Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.”⁷Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong.⁸He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.⁹When all the people saw him walking and praising God, ¹⁰they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Today's Scripture shares the first miracle the disciples performed after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. They were new men on a greater mission. When I read scripture, I to want to understand how it relates to my life and everything that is really going on.

In today's scriptures there are three major things going on. **First** - Peter noticed the cripple man and demanded his undivided attention. **Second** - Peter identified the cripple's needs and he healed the crippled man. **Third** - the healed man goes around telling everyone that he was healed.

So the first thing is that Peter and John went to the temple to pray. They had not given up on the religious practice of worship and prayer at the temple. Now the temple had several entrances and they all had names. They are at the entrance or gate called Beautiful.

At the gate they see a man crippled from birth being carried to the temple gate. So we know that the crippled man had some buddies that carried him to the temple so he could beg. Now Peter and John may have passed by this beggar before, as it appears the crippled man begged on a regular basis at the temple. But now with the gift of the Holy Spirit, Peter and John

recognized the man and his needs.

Now I would like you to think about this for a moment; What if you see someone drop off a homeless beggar at our front entrance - he can't walk and he is sitting on a piece of carpet. What would you think? What would you do? Maybe toss something in his cap, or maybe you would "Catch him on the way out" or maybe look for another entrance. Usually when we see a cripple or a beggar, our first instinct is to turn away, isn't it? None of us like to see someone who is a cripple because we don't want to think about what it would be like to be crippled. None of us like to see beggars because we don't want to think about what it would be like to be that poor.

Back to the scriptures. The beggar was begging - it was his life. He was playing "the hand he was dealt" - he thought this was all his life would amount to. He couldn't walk, so someone had to bring him to the temple and take him home afterwards every day. Many of the people going into the temple probably walked by him and just considered the beggar part of the environment, maybe so common place that the beggar's needs weren't even acknowledged. Now the beggar had physical needs that he was begging for. His expectations were that some of the temple guests would give him enough money to get by; food, rent, etc. And he was there every day, probably along with other beggars. The people in the temple walking by. Maybe they gave him some money or maybe they had better things to do? Prayer meetings to go to? Bible studies to attend? Lives to get on with?

The beggar had expectations: He wanted money from Peter and John, but they did not look away from him; they looked straight at him. "Look at us!" Give me your full undivided attention. Then the unlovely crippled beggar gave Peter and John his attention. The man was expecting money to meet his physical needs. But Peter said that he was going to give this cripple something better than money, he was going to give this man a touch from God!

Peter knew exactly what it was he could give him. Peter wasn't going to give him what he wanted, but something more. The ability to walk and be self-sufficient. Peter reached out his

hand and said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

The take a way: The message in that healing is that there is power in the name of Jesus Christ, power in the Holy Spirit. The message that Jesus loves you and by His grace you are saved. If you don't feel loved, I want to assure you, you are.

The healed man was so excited, he went into the temple courts, walking, jumping, and praising God. Can you imagine the craziness that the temple guests must have felt? They recognized this guy, and he was walking and jumping and interrupting the worship and prayer time.

Think about the cripple we mentioned when you walked into church today. If he came in jumping and shouting. "Praise God, I am healed," How would we react?

There was an old country church one time that had a visitor join them for worship one Sunday morning. There was a prayer time during the service and the visitor was particularly moved by the prayer and said a few "Amen's!" during the prayer. The people around him opened their eyes and looked at him uncomfortably. Then the church sang some hymns and the man was caught up in worship and raised his hands and again the people looked at him uneasily. The preacher began his sermon and it, too, was a soul stirring speech and he shouted, "Praise the Lord."

Finally, an Elder of the church was shoved out into the aisle (by his wife), and the respectful man straightened his tie and buttoned his jacket and marched over to where the visitor was seated. He gently leaned over and whispered into the man's ear, "Listen, buddy, we don't 'Praise the Lord' around here."

I hope we would not react like that as we see miracles every day. Praise the Lord!

WELL SO MUCH FOR THE OBVIOUS. What else can we learn from today's scripture text? Are we too busy to see people's needs around us? Do we walk by hoping someone else will deal

with it? Do we pay attention to the real needs or maybe just tossed some money at the problem? Many times, we think that money can solve a problem without looking at the cause of the problem. OR we are too busy being good to be helpful?

Remember those buddies of the cripple, the ones that brought him to the temple and then took him home? They thought they were helping, so he could beg to live. They were focused on the physical needs of the man. But shouldn't they have taken him into the temple to expose him to the spiritual benefits of worship and prayer.

Have you ever brought someone to church or talked about their spiritual life and then abandoned them? Or feel that taking them to church was enough? Did you reach out afterwards to see what their needs or expectations were? Did you let them know that Jesus loves them and died for their sins, and grace is free?

Have you ever thought about how crippled you might be and how Jesus could heal you? When you know that Jesus is your personal Lord and Savior, do you tell others or keep it to yourself? Would you shout, "Praise the Lord, I am saved?"

We have and see miracles every day. Let us be like the healed cripple and start telling everyone how good God is! When God meets our needs, let's tell others. When God keeps providing for you month after month even though the budget is tight, tell others. When God gives you peace in the midst of loss, tell others. When God is there for you at your darkest moment, tell others! We think our need is one thing - money, relationship, time, health - but in reality our need is so much bigger. We need God Himself. We each need to experience the living God.

God needs your full attention at all times so that He can do His work through you. He doesn't want only half, or 3 quarters. Without our undivided attention, God cannot work in our lives. We must simply call on the name of Jesus to help us get through our temptation or trial. We can tap into the power of the name of Jesus by simply asking for it. It is only with the power of Jesus Christ our Lord that we can make it through those tough times.

When He heals us, what do we do? Do we sit on it and say “yea!” and keep it to ourselves? Or do we jump up and down and yell "PRAISE THE LORD! Look at what He has done for me!"

If that man would not have gotten up, gone into the temple and jumped up and ran around, no one would have known he was healed. He would not have been at the gate anymore and maybe assumed dead, end of story. But instead, he jumped up and down and praised God. People recognized him and guess what else they recognized about him? They recognized that he had been healed. The man shouted to everyone he saw. He praised God because he was healed.

We should do the same. We are healed by the power of the name of Jesus Christ. We are healed by Him and only by Him. We should not be shy about telling the world or showing the world this by our actions and by our talk.

Stop and think for a moment when you first accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior. Now if you have never done that, then there is no better time to accept it. Say a prayer to yourself and God will hear it.

God was going to use you and mold you and make you into something new. If you have never done that, or if you have taken your life back out of His hands, give it back to Him now. It is never too late to start over with God. Give Him your full attention. Give it to Him and say take my life and let it be. Burdens? Cast them all upon the Lord because you know that there is power in that name and so take it.

Just like the beggar – we expect to receive something from God:

We expect to receive answers to our prayers.

We expect to receive healing for our physical bodies.

We expect to grow spiritually

We expect to overcome trials and tribulations.

We can expect to accomplish the impossible.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, we need to expect God to do it His way and His time and not ours.

No matter how bad you think your situation may seem, never underestimate the power of God to turn things around. He knows when you're ready to receive His blessings, and when the world is ready to witness His glory through you. Trust in His timing, even when things don't seem to be going your way?

There are blessings money cannot buy. Can you recall a moment when a kind word, a loving action, or a heartfelt prayer meant more to you than any material gift? Our capacity to give is not limited to what's in our wallets; it extends to our talents, our time, and our faith. Be generous with what you have, whatever gifts God has blessed you with; be it wisdom, compassion, skills, or spiritual gifts, share it. Be generous not just in your wealth, but also in your spirit.

God may choose to use us in extraordinary ways. He has blessed you with significant talents and opportunities. Being used by God is an honor and a privilege. God's ultimate blessing is to bring you closer to Him. Are you ready to embrace this incredible blessing?

What are your needs? Some of us would identify our need as financial. We need money, a job, help paying off our student debt, or a mortgage, a car payment, or medical bills.

Some of us would identify relationship as our need. Dealing with marriage problems or family problems. Problems with a parent, sibling, or coworker we don't know how to fix. We need to feel loved and needed.

Some of us would identify time as our need. We are too busy with our schedules and our kid's sports and activities. We don't have enough time with our family or to get our job or homework done.

We see other needs. We feed folks at the mass meal but do we talk to them? We work to solve problems without looking at causes. If there are people in need, we can't just ignore them. We need to ask God for wisdom in how to respond to them. We need to give them not just what they want, but what they need. For God has not called us to love Him and ignore people. No, we are called to love God and love people.

You see, the truth is that none of us are lovely people and God has somehow managed to take all the confusion and broken pieces of our lives and put together something beautiful, and for that we all need to praise God! We can get so wrapped up in everyday life, we can walk past “God opportunities” every day.

I missed an opportunity a couple of weeks ago. A young man came up to me as I was approaching the entrance to a restaurant and said, “You are a heaven sent, God says you can help me.” WOW, that was unexpected – He thought I was a God Sent?

I listened and talked with the young man for a short period of time, shared his concerns, talked about his situation, and told him I would pray for him. BUT then I went in the restaurant to take care of my needs, leaving him alone outside the restaurant. I blew it! What I should have done was buy him lunch and learned more about his needs. What I should have done was said “Give me your full undivided attention and I will give you mine. Jesus Christ is the answer to your problems. Let’s talk.” You see, I am a cripple who has been given the ability to walk, but I still limp along day to day.

There is a song that is one of my anthems of praise and witness I would like to share with you. If you have the chance, go to YouTube and search for the Song “He Made A Change.”

It is called **He Made A Change**. Listen to these words:

When Paul met the Lord on Damascus Road
He never was the same again
When Peter met the Lord he left his boat
And started fishing for men
Well, I may not be Peter or Paul,
But one thing I can truly say
When I met the Lord and made Him my choice
He definitely made a change.

He made a change in the way that I’m walking
He made a change in the way that I’m talking

Old things pass away, behold everything's new,
He made a change in the life that I'm living.
I'm born again, set free, finally forgiven
If He can make a change in me, He can make a change in you.

Well, I've seen some old friends shaking their heads
'Cause they never thought they'd see the day
When a sinner like me would praise the Lord
Or bow my head to pray.
Well, I'm not what I used to be,
You see my life has been rearranged.
Well there's nothing that I've done, but I have found someone
Who definitely made a change.

He made a change in the way that I'm walking
He made a change in the way that I'm talking
Old things pass away, behold everything's new
He made a change in the life that I'm living
I'm born again, set free, finally forgiven
If He can make a change in me, He can make a change in you

I know if He can make a change in me, He can make a change in you

Let us pray. Dear Lord we give You thanks for allowing the Holy Spirit to be with us today. We realize the power of the name of Jesus Christ. You know our needs, help us to recognize the needs of others. We give You thanks for the change You have made in our lives. Give us the willingness to sing Your praises for all those blessings. For Your healing power, for Your grace. Help us praise Your name and blessings, not in a whisper but in a shout. Praise the Lord. Amen.