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## Ministry of the Holy Spirit

### Acts 3:1-10

#### Lesson 7 – Obedience Creates Expectations

**Acts 3:1-10 (NIV)** <sup>1</sup> One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer--at three in the afternoon. <sup>2</sup> Now a man crippled 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. <sup>3</sup> When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. <sup>4</sup> Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" <sup>5</sup> So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. <sup>6</sup> Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." <sup>7</sup> Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. <sup>8</sup> He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. <sup>9</sup> When all the people saw him walking and praising God, <sup>10</sup> 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.

#### Study Questions:

1. If someone were to make this statement, how would you respond: It is impossible to be obedient to God yet still sin?
2. **Hebrews 10:25 (NIV)** <sup>25</sup> Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.  
This verse speaks to the importance of worship service. Why is regular worship service attendance so important and what will be the negatives experienced if you are not in regular attendance?
3. Why is the following statement true: When we are disobedient to God, we cannot pray, serve or worship effectively.
4. The sermon spoke about a term "need seeker."
  - a. Define this term and explain what it means to be a need seeker in your life.
5. How does the enemy keep many Christians grounded in a place of low or no expectations?
6. What does it mean that we are ambassadors of Christ?
  - a. What responsibilities do we have as ambassadors?
  - b. When God says to bless someone in a certain way/amount and we choose to do less than the Holy Spirit has put on our heart, what are the consequences?
    - i. What are some of the reasons some choose to do less that God put on their heart especially when it comes to money?
  - c. How did it impact your walk with God and ministry for God?
7. Peter is a vessel that God worked through...God is also looking to work miracles in you and through you.
  - a. What specifically do you need to do to put yourself in position to be greatly used by God to bring miracle in your own life and the lives of others.
  - b. Have you or been witness to a miraculous healing by God? If so how did it impact your walk with God and service to the kingdom?
8. Our natural instincts are to be compassionate toward the less fortunate those who have found themselves beggars, homeless and needy. There is a distinct difference between a hand out and hand up, however both are needed...How do you discern the difference and give example? What are ways that you see our ministry doing both?
9. Share your greatest takeaway from the sermon/lesson for this week?

## F. The First Recorded Miracle: Lessons for Witnessing, 3:1-11

(3:1-11) **Introduction**: this is the church's first recorded miracle. God was now ready to reach another great harvest of souls. It was now time to attract the attention of the people, so He reached down and healed a single man, a man whom everyone knew, and filled the man so full of the Holy Spirit that he just went wild with excitement and joy. Such a miracle and behavior naturally attracted the attention of the public.

Note: the miracle was more than just a miracle. It was a *sign*, a demonstration of two things.

⇒ Jesus is alive. His power is just as active upon earth today as it was when He walked upon earth.

⇒ Jesus is now working through His followers. Through them, He is reaching out to save and heal the world. His followers are now His instruments, His emissaries, His ambassadors, His representatives, His messengers, His *witnesses* to a world lost in suffering and death, sin and shame.

In this first recorded miracle of the church, God is demonstrating His power, and bearing witness through His followers. In so doing, He has given us some of the greatest lessons on witnessing to be found anyplace.

1. Jesus is now working through His disciples (v.1-5).

2. Jesus is alive: His presence and power are still active upon earth (v.6-8).

3. The results (v.9-11).

**1. (3:1-5) Ministry—Sympathy**: Jesus is now working through His disciples. This is one thing Jesus wants people to know. His presence and His power are still at work, still available to men. His great love and concern for the world is still being manifested through the lives of His disciples. In fact, Jesus has...

- no feet but our feet. • no hands but our hands. • no voice but our voice.

If we do not go and do and speak the work of God, His work does not get done. Note four significant lessons.

1. Jesus works through those who are faithful in prayer (see Deeper Study #1—Acts 3:1 for discussion).

2. Jesus works through those who look and see the desperate need of the suffering, both those who suffer in spirit and body. How many years had this man been sitting there begging? He had been a cripple for over forty years. Imagine! Forty years or more, a cripple from birth, never having walked a single step. Had he been carried and placed at the temple's entrance to beg...

- for ten years? • for twenty years? • for thirty years?

We are not told, but no doubt he had been a beggar for years upon years. Everyone knew him (Acts 3:10).

Picture the man...

- a helpless cripple
- poor

- unable to work
- being ignored
- with no one to take him in and help
- without family
- having to fend for himself
- never fitting in, never being accepted

Note: he was not even looking up at Peter and John when he asked for alms (Acts 3:4). Years of having people look the other way had taught him he was different and did not fit in. From the first, even as a small child, he had probably grown into a shy, withdrawn, embarrassed person, a person unable to look people in the eye.

The point is this: the man was hurting *within* as well as *without*. He was a living picture of so many in the world...

- persons who are wounded and suffering so much (both within and without) from the neglect of men—from an unconcerned and selfish and hoarding world—from a world that will not let go and share what it has with those who do not have.

But even more critical...

- persons who are suffering so much from the neglect of God's people, the very people who profess to know the love and care of God for all, and yet who act just as unconcerned and selfish and hoard just as much as the world.

The needs exist and abound. They are all around us. Jesus can work only through the people who see the desperate needs of hurting men.

3. Jesus works through those who fasten their eyes upon the need. It is not enough just to see the desperate needs of the world—just to see a person hurting and suffering. A person must stop and *fasten his eyes* upon the need. The word for "fastening his eyes" (*atenisas*) means fixed attention; an earnest, intense gaze, continuous, steadfast attention. It is seeing the need and focusing upon it. It is continuing to focus one's...

- sight, • concern, • attention, ...upon meeting the need until it is met.

