

Acts 3:1-11 Look at us – Look to Him

How would you describe as a Hopeless situation?

A) A situation in which we are helpless to change or improve in anyway.

B) That is the situation that we come upon in Acts 3 – A man who has been lame from birth { 3:2

1) A man who is over 40 yrs old {4:22

C) A man that Peter himself identified as being helpless. { 4:9

This man was helpless to fix himself – Doctors couldn't fix him – family couldn't fix him

A) His daily routine was to be carried to the gate of the temple everyday – sit and beg for alms

B) Not a lot of hope in that Picture.

1) Epitaphy of simple seeking to exist and get by.

C) Hopeless until the name of Jesus is brought into the picture.

We left off in Chapter 2 having seen the birth of the Church on the day of Pentecost –

A) Peter's first sermon – 3,000 saved - a little nervous I will get better

B) Church living communally – necessity – sharing

C) Unified – Devoted to 4 things

Acts 2:42 “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

D) Wonder – Joy – Contagious – people getting saved every day.

Acts 3 Gives us the setting for this miracle.

V.1 Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. { 3pm

A) Here we find the apostles continuing in the normal routine of Judaism – Temple 3 times a day to pray

B) Why? Christianity was not meant to replace Judaism it was meant to fulfill it!

1) They were aware that the new faith and the old discipline could walk hand in hand

C) So they continued with the same disciplines in going to the temple and prayer – new meaning

1) Religion was replaced by relationship – Practice with a person.

The Jewish day began at 6 o'clock in the morning and ended at 6 o'clock in the evening.

A) For the devout Jew there were three special hours of prayer—9 a.m., 12 midday and 3 p.m.

B) 3pm special hour – Hour of the Lord's death.

He cried – It is finished – Veil was torn in two!

V.2 Completes the setting: “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;”

A) Now this man picked a great place to beg for several reasons.

B) It was called the Beautiful gate for a reason – It was very pretty –

1) Josephus tells us “the gate was fifty cubits high and forty cubits wide, was overlaid with Corinthian bronze, and was such a work of art that it “•far exceeded in value those plated with silver set in gold. •” •

C) Because it was a beautiful setting – many people entered thru that gate – most popular.

D) Begging at the entrance to the temple – was also smart because – Jewish system

1) People sought to earn God's favor by their performance

E) What better place to solicit alms – than from people going to meet with God – be excepted

1) "God did you see what I gave that guy out there!"

F) Daily he was placed there! Fixture – He was seen every day - { No longer noticed

Now came the Divine encounter – RD V.3-6

....Alms and got legs J

Notice: Peter didn't look away – that is what we do at times person in need – look away.

A) V.4 Fixing their eyes on the man – NLT looking intently. NIV Looked straight – ESV directed his gaze

B) Principle: Before we can be used to meet a need we need to see the need.

1) Can't ignore the needs around us – His eyes and His heart.

C) Interesting – They might have passed by this man many times – over the previous weeks

1) Jesus might have passed by this man

D) This day would be different. {Sensitive to Spirit

Peter's response: LOOK AT US

A) Why did Peter want eye contact?

B) Picture this man – in his 40's and for yrs maybe 20 plus years he has been dropped off every day – gate

C) Maybe first went – desperation – looked at pp

1) Help me – please

But after yrs of rejection: Yrs of being ignored

A) Yrs of feeling shame – this is the only way he can exist

B) Yrs of feeling like a pain to the people who have to bring him there every day – and then take him home

C) I would think this guy was dejected – head down

1) Routine – easier not to look – because then he didn't see the pp ignoring him

D) Didn't see them turn their head the other way.

E) He was a broken man in more ways than one.

So that might have been part of the reason why Peter wanted eye contact – the guy was looking down

A) But I think it was more than that -

B) Peter says LOOK AT US! - Do we look like guys with money – { Pull pockets out of his pants

1) Text supports that – Peter says Silver and gold we don't have.

