

CHAPTER 2

The Healing of a Lame Man (Acts 3-4)

The Healing Miracle

The Holy Spirit had come! The Church had been born! God was working and acting through His apostles. In this chapter we will see how God worked through Peter and John in a special way.

Often when a surgeon is about to operate he will put on a pair of gloves. He then begins to work through these gloves to do his operation. The gloves do whatever the skillful surgeon wants them to do. How much can the gloves do without the surgeon? _____ How much can the believer do without Christ (John 15:5)? _____ God wanted to work through Peter and John, just as a surgeon wants to work through a pair of gloves.

It would be silly for the gloves to say, "Look how great we are! We have just performed a successful operation and we have saved a person's life!" What they really should say, if they could talk, would be something like this: "We are nothing but a pair of gloves, but we have a great surgeon who works through us to accomplish great things. He is the one who does it, but we are thankful that he uses us to do his surgical work!" Peter and John knew that they were nothing, but that they had a great God who was using them in a great way!

One day (some time after the day of Pentecost) Peter and John were going to the temple in Jerusalem. Why were they going there (Acts 3:1)? _____ It was about 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon (the ninth hour).

At the gate of the temple there was a lame beggar (Acts 3:2). This man was crippled and he could not walk. Every day he had to be carried to the gate of the temple where he could beg and ask for money from those who were entering the temple. The Bible tells us that this man was more than _____ years old (Acts 4:22).

Some people become crippled as the result of an accident or an injury. For example, a person could be lame as a result of a car accident, a fall from a tree or an injury received in battle. Other people are born with certain physical disabilities and problems. Was this man born lame or did he become lame later on in life (Acts 3:2)? _____
Compare John 9:1.

Day after day, year after year, this man sat at the gate of the temple. He hoped that the people going into the temple would hear him begging and that they would stop and give him some money. He hoped that people would have mercy on him and give him that which would meet his physical needs.

On this particular day, who were about to go into the temple (Acts 3:3)? _____
The lame beggar spoke to these two men as they passed him, hoping that they might stop and give him something.

They did stop (Acts 3:4). Peter stared right at this man and said, "Look on us."

This man was encouraged. He expected to receive something from them (Acts 3:5). What do you think he expected to receive from them?

_____ Do you think that he expected that they would heal him of the lameness that had crippled him for his entire life? _____

What was Peter able to give to this man (see Acts 3:6 and circle the correct answer):

- a. Silver
- b. Gold
- c. Food
- d. A miracle of healing
- e. Nothing

Peter did not have a gift of money to give to this man, but Peter did have a gift of healing (see 1 Corinthians 12:9) which he used on this man. Was this man going to receive something better than silver and gold? _____

What did Peter tell this lame man to do (Acts 3:6)? "R_____ up and W_____." Peter told this man to do something that he had never done in his entire life!

Did it take a long time for this man to be healed or did it happen immediately (Acts 3:7)?
_____ The Lord did a wonderful thing!

First the man stood, then he began to walk, and soon he even began to leap and jump for joy! For the first time his feet and legs were able to support his body. Was this man thankful to God for what had happened (Acts 3:8-9)? _____

Right away the people noticed this man leaping and praising God. Did the people recognize that this was the poor beggar that sat at the gate of the temple (Acts 3:10)? _____ They knew this man well. Every time they entered the temple, he was there! And he had been there for years. They were used to seeing him begging, but they were greatly surprised to see him LEAPING!

Think of one of your friends in school. What would you think if you came into your class one day and saw your friend flying around like Peter Pan or Superman. You would be surprised and shocked! It would be impossible for your friend to fly. It was impossible for this lame man to walk and leap, but "with God _____ shall be _____" (Luke 1:37). God did a wonderful thing and made the impossible possible for this man, and the people were filled with "W_____ and A _____" (Acts 3:10).

The people had one great question on their minds: HOW DID THIS HAPPEN? Peter would soon answer this question.

The Powerful Message

Hundreds of amazed people came together to find out how this man was made whole. How did Peter explain this healing miracle? Did he boast and take full credit for it himself by saying, "I

want you all to know that Peter the Fisherman is the GREAT HEALER! I want you all to see this amazing miracle which I have done by my own power"? Is this what Peter said (see Acts 3:12)? _____ Peter knew that he was just the GLOVE; he was not the SURGEON! This miracle was done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 3:16).

As Christians, we should not go around telling people how great we are. Instead we should tell them how great our Saviour is! We should not point to ourselves, but we should point to the Saviour. This is what Peter and John did.

Think again of this lame man. He was over _____ years old (Acts 4:22). For years and years he must have wondered why God allowed him to be born crippled. All those years he could do nothing but beg, and life was probably very difficult for him. But God had a wonderful purpose in all of this. This lameness was for the glory of God--that people might know how great God really is. If this man had never been lame, then he could not have been healed. Because this man was healed, thousands of people were able to hear the good news of salvation. Peter preached to these people and told them that the God who took away this man's lameness was the same God who could take away their sins (see Acts 3:19,26).

Because of this miracle of healing, many people were able to hear the good news of salvation, and those who believed this good news were healed spiritually and given eternal life. Has the living God healed you and made you whole?

God was adding to His Church in a wonderful way. According to Acts 4:4, the total number of men in the church was about _____ thousand. Remember that on the day of Pentecost the total number of believers (men and women) was about _____ thousand (Acts 2:41). Christ was building His church (Matthew 16:18). There were many people who believed on Christ the day the lame man was healed. Is God still adding to His Church today?

Many in the crowd that Peter addressed were the same people who not long before had demanded that Christ be put to death. These were the same people who had shouted, "CRUCIFY HIM! CRUCIFY HIM! WE HAVE NO KING BUT CAESAR!" Now brave Peter stood up before these people and told them this: "The One that you crucified (Acts 3:13-15) is now alive (Acts 3:15,26), and He wants to bless you and save you from your sins (Acts 3:19,26)." This was GOOD NEWS!

God is different from us. If we were in God's place we might choose to judge and destroy those people who crucified the Son of God. God desired to save them and forgive them (compare 1 Tim. 2:4).

The Unfair Arrest

As Peter and John were speaking to the people, the religious leaders came up to them (Acts 4:1). Were they filled with joy that Peter and John were teaching the people about the good news of salvation (Acts 4:2)? _____ Were they rejoicing that Jesus rose again from the dead (Acts 4:2)? _____ These men took Peter and John and put them in jail overnight (Acts 4:3)!

Usually a person is put in jail because of some BAD DEED which he has done. Peter and John were put in jail because of a G _____ D _____ which was done to a lame man (Acts 4:9). Usually a person is arrested if he has killed someone. Peter and John were arrested because they healed someone! What an unfair arrest! These same religious leaders were the ones who

had arrested Christ, the One who was H _____ and J _____ (righteous) and Who had never done anything wrong (Acts 3:14).

These religious leaders asked Peter and John how they did this miracle (Acts 4:7). In Peter's answer, did he point to himself or did he point to Jesus (Acts 4:10)? _____
Peter told these men that the GREAT HEALER (Acts 4:10) is also the GREAT SAVIOUR (Acts 4:12), and He is the ONLY SAVIOUR (Acts 4:12)!

What did these men notice about Peter and John (Acts 4:13):

- a. **that they were very intelligent and well educated**
- b. **that they had been trained at the best schools in the land**
- c. **that they were very handsome**
- d. **that they had been with Jesus**

Jesus made the difference! He can make the difference in your life too!

The Harsh Threatenings

The religious leaders wished that this miracle had never taken place. They wished that they could deny this miracle and say, "Listen everybody, this man was not really healed. It's just a trick. Peter and John are skillful magicians and they have fooled all of you." Were they able to say this (Acts 4:14,16)? _____

They wished that they could punish Peter and John and even put them to death, but they were afraid of the people (Acts 4:21). There were thousands of people who were rejoicing at the great miracle which had been done (Acts 4:4) and these people knew that Peter and John had done nothing wrong.

There was only one thing they could do--THREATEN THEM (Acts 4:17,21)! They commanded them not to S _____ and not to T _____ in the name of Jesus (Acts 4:18). "If you speak or teach you'll be in BIG TROUBLE!" This was their great threat!

<p>The Religious Leaders said:</p> <p>DON'T SPEAK</p> <p>and</p> <p>DON'T TEACH (Acts 4:17-18).</p>	<p>The Risen Lord said:</p> <p>"P _____ the GOSPEL" (Mark 16:15)</p> <p>and</p> <p>"TEACH them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20).</p>
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Who should they obey? The religious leaders or the risen Lord?

_____ Who should they listen to, the religious leaders or God (Acts 4:20)? _____ Peter and John said, "We must speak the things which we have _____ and _____" (Acts 4:20).

TO SPEAK OR NOT TO SPEAK--that is the question! Who did Peter and John fear the most--the religious leaders or God? _____ If they should continue to speak who would be displeased? _____ If they should stop speaking about the Lord who would be displeased? _____ The one Person Peter and John did not want to displease was _____.

The Prayer for Boldness

Peter and John were released from prison and immediately went to meet with the other believers (Acts 4:23). What was the first thing the believers did when they learned about these threats from the Jews?

- They complained.**
- They decided that being a Christian was too difficult and they should find something else to do.**
- They prayed to the God of heaven.**
- They argued with each other. Some thought that they should continue preaching and others thought they should stop preaching.**

They brought their problem to God! That was the first thing they did. In Acts 4:29 we discover that they asked God for one thing in particular. Did they say, "Lord, you know how they have threatened us. Now, please protect our lives and keep us from being persecuted"? _____ These people prayed for COURAGE and BOLDNESS to speak God's Word without fear! They prayed that God would help them to do the very thing that the religious leaders did not want them to do! The religious leaders said, "DON'T SPEAK!" (Acts 4:18) and they prayed, "Lord help us **TO SPEAK Thy Word with all boldness!**" (Acts 4:29). Did God answer this prayer in a wonderful way (Acts 4:31)? _____

Today God wants us to speak for Him. If God has given us His great gift of salvation (Romans 6:23), should not we be willing and eager to tell others about it? If a doctor discovered a cure for cancer which could save thousands of lives, would not he want others to know about it? GOOD NEWS should be spread! People need to know that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour (Acts 4:12). Just like the early Christians, we can pray and ask God for courage and boldness to share His Word with others. The same God who gave them boldness to speak then is the same God who can give us boldness to speak today!

MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL BALLOTS