Peter looked and saw the man in need and *would not look away*. He could have looked away and just passed by the man. Most people did, but not Peter. He was now indwelt by the Spirit of God, and he was on earth to meet the needs of the world for the Lord. Therefore, he fastened his attention upon the man, being full of concern and compassion.

**Thought 1.** The great need of the hour is to see the needs of the world and to fix our attention upon them.

4. Jesus works through those who reach out to meet the need.

⇒ It is not enough to see the needs of the world.

⇒ It is not enough to fasten one's attention upon the needs of the world.

Just seeing and being concerned over the needs of the world does not meet the needs. Peter acted; in fact, he did something dramatic. The need existed; it was there. He knew the Lord cared, and he was the representative of the Lord. It was up to him to show the Lord's care.

Note the words: "Look on us." The words were authoritative and arresting. They stirred an expectancy within the man to receive something.

The words of Peter demonstrated that...

- he had a sure *confidence* that he himself belonged to God; he was God's representative.
- he had a *plan* to help the man.
- he had an *expectancy*, a genuine faith that God would help him to meet the need.
- he had a *willingness* to act, to reach out by faith and meet the need.

**Thought 1**. All this is essential if we are to reach out in the power of God to meet the needs of the world. In fact, the needs of the world will be met...

- only as we are confident that we ourselves belong to God, that we are His representatives upon earth.
- only as we think and plan how to meet the need.
- only as we are expectant, believing God will meet the need through us.
- only as we are willing to act, step out by faith to meet the need.

**"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).**

**"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**

**"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Romans 15:1).**

**"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).**

## **DEEPER STUDY #1 (3:1) Prayer**

**2. (3:6-8) Jesus Christ, Power:** Jesus is alive; His presence and power are still active upon the earth. This is the most important thing God wants people to know. His Son, Jesus Christ, is alive. He is not dead, having passed from the scene of world history. He is alive and exalted to the right hand of the Father forever. His presence and power are still active upon the earth and will continue to be active in the lives of His true followers until He returns. His power is still available to men. He still loves and is still greatly concerned for the world and for every person in the world. But note three significant facts that must be understood.

1. Jesus' presence and power are not found in silver and gold. Peter had...

- no silver or gold. • no money or material goods. • no food or clothing. • no housing or shelter.
- no social or community services.

Therefore, Peter could not give those things to the man. But note: it was such things that the man wanted and expected, and it was what the man seemed to need *in the eyes of the world*.

**"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).**

However it was not what the man needed. It was not the basic need of the man. The man needed to be changed both within and without. If he was changed physically and spiritually, he would be able to walk and be motivated to work.

When God looked at the man, He saw the man's spiritual need and his physical need. Therefore, God's concern was to cure and change the man completely. God was out to take care of the *whole man*, and the answer to changing the *whole man* was not found in silver and gold.

**Thought 1.** The necessities of life are just that, things that are necessary to life. But having the necessities of life are not the basic need of man. Man's spiritual welfare is his basic need. If his spirit is right, he is right with God and man. If his spirit is wrong, he is at odds with God and man. If his motivation is strong, he is strong. If his motivation is weak, he is weak. What God is after is to change man by making him *completely whole*, so that man can be productive: fulfill his purpose in the world and make the contribution he is supposed to make. God is concerned with whatever it is (spiritual or physical) that keeps a man from knowing Him personally and from fulfilling his purpose on earth.

2. Jesus' presence and power are found in Jesus' name. (See Deeper Study #2—Acts 3:6 for discussion.)

3. Jesus' presence and power are still at work, working miracles and meeting the needs of people. Note this:

⇒ Peter reached down to take the man by the right hand and lift him up. (What faith!)

⇒ The man let him. (What trust!)

⇒ Jesus healed him. (What power!)

**Thought 1.** How much we need to trust Jesus—His presence and power! How much we need to quit questioning and arguing over whether or not we still have the right to call upon Jesus' name, over whether or not we can still trust His presence and power! It is time to trust Jesus, to believe Him, *His love and care* for the suffering and lost souls of the world. It is time to go forth in the *full* presence and power of the Lord who *is alive*, whose presence and power are still available for the earth!

**"Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matthew 17:20).**

**"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13).**

**"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24).**

**"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Ephes. 1:19).**

**"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephes. 3:20).**

Note: the man was completely changed, his whole being, attitude, and life. He was no more shy and reserved, embarrassed and ashamed about not *fitting in* and being accepted. He was saved and healed, inside and out; his whole personality was changed, and he wanted all to know it. He was...

- standing
- leaping
- walking
- praising God

### **DEEPER STUDY #2 (3:6) Name— Jesus Christ, Name**

**3. (3:9-11) Conclusion:** the results were twofold. The people knew the man had been truly healed. They had seen the man for years sitting as a cripple and begging for help. There could be no question about the miracle.

They were filled with wonder and amazement at the change, "at that which had happened unto him." And they were attracted, wondering and wanting to see what had caused such a miracle.

**Thought 1.** A changed person, a person who is truly changed by Christ, will cause people to stand in amazement and to wonder. A changed person will stir people to desire the same miracle in their own lives or in the lives of some loved one.

**"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).**

**"For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing" (1 Thes. 1:8).**

**"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).**

**"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul" (Psalms 66:16).**

**"I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses" (Isaiah 63:7).**

## DEEPER STUDY #1

(3:1) **Prayer:** Peter and John were faithful prayer warriors. Note the phrase "the ninth hour," which was around three o'clock in the afternoon. The Jews observed three stated times for prayer...

- the third hour (9 a.m.).
- the sixth hour (12 noon).
- the ninth hour (3 p.m.).

The very fact that Peter and John were going into the temple to pray indicates they were men of prayer. Imagine having three specific times for prayer every day! Not just praying while on the run, not just *praying always* while we go about our daily affairs, which is what we so often claim and use to salve our consciences. But