

=THE BOOK OF ACTS=
Lesson 3
The Lame Man Healed - Acts 3

AIM: to teach my pupils the story of the lame man and his healing, and the purpose of this story, which is found in Acts 3.

POINT OF CONTACT: Since all of this took place at the temple, and because Peter and John were going to the temple to pray (or in other words, they were going to church), let us discuss how long each pupil has attended our church. Some have come since infancy; others moved here from some distance away; still others may have been reached for Christ by our soul winners.

- I. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MIRACLE AND ITS LOCATION IN THE BOOK OF ACTS. You will recall that Luke wrote two books in the New Testament: one was the book of Luke, and the second was the book of Acts. In the first verse of the book of Acts, he reminds us that he wrote the book of Luke to tell what Jesus began to do and to teach. Hence, the book of Acts is to tell that, even though Jesus has gone back to Heaven, He is still working, and He is still carrying out the work that He began to do in Luke. In other words, the work of Christ is still going on after He has gone back to Heaven. The same work that He did during His earthly ministry is being done in the book of Acts and even unto this day. We cannot read this story of the healing of the man who was a cripple from birth without being reminded of the story in the life of our Lord when, passing through Bethesda porches, He found a man who had been infirmed for 38 years, and He healed him. It is so like this story. Since Jesus did this work, the Holy Spirit inspired the first work after Pentecost to be a similar one, reminding us that the work of Christ is going to continue. He is still at work, and He is doing exactly what He had done in the days of His flesh. It is significant that this is the first story mentioned after Pentecost, and it is so much like the aforementioned one.

- II. THE PLAN OF SALVATION IN THE STORY. Read Acts 3:2.
 1. “And a certain man...” Any time in the Bible we have a “certain man” mentioned, it no doubt represents the entire human race. So this man certainly is a picture of every man.
 2. “...lame...” In other words, he was helpless and could not lift himself. This is a picture of the human race. Man by nature is lost and cannot lift himself into salvation.
 3. “...from his mother’s womb...” He had always been lame. He was over 40 years of age, and he was born in his present condition. Once again, this pictures salvation. Read Psalm 51:5 and Psalm 58:3 in connection with this. Man is by nature a sinner and is born in that condition.
 4. “...was carried...” This once again shows human instrumentality in salvation. He would not have been at the place of healing and salvation unless someone had carried him to that place. Let us stress the importance of bringing people to Jesus Christ and the importance of bringing people to God’s house—friends, loved ones, family, visitors, etc.
 5. “...whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple...” These people knew where to bring this man. They brought him to church. Many people cannot be won by a soul winner, but they can be brought to church and be saved in God’s house. Let us stress the importance here of bringing our friends to church to hear the message. Oftentimes people who fail in soul winning succeed in bringing someone to hear the preacher, and then these people who are brought are saved.
 6. “...Look on us.” Acts 3:4. Peter and John knew they had the answer; in fact, they knew they had the only answer. The answer was in the Christ, Who was in their hearts, and the Holy Spirit, Who now indwelt them. Let us never be timid to let people know we have the answer for their need in Jesus Christ. He is the answer!
 7. “...Silver and gold have I none...” Acts 3:6. This pictures the wonderful truth that salvation cannot be purchased. It is not for sale; it is the gift of God. (See Romans 6:23.) There is nothing we can do to earn it; there is nothing we can do to buy it; there is nothing we can do to deserve it. Silver and gold are of no avail. (Teacher, to illustrate the fact that salvation is a gift, give away a coin. The

value of this coin would be determined by the financial condition of the teacher. Anything from a penny on up would be satisfactory. Show them that all they have to do is take it. The first time, ask who wants the coin; then, whoever wants it, have him come and get it. Ask them if this is a picture of salvation. Salvation is not us even coming to get it. Salvation is our accepting it; it is brought to us by the Holy Spirit. Now take the coin to that person and give it to him. All he has to do is receive God's offer.)

8. "...such as I have give I thee..." Review Acts 3:6. Notice especially the word "give." Here again we have salvation as a gift, not something that we can earn.
9. "...lifted him up..." See Acts 3:7. This is exactly what Jesus does when we receive His salvation. He lifts us up and makes us a new creature.
10. "...immediately..." Review Acts 3:7. Salvation is an instantaneous thing. It is not a process. Explain to the class here that it is not a series of lessons or confirmation; it is not learning the dogma of the church or growing into membership or religion; it is receiving God's gift and immediately being lifted up.

III. THE RESULTS OF SALVATION.

1. "...his feet and ankle bones received strength." Review Acts 3:7. Something came into his body and changed him. (Teach the class here about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and that every Christian has a Person living within him and walking with him everywhere he goes. This could not be stressed too much in our teachings.)
2. "...and entered with them into the temple..." Notice Acts 3:8. The first thing he did after being healed was go to church with them. This is the thing that every newborn Christian should do immediately—go to church. (Teacher, talk a while here about faithfulness to the services.)
3. "...and praising God." (Acts 3:8) He was making public his decision. This is a public profession. He went to church and told everybody. (Talk to the class members about making a public profession. See if there are any who have been saved but have never yet walked the aisle—or those who have walked the aisle who have never yet been baptized. Lead them to make a public profession of what God has done.)
4. Notice that his life was a constant testimony to the power of God. Read Acts 3:9. All the people saw him walking. Perhaps there is no form of testimony as strong as the one of a changed life, when people can see what God has done for us.

IV. SOME PRACTICAL TEACHINGS OF THE MIRACLE.

1. Peter and John were going to church. Notice Acts 3:1. They were going to the temple. This was the temple rebuilt by Herod. First there had been Solomon's Temple, which had been destroyed by the Babylonians. (II Chronicles 36:19) Second was the rebuilding of the temple by the returning remnant after the Babylonian Captivity. (Ezra 5:2; 6:15) Finally, Herod the Great rebuilt the temple beginning about 20 B.C. This took 46 years. (John 2:20) This is the place of the miracle of Acts 3. It was an open court or plaza where crowds gathered. The time was about 3:00 p.m. There were three times of prayer, so it is said: at the third hour (9:00 a.m.), at the sixth hour (12:00 noon), and at the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.). Hence, this miracle took place about 3:00 p.m. It is interesting that Peter and John went to the temple to pray. They had seen the earthly ministry of Christ; they had seen Him transfigured; they had seen Him in Gethsemane, but now He is gone. They too must have the strength of fellowship with God's people and worship. If they needed it then, just a few days after Christ had gone back, then we need it now—2,000 years later!
2. It is interesting that the lame man went to the temple to ask alms. This is always the case. The best people are God's people. The ones most likely to share and give are the ones who have received God's gift of salvation.