C) Peter is saying: Look at US!!!! – We have nothing to offer you –

1) Last 3 yrs – no pay Check – lousy fishermen

D) Look at us – We don't possess anything in and of ourselves – to help you.

Application for us: We live in a world of broken pp

A) Broken by abuse/ addiction/ Divorce/ Bankruptcy

Broken by – pp taking advantage = broken trust

B) World filled with hopelessness { Can't trust govt

1) Guy flies a plane into a building

2) Suicide rate of young tripled in past 2 decades

LOOK AT US! – Look around –

A) What do we have to help this world. { Hospital

B) We don't have enough money –

1) Not smart enough – talented enough

C) We don't have anything of any substance to offer to a hurting world

D) When I look at the needs in this world – NC – Vista – I get overwhelmed - - look at me – US

E) Look at us – We are in trouble: LOOK TO HIM!

LOOK 2 HIM – My heart is filled with Hope!

A) Psalm 3:3

**“But You, O Lord, are a shield for me,
My glory and the One who lifts up my head.”**

**B) Notice v.6 again - "Silver and gold I do not have, *but what I do have*
{ He did have something – He wasn't empty- neither are we – We have something – infinite worth/ Infinite power/**

"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."

V.7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them — walking, leaping, and praising God.

Picture this scene The poor man knew he could not walk, so he did not budge.

A) But Peter, doing a typically Peter thing, grabbed him by the right hand and began to hoist him up.

B) At that moment (the Greek says, “*instantly*”) everything came together.

C) Remember Luke – is a Doctor – He uses – some medical terms here. –

1) The word translated *feet* is only used by Luke, and occurs nowhere else. It indicates his discrimination between different parts of the human heel.

D) The phrase *ankle-bones* is again a medical phrase to be found nowhere else.

1) The word “*leaping up*” describes the coming suddenly into socket of something that was out of place,

E) So this then is a very careful medical description of what happened in connection with this man.”

1) Instantly – strength entered his joints – everything that was out of place – was put back

F) In that moment – strength to walk

Power in the name of Jesus!

A)Not magical name – name didn't have special powers

B)The name spoke of the Person –Who Jesus was

C)Early Church was Anchored into Jesus!

1)Believed Rez Lord – God in human flesh

D)Savior/ Cross – Way truth and life...no man!

1)Great Physician

They were also walking – moving forward in the reality that Jesus was still with them!

A)His spirit indwelling them – empowering them

B)What they had to give to the world was Jesus!

1)Acts 2:21 – Call upon His name –saved

C)See Later – Acts 4:18/5:40 – Don't speak of His name!

1)They couldn't – They were all about Jesus

D)Everything else in life was a distant 2nd to Him

CAN WE SAY THAT?

A)Jesus just a part of your life – or is He at the center?

B)Does your life revolve around Him?

1)Guys that is how we like Peter move in the miraculous

C)We live in a broken world – with broken pp all around us- what we can give them is Jesus

D)It is true that not everyone that gets prayed for gets healed physically – { others that day.

But for everyone who believes in Jesus as their Savior – Everyone who surrenders

A) There is an immediate Change that occurs

B) Immediate Cleansing – Sins forgiven/ forgotten.

C) Immediate Change in destiny – Hell to heaven

1) Immediate change in standing with God –

Enemy to friend – Stranger to family

2) Darkness to light –

D) 2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”

That Change is immediate: - We need to believe that! 1st Personally – our lives

A) Not only do Peter and John provide principles *for* us, but the lame man is a picture *of* us.

B) You see, like the crippled man, we too were lame from birth. Adam, our father in the flesh, fell.

1) And so great was his fall that all of his descendants were born lame.

C) Unable to walk with God, or after the things of God, we sat outside the temple—

1) alienated from God because of our sin—and begged enough silver or gold to get us by for one more day.

And then something happened.

A) Heard a message about Jesus – friend / Church/ Crusade -

**B)When we least expected it, Jesus grabbed us by the hand and said,
“Stand up and walk. I’m calling you into the kingdom.**

1) I’m taking you to heaven.”

c)In that moment – we were immediately transformed!

