

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Acts Chapter 3 — The Healing at the Beautiful Gate and Peter's Bold Preaching

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Acts Chapter 3 shows what happened as the Spirit-empowered church began carrying out the mission Jesus gave in Acts 1:8.

Peter and John were going to the temple at the regular time of prayer when they encountered a man who had been unable to walk from birth.

Every day this man was carried to the temple gate called Beautiful.

Every day he depended upon others.

Every day he asked people for money.

On this particular day, he asked Peter and John.

Peter gave him something far greater than silver or gold.

He said:

“In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”

Immediately the man's feet and ankles became strong.

He stood.

He walked.

He jumped.

And he praised God.

The miracle attracted a crowd, but Peter immediately refused to accept credit for what had happened.

He directed everyone's attention toward Jesus Christ.

Peter then preached another powerful sermon.

He proclaimed that:

- Jesus is God's glorified Servant.

- Jesus is the Holy and Righteous One.
- Jesus is the Author of life.
- God raised Jesus from the dead.
- Faith in Jesus brought the man's healing.
- The suffering of Christ fulfilled prophecy.
- People must repent and turn to God.
- Jesus is the Prophet promised by Moses.
- Jesus fulfills God's covenant promises.
- God's blessing is intended to turn people away from sin.

Acts 3 therefore teaches an essential principle:

The power of God should always point people toward the Person of Jesus Christ.

I. PETER AND JOHN GO TO PRAYER

Acts 3:1 — The Hour of Prayer

“One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—about three in the afternoon.”

Peter and John were apostles.

They had witnessed Pentecost.

They had seen thousands saved.

Yet they continued practicing prayer.

Spiritual power had not made prayer unnecessary.

It made prayer even more important.

Cross References

Psalm 55:17

Evening, morning, and noon I cry out to God in my distress, and He hears my voice.

Daniel 6:10

When Daniel learned that the order had been signed, he went home. The windows of his upstairs room opened toward Jerusalem. Three times each day he got down on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to his God, just as he had always done.

Exodus 29:39

Offer one lamb in the morning and the other lamb in the evening.

Spiritual Principle

Spirit-filled believers should also be prayerful believers.

Peter and John did not say:

“We experienced Pentecost, so prayer is no longer necessary.”

They continued seeking God.

Application

Power without prayer eventually becomes presumption.

Ministry without prayer becomes human effort.

II. A MAN LAME FROM BIRTH

Acts 3:2 — Carried Every Day

“Now a man who had been 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.”

This man's condition was lifelong.

He had never known what it was like to walk.

Every day someone had to carry him.

Every day he depended upon generosity from others.

Cross References

John 9:1

As Jesus was walking along, He saw a man who had been blind from birth.

Acts 14:8

In Lystra there was a man who could not use his feet. He had been unable to walk from birth and had never walked.

Acts 4:22

The man who had been miraculously healed was more than forty years old.

Acts 4 tells us that this man was over forty years old.

For more than four decades he had lived with this disability.

Spiritual Principle

A long-standing problem is not beyond God's power.

Time does not weaken God.

What has been impossible for decades is still not impossible for Him.

III. THE MAN ASKS FOR MONEY

Acts 3:3 — Expecting Alms

“When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money.”

The man knew what he thought he needed.

Money.

He had probably made the same request thousands of times.

Cross References

Luke 16:20

At the gate of the rich man's house lay a poor man named Lazarus, whose body was covered with sores.

Deuteronomy 15:11

There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to open your hand generously to your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy.

Proverbs 19:17

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and the Lord will repay that person for what he has done.

Key Truth

Sometimes we ask God for what we think we need while He sees a much deeper need.

The man wanted enough money for another day.

God was about to transform his life.

IV. “LOOK AT US”

Acts 3:4 — Peter Gets His Attention

“Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, ‘Look at us!’”

Peter did not ignore the man.

He saw him.

He gave him his attention.

Cross References

Acts 14:9

Paul looked directly at the man and saw that he had faith to be healed.

Mark 10:21

Jesus looked at the man and loved him.

Luke 22:61

The Lord turned and looked directly at Peter. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had told him.

Spiritual Principle

Ministry often begins by truly seeing the person in front of us.

Crowds matter.

But individuals matter too.

Peter and John were going to prayer.

Yet they were not too busy with religious activity to notice someone in need.

V. EXPECTING TO RECEIVE SOMETHING

Acts 3:5

“So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.”

He expected money.

He had no idea what was actually coming.

Cross References

Luke 18:35

As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting beside the road begging.

Mark 10:49

Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called the blind man and said, “Take courage! Get up! He is calling you.”

John 9:8

The man's neighbors and those who had previously seen him begging asked, “Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?”

Spiritual Principle

God's answer may be far greater than our expectation.

The beggar expected coins.

He received strength in his legs.

VI. SILVER AND GOLD I DO NOT HAVE

Acts 3:6 — What Peter Did Have

“Then Peter said, ‘I don’t have silver or gold, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.’”

This is one of the most memorable statements in Acts.

Peter did not possess financial wealth.

But he possessed something infinitely greater.

He knew Jesus Christ.

Cross References

1 Peter 1:18

You know that you were not redeemed from your empty way of life with temporary things such as silver or gold.

Acts 4:10

Peter said, “Let all of you and all the people of Israel know that this man stands before you healed by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified and whom God raised from the dead.”

Mark 16:18

Jesus said that His followers would lay hands upon the sick, and they would recover.

Spiritual Principle

The church's greatest treasure is not money, property, influence, or political power. It is Jesus Christ and the gospel.

Money has value.

But money cannot:

Forgive sin.

Give eternal life.

Reconcile a sinner to God.

Conquer death.

Only Christ can do that.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Never confuse what the church possesses materially with what the church possesses spiritually.

VII. “IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST”

Peter did not say:

“By my power.”

He said:

“In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.”

The name represents Christ's authority and person.

This was not a magical phrase.

Peter was acting as Christ's representative under Christ's authority.

Spiritual Principle

The power was not in Peter. The power belonged to Jesus.

VIII. IMMEDIATE STRENGTH

Acts 3:7 — Feet and Ankles Made Strong

“Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong.”

The healing was immediate.

The man's body did not gradually improve over several months.

His feet and ankles received strength at once.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:6

Then the person who cannot walk will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the person who cannot speak will shout for joy. Water will break out in the wilderness and streams will flow in the desert.

Mark 1:31

Jesus went to Simon's mother-in-law, took her by the hand, and helped her up. The fever left her immediately, and she began serving them.

Acts 9:41

Peter took Tabitha by the hand and helped her stand. Then he called the believers and widows and presented her alive.

Key Truth

When God heals, He is not limited by the severity or length of the condition.

IX. WALKING, JUMPING, AND PRAISING GOD

Acts 3:8

“He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.”

The man who had been carried into the area now entered on his own feet.

Notice his response:

Walking.

Jumping.

Praising God.

Cross References

Isaiah 35:6

Then the lame person will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless will sing for joy.

John 5:9

Immediately the man was healed. He picked up his mat and began to walk.

Luke 5:25

Immediately the healed man stood up in front of everyone, picked up the mat he had been lying on, and went home praising God.

Spiritual Principle

Grace should produce gratitude.

The healed man did not merely enjoy his new ability.

He praised the God who had transformed him.

X. EVERYONE SAW HIM

Acts 3:9

“All the people saw him walking and praising God.”

The miracle became public evidence.

Cross References

Luke 18:43

Immediately the blind man received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.

Mark 2:12

The man got up, immediately picked up his mat, and walked out in front of everyone. The people were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this.”

Psalms 148:13

Let everyone praise the name of the Lord, because His name alone is exalted. His glory is above the earth and heavens.

Spiritual Principle

A transformed life can become a testimony visible to other people.

XI. THEY KNEW WHO HE WAS

Acts 3:10

“And they 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.”

The crowd knew this man.

He had been there every day.

Nobody could easily dismiss what happened.

Cross References

John 9:8

His neighbors and those who had seen him begging asked, “Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?”

Acts 4:14

Since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with Peter and John, the leaders had nothing they could say against them.

Mark 5:42

Immediately the girl stood up and began walking around. She was twelve years old. Everyone who saw this was completely amazed.

Key Truth

The evidence was standing in front of them.

XII. THE CROWD RUNS TO PETER AND JOHN

Acts 3:11 — Solomon's Colonnade

“While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon’s Colonnade.”

The miracle created an opportunity for preaching.

Cross References

John 10:23

Jesus was walking in the temple area in Solomon's Colonnade.

Acts 5:12

The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people, and the believers regularly gathered together in Solomon's Colonnade.

Acts 4:13

When the leaders saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized they were ordinary men without formal rabbinic training, they were amazed and recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Spiritual Principle

A miracle is not the final message. It can become an opportunity to proclaim the gospel.

Peter immediately begins preaching Christ.

XIII. PETER REFUSES THE GLORY

Acts 3:12 — “Why Are You Looking at Us?”

“When Peter saw this, he said to them: ‘Fellow Israelites, why are you surprised? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we made this man walk?’”

Peter refuses celebrity status.

He says:

“Do not look at us as though we did this by our own power.”

Cross References

Acts 14:15

Paul and Barnabas shouted, “Why are you doing this? We are human beings just like you. We are bringing you good news so that you will turn from these worthless things to the living God.”

Acts 10:26

Peter told Cornelius, “Stand up. I am only a man myself.”

John 3:27

John answered, “A person can receive only what is given from heaven.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A faithful servant redirects glory away from himself and toward Christ.

Spiritual ministry becomes dangerous when people begin worshiping the messenger instead of the One who sent him.

XIV. GOD HAS GLORIFIED JESUS

Acts 3:13

“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God of our fathers—has glorified His servant Jesus. You handed Him over to be killed, and you disowned Him before Pilate, even though Pilate had decided to let Him go.”

Peter connects Jesus with Israel's covenant God.

The God worshiped by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has glorified Jesus.

Cross References

Exodus 3:6

God said to Moses, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Moses covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.

Isaiah 52:13

The Lord says, “Look, My Servant will act wisely. He will be raised, lifted up, and greatly exalted.”

John 19:15

The crowd shouted, “Take Him away! Take Him away! Crucify Him!” Pilate asked, “Should I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king except Caesar.”

Spiritual Principle

Human rejection of Jesus did not cancel God's exaltation of Jesus.

XV. THE HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS ONE

Acts 3:14

“You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you instead.”

Peter presents a terrible contrast.

They rejected:

The Holy and Righteous One.

And requested:

A murderer.

Cross References

Isaiah 53:11

After His suffering, My righteous Servant will see the result of His work and be satisfied. Through His knowledge He will make many righteous, because He will carry their sins.

Luke 23:18

The crowd shouted together, “Take this man away! Release Barabbas to us!”

Mark 1:24

The unclean spirit cried out, “I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”

Spiritual Principle

Sin reverses moral judgment.

Human rebellion can reject righteousness while embracing evil.

XVI. THEY KILLED THE AUTHOR OF LIFE

Acts 3:15

“You killed the Author of life, but God raised Him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.”

The irony is staggering.

They killed:

The Author of life.

But death could not hold Him.

Cross References

Hebrews 2:10

It was fitting for God, for whom and through whom everything exists, to make the Author of their salvation complete through suffering as He brings many sons and daughters to glory.

Acts 5:30

The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead after you killed Him by hanging Him on a cross.

Acts 2:32

God raised this Jesus to life, and all of us are witnesses of it.

Key Truth

The gospel is built upon the great reversal: humanity killed Jesus, but God raised Him.

XVII. FAITH IN JESUS' NAME

Acts 3:16

“By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through Him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.”

Peter explains the miracle clearly.

The man was healed through faith connected to Jesus Christ.

Cross References

Acts 4:10

Peter said, “This man stands before you healed through the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead.”

Matthew 9:22

Jesus turned and saw the woman. He said, “Take courage, daughter. Your faith has made you well.” From that moment she was healed.

Acts 14:9

Paul looked directly at the man and saw that he had faith to be healed.

Spiritual Principle

Faith has power because of the Person in whom faith rests.

Faith itself is not a magical force.

Jesus is the source.

XVIII. THEY ACTED IN IGNORANCE

Acts 3:17

“Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders.”

Peter speaks firmly but compassionately.

He does not excuse their actions.

But he acknowledges their ignorance.

Cross References

Luke 23:34

Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing.”

1 Timothy 1:13

Paul said, “I was formerly a blasphemer, persecutor, and violent man. But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief.”

1 Corinthians 2:8

None of the rulers of this age understood God's wisdom, because if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Spiritual Principle

Ignorance does not make sin harmless, but God's mercy reaches ignorant sinners.

XIX. THE MESSIAH'S SUFFERING FULFILLED PROPHECY

Acts 3:18

“But this is how God fulfilled what He foretold through all the prophets, saying that the Messiah would suffer.”

The cross was not a failure of prophecy.

It fulfilled prophecy.

Cross References

Isaiah 53:5

He was pierced because of our rebellion and crushed because of our sins. The punishment that brought us peace was placed upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.

Luke 24:26

Jesus said, “Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and then enter His glory?”

Luke 24:44

Jesus said, “Everything written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms had to be fulfilled.”

Key Truth

The suffering Messiah was always part of God's redemptive plan.

XX. REPENT AND TURN TO GOD

Acts 3:19 — Sins Wiped Away

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”

Peter's sermon now reaches its appeal.

The people must:

Repent.

And:

Turn to God.

Cross References

Acts 2:38

Peter said, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ in connection with the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Isaiah 43:25

The Lord says, “I am the One who wipes away your rebellion for My own sake, and I will no longer hold your sins against you.”

Acts 26:20

Paul said, “I preached that people should repent, turn to God, and demonstrate their repentance by the way they live.”

What Does Repentance Mean?

Repentance is more than regret.

It involves:

A changed mind.

A changed direction.

A turning from sin.

A turning toward God.

“Wiped Out”

The picture is powerful.

Sin creates a record of guilt.

God offers complete forgiveness.

Spiritual Principle

Repentance turns toward the God who alone can erase guilt.

XXI. TIMES OF REFRESHING

Peter says repentance leads to:

“Times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.”

Sin exhausts.

Guilt burdens.

Distance from God dries the soul.

God's presence refreshes.

Spiritual Principle

True spiritual refreshing comes from restored fellowship with God.

The world offers distraction.

God offers restoration.

XXII. THE RETURN OF THE MESSIAH

Acts 3:20

“And that He may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus.”

Peter looks toward Christ's future return.

Cross References

Acts 1:11

The angels said, “This same Jesus who has been taken from you into heaven will return in the same way you saw Him go.”

1 Thessalonians 1:10

Believers wait for God's Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming judgment.

Revelation 22:20

Jesus says, “Yes, I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Key Truth

The Jesus who came once will come again.

XXIII. THE RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS

Acts 3:21

“Heaven must receive Him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as He promised long ago through His holy prophets.”

Christ remains in heaven until God's appointed time.

Cross References

Acts 1:11

This same Jesus who was taken into heaven will return in the same way the disciples saw Him go.

Matthew 17:11

Jesus answered, "Elijah does come first and will restore all things."

Isaiah 65:17

The Lord says, "Look, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former troubles will no longer be remembered or come to mind."

Spiritual Principle

God's redemptive plan moves toward restoration, not endless disorder.

Sin will not have the final word.

XXIV. MOSES PROMISED A COMING PROPHET

Acts 3:22

"For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything He tells you.'"

Peter identifies Jesus with the Prophet promised by Moses.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 18:15

Moses said, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people. You must listen to Him."

Deuteronomy 18:18

The Lord said, "I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people. I will put My words in His mouth, and He will tell them everything I command Him."

John 1:21

The religious leaders asked John, "Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." They asked, "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No."

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is not merely one teacher among many. God commands people to listen to Him.

XXV. THE DANGER OF REFUSING CHRIST

Acts 3:23

“Anyone who does not listen to Him will be completely cut off from their people.”

The promise of the Prophet includes a warning.

Rejecting Him has consequences.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 18:19

The Lord said, “I Myself will hold accountable anyone who refuses to listen to My words spoken by the prophet.”

Leviticus 23:29

Anyone who refuses to humble himself on that day must be removed from among the people.

Hebrews 12:25

Be careful that you do not refuse the One who speaks. If people did not escape when they rejected God's warning on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the One who warns us from heaven?

Key Truth

Jesus demands a response.

Neutrality toward Christ is ultimately impossible.

XXVI. THE PROPHETS SPOKE ABOUT THESE DAYS

Acts 3:24

“Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days.”

Peter places Jesus within the entire prophetic storyline.

Cross References

1 Samuel 3:20

All Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was established as a prophet of the Lord.

Hebrews 1:1

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many different times and in many different ways.

Luke 24:27

Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, Jesus explained to the disciples what the Scriptures said concerning Himself.

Spiritual Principle

The Bible tells one unfolding story that reaches its fulfillment in Christ.

XXVII. HEIRS OF THE PROPHETS AND THE COVENANT

Acts 3:25

“And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, ‘Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.’”

Peter reminds Israel of its covenant privilege.

But privilege brings responsibility.

Cross References

Genesis 22:18

God told Abraham, “Through your offspring all nations of the earth will be blessed because you obeyed My voice.”

Genesis 12:3

God told Abram, “I will bless those who bless you, and I will deal with those who dishonor you. Through you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

Galatians 3:8

Scripture foresaw that God would make the Gentiles right with Himself through faith and announced the gospel beforehand to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.”

Key Truth

God's promise to Abraham always included blessing for the nations.

XXVIII. GOD SENT JESUS FIRST TO ISRAEL

Acts 3:26

“When God raised up His servant Jesus, He sent Him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.”

This is a powerful definition of blessing.

Peter does not define blessing primarily as:

Money.

Comfort.

Prosperity.

Ease.

He says God's blessing involves:

Turning people away from wickedness.

Cross References

Acts 13:46

Paul and Barnabas said, “It was necessary that God's Word be spoken to you first. But since you reject it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, we are now turning to the Gentiles.”

Matthew 15:24

Jesus said, “I was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

Romans 1:16

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew and also to the Gentile.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

One of God's greatest blessings is deliverance from the sin that destroys us.

XXIX. SIX GREAT LESSONS FROM ACTS 3

1. Jesus Is Greater Than Silver and Gold

The lame man expected money.

He received healing through Christ.

Principle:

Material help has value, but humanity's deepest need is ultimately spiritual.

2. Miracles Must Point Toward Christ

Peter refused personal glory.

Principle:

When God works through us, the attention should move toward Jesus, not toward us.

3. Jesus Is the Author of Life

Peter used extraordinary language for Christ.

Jesus is:

Holy.

Righteous.

Servant.

Author of life.

Messiah.

Prophet.

Principle:

Christianity stands or falls upon the identity of Jesus Christ.

4. The Resurrection Is Central

Peter again declares:

“God raised Him from the dead.”

Principle:

A gospel without the resurrection is not the apostolic gospel.

5. Repentance Leads Toward Forgiveness

Peter says:

“Repent and turn to God.”

Principle:

The gospel does not merely announce forgiveness; it calls sinners to turn toward God.

6. God's Blessing Extends to All Nations

The Abrahamic promise anticipated worldwide blessing.

Principle:

Jesus is Israel's Messiah and the Savior whose gospel reaches the nations.

XXX. WHAT THE LAME MAN TEACHES US

The lame man provides a remarkable spiritual picture.

He began the day:

Unable to walk.

Dependent upon others.

Sitting outside.

Begging.

Expecting coins.

He ended the encounter:

Standing.

Walking.

Leaping.

Entering the temple.

Praising God.

Spiritual Principle

An encounter with the power of Christ can completely change the direction of a life.

XXXI. WHAT PETER TEACHES US ABOUT MINISTRY

Peter demonstrates several essential principles.

He Saw the Need

He noticed the lame man.

He Refused False Glory

He said:

“Why are you looking at us?”

He Exalted Jesus

Christ became the center of his explanation.

He Confronted Sin

Peter did not avoid difficult truth.

He Proclaimed the Resurrection

The gospel remained central.

He Called for Repentance

He demanded a response.

He Offered Hope

Sins could be wiped away.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Faithful ministry sees people, serves people, points to Jesus, confronts sin, and offers the hope of grace.

XXXII. “SILVER AND GOLD I DO NOT HAVE”

This statement deserves deeper consideration.

Peter had no money to offer the man.

But that did not mean Peter had nothing to offer.

Sometimes churches become convinced that ministry requires enormous financial resources.

Resources can certainly help ministry.

But money is not the source of spiritual life.

The early church possessed something far greater.

The gospel.

The Holy Spirit.

Prayer.

Truth.

Christ.

Principle

A poor church with Christ possesses greater eternal treasure than a wealthy church that has lost the gospel.

XXXIII. “WHY DO YOU STARE AT US?”

Peter understood a danger that every Christian leader should understand.

People can begin admiring the servant instead of worshiping the Savior.

Peter refused that.

He immediately said:

“Not our power.”

“Not our godliness.”

The miracle belonged to Jesus.

Application

Pastors should point toward Christ.

Teachers should point toward Christ.

Musicians should point toward Christ.

Missionaries should point toward Christ.

Every Christian servant should point toward Christ.

Principle

The faithful servant disappears behind the glory of the Master.

XXXIV. WHAT ACTS 3 TEACHES ABOUT REPENTANCE

Acts 3:19 says:

“Repent and turn to God.”

This gives two sides of biblical repentance.

Turning From

Sin.

Rebellion.

Self-rule.

Unbelief.

Turning To

God.

Faith.

Obedience.

Christ.

Result

“Your sins may be wiped out.”

Spiritual Principle

Biblical repentance is not merely walking away from something wrong; it is turning toward Someone right.

XXXV. TIMES OF REFRESHING

Peter connects repentance with:

“Times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.”

The word picture is deeply hopeful.

Sin dries the soul.

God refreshes.

Guilt burdens.

God forgives.

Fear enslaves.

God gives peace.

Separation wounds.

God reconciles.

Key Truth

The refreshing we most desperately need comes from God's presence rather than changed circumstances alone.

XXXVI. THE OLD TESTAMENT POINTS TO JESUS

Peter's sermon draws from several major Old Testament themes.

Abraham

All nations will be blessed.

Moses

A Prophet is coming.

Samuel and the Prophets

They pointed forward to these days.

The Suffering Messiah

The prophets foretold His suffering.

Restoration

The prophets looked toward God's final work.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Old Testament is not disconnected from Jesus; its covenant promises, prophetic expectations, and redemptive storyline move toward Him.

XXXVII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why were Peter and John going to the temple?

They were going at the regular time of prayer.

This demonstrates that prayer remained central even after Pentecost.

Receiving the Holy Spirit did not make prayer unnecessary.

It deepened their dependence upon God.

Question 2

How long had the lame man been disabled?

He had been lame from birth.

Acts 4:22 adds that he was more than forty years old.

His condition was therefore well known and longstanding.

This made the miracle particularly powerful evidence.

Question 3

Why is Peter's statement about silver and gold important?

It demonstrates that Peter's greatest resource was not material wealth.

He possessed the message and authority of Jesus Christ.

Money might have helped the man temporarily.

The healing transformed his circumstances dramatically.

Spiritually, the larger principle is that Christ offers what earthly wealth can never provide.

Question 4

Did Peter claim the power to heal came from himself?

No.

Peter specifically rejected that idea.

He asked:

“Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we made this man walk?”

He attributed the healing to Jesus Christ.

Question 5

Why does Peter call Jesus the Author of life?

The title emphasizes Christ's unique relationship to life itself.

The people killed the One connected with the very source and giver of life.

Yet God raised Him from the dead.

The title magnifies the greatness and authority of Christ.

Question 6

What role did faith play in the man's healing?

Acts 3:16 says that faith connected with the name of Jesus made the man strong.

The power was not in faith as an independent force.

The power rested in Jesus Christ.

Faith receives what Christ provides.

Question 7

What does Peter mean when he says the people acted in ignorance?

They did not fully understand who Jesus was or the significance of what they were doing.

However, Peter does not say ignorance removed their responsibility.

Instead, he calls them to repentance.

God's mercy reaches people who have sinned in ignorance.

Question 8

What does it mean for sins to be “wiped out”?

It pictures complete removal.

God does not merely cover over guilt as though pretending it never happened.

Through His saving grace, He forgives the repentant sinner and removes the record of guilt.

Question 9

What are the “times of refreshing”?

The phrase communicates restoration and renewal coming from God's presence.

In the immediate sermon, Peter connects repentance, forgiveness, and God's redemptive purposes.

The principle is that true spiritual renewal comes from God.

Question 10

Who is the Prophet Moses promised?

Peter identifies the fulfillment with Jesus Christ.

Moses said God would raise up a Prophet whom the people must hear.

Peter applies that promise directly to Christ.

Question 11

How does Abraham's covenant connect with the gospel?

God promised Abraham that through his offspring all nations would be blessed.

Peter shows that God's work through Jesus participates in the fulfillment of that worldwide blessing.

The gospel is therefore not restricted to one people group.

Question 12

What does Acts 3:26 teach about God's definition of blessing?

God sent Jesus:

“To bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.”

This means deliverance from sin is itself an extraordinary blessing.

We should not define blessing only in terms of money, health, comfort, or success.

XXXVIII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Acts 3 asks us several serious questions.

Am I Prayerful?

Peter and John were going to pray.

Do I Notice People in Need?

They saw the man others probably passed every day.

What Do I Believe People Need Most?

Do I think material solutions alone can solve spiritual problems?

Do I Give Christ the Glory?

When something good happens through my ministry, who receives the credit?

Am I Willing to Confront Sin?

Peter preached grace without avoiding uncomfortable truth.

Have I Repented and Turned to God?

The invitation remains:

“Repent and turn to God.”

Do I Understand God's Blessing Correctly?

God's greatest blessing may be turning us away from what is destroying us.

Am I Pointing Others Toward Jesus?

That was Peter's purpose.

XXXIX. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Do Not Give People Only What They Ask for When Christ Offers What They Truly Need”

The lame man asked for money.

Peter could have given him a coin if he had one.

That might have helped him buy food.

But it would not have changed his fundamental condition.

Instead, through Christ's power, the man received something greater.

He received the ability to walk.

This illustrates a broader spiritual principle.

People often ask for:

Better circumstances.

More money.

Less stress.

Improved relationships.

Physical comfort.

Personal success.

These concerns can be legitimate.

But beneath every temporary need stands humanity's greatest need:

Reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ.

The church should care about physical needs.

The early church certainly did.

But the church must never forget its greatest treasure:

Jesus Christ.

XL. FINAL APPLICATION

Acts Chapter 3 begins with a man sitting outside the temple.

He cannot walk.

He depends upon other people.

He asks for money.

Then he encounters two followers of Jesus.

Within moments:

His feet become strong.

His ankles become strong.

He stands.

He walks.

He leaps.

He praises God.

People gather.

And Peter preaches Jesus.

That sequence is important.

The miracle never becomes the destination.

It becomes a doorway to the gospel.

Peter refuses to say:

“Look what we can do.”

Instead he says:

“Look to Jesus.”

Jesus is the One God glorified.

Jesus is the Holy One.

Jesus is the Righteous One.

Jesus is the Author of life.

Jesus was crucified.

Jesus rose from the dead.

Jesus is the promised Messiah.

Jesus is the Prophet foretold by Moses.

Jesus is God's means of blessing.

Then Peter gives the proper response:

Repent.

Turn to God.

And the promise follows:

Your sins may be wiped out.

That is the greater miracle.

A healed body is wonderful.

A forgiven sinner is eternally significant.

Physical healing changes earthly life.

Forgiveness through Christ changes eternity.

Acts 3 therefore calls us to keep the gospel at the center.

Help people physically.

Show compassion.

Meet needs when possible.

Pray for healing.

But never stop there.

Point people toward Jesus.

Because silver and gold cannot save.

Human power cannot save.

Religion cannot save.

Good intentions cannot save.

But Jesus Christ:

Died.

Rose.

Reigns.

Forgives.

Restores.

And still calls people:

“Repent and turn to God.”

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the power and authority of Jesus Christ.

Thank You that Peter and John understood that their greatest treasure was not silver or gold but the Savior they knew and proclaimed.

Give us eyes to see people around us who are hurting.

Keep us from becoming so busy with religious activity that we walk past people You have placed in our path.

Give us compassion.

Give us wisdom.

Give us courage.

And above all, help us point people toward Jesus.

Keep us from seeking glory for ourselves.

When You use us, remind us that the power belongs to You.

When people praise us, help us redirect that praise toward Christ.

Thank You that Jesus is the Holy and Righteous One.

Thank You that He is the Author of life.

Thank You that although He was crucified, You raised Him from the dead.

Strengthen our faith in the risen Christ.

Give us courage to proclaim repentance clearly.

Help us never weaken the gospel by removing its call to turn away from sin.

Thank You that sins can be wiped away.

Thank You that forgiveness is real.

Thank You that times of refreshing come from Your presence.

Turn our hearts toward You.

Turn us away from wickedness.

Help us understand that freedom from sin is one of Your greatest blessings.

Make our churches places where people encounter biblical truth, genuine compassion, prayer, and the clear message of Jesus Christ.

May every act of ministry lead people beyond us to Him.

May every blessing produce praise.

May every opportunity become an opportunity for witness.

And may the name of Jesus Christ be honored in everything we do.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Key Verse

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” — Acts 3:19

Central Truth

The risen Jesus Christ has power to restore, forgive, and transform, and every work done in His name should lead people toward repentance, faith, and worship rather than toward human glory.

Acts 3 in One Sentence

After Jesus heals a man lame from birth through Peter and John, Peter refuses personal glory and boldly proclaims the risen Christ, calling the people to repent, turn to God, receive forgiveness, and recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah and Prophet foretold throughout Scripture.