1) We need to walk in the power – transformed – set free – we don’t believe it.

We continue to give into our flesh –

A)We continue to live in condemnation – because we don’t believe we have really been cleansed.

B)Do you think this guy went back to the gate the next day to beg. – No way – Transformed – healed

1)So he lived like it

C)Jesus transforms – makes new – change on the inside that affects the outside.

Church we need to believe that is what Jesus does and walk in that

A)That is what we have to offer to broken pp living in a broken world.

B)A message of transformation – Instant –

1)Might take a while to see the affects on the outside

But what takes place inside is immediate.

**Peter says – I don’t have any money – but what I do I have I give to you –
In the name of Jesus – rise walk**

A)Church – we do have something to impart to this needy world – we have Jesus

B) We have the Message of the gospel – There is power in the name of Jesus to instantly transform!

1) We need to believe it – Share Jesus

C) Give pp Jesus – What I have I give to you! – We have answer – Jesus changes lives.

D) We need to look for broken pp – seize opportunities – Believing power of gospel

In the tiny compartment of a passenger train sat a young lieutenant in uniform. Next to him sat his commanding officer, a crusty old general.

Across from him sat a beautiful young lady. Next to her was her grandmother.

HRS passed – Lieutenant & young lady attraction

Tunnel – dark – Kiss / followed by a slap

As the train emerged from the tunnel, the four travelers looked at one another with a variety of expressions.

The young lady was delighted that the lieutenant would kiss her at that moment, but puzzled as to why her grandmother would slap him.

The grandmother was angry that the lieutenant had the audacity to kiss her granddaughter, but grateful to the general who slapped the young man in line.

The general was proud of his lieutenant for kissing the young lady, but confused and smarting from the slap of the young girl.

The lieutenant was hardly able to contain the laughter within him, as he alone knew what had actually transpired in the tunnel.

Under the cover of darkness, he had seized the moment **to kiss the girl and smack the general.**

Seize the moment, folks! Watch for the moment of the miraculous when the Lord will use you in this dark tunnel of time to slap the Enemy in the face, as you heal a hurting world.

Finish up by noting the reaction of the People.

RD v.9-11

People heard this guy walking and leaping and praising God – they ran to see what was going on.

A) All formalism was gone –

B) They said isn't that the guy – the man ... lame

1) They didn't even know his name – that is how insignificant he was

C) Now they were filled with 3 things

#1 V.10 Wonder = awe and Reverence – presence of God was near.

#2 V.10 Amazement = ecstatic – it literally means to stand outside yourself – they saw God working and they were blown away by it. They were floored

#3 V.11 Greatly Amazed – actually astounded

A) Little boy walking into the magic kingdom for the first time.

B) Parents birth of their first Child.

C) New Christians –

What about us? Filled with wonder any more?

A) What kills wonder? 3 things

#1 Cynicism: I wasn't born yesterday – Can't trust pp – Hear story – explain it away – not God

#2 Skepticism: I can't trust what I am seeing!

A) There has to be an explanation – right

B) Why was Jesus so into Children

1) And Why did he say – Become like little Children

C) Little kids believe in a big God – God who can do anything- they pray for big things – Cancer

D) As adults we know too much – we know how things work – we know the obstacles

E) We need to get back to being Childlike again!

#3 Fatalism:

A) Fatalism says – there might be a God –but He has left everything to fate

B) We are left here to figure it out – Fate – God doesn't step in – things will run their course.

C) There are many Christians who are fatalistic in their actions – they don't pray anymore –

1) Just waiting for God to do what He is going to do
Let things run their course

D) Lousy way to live!

Hosea 6:3 God's going forth is as certain as the dawn;

The sun coming up is pretty certain!

A)Not worried about that –

B)Worriers = Every worry – sun going up

C)God's workings are that certain!

D)He is working all around us – He is working in us

E)He invites us to be a part of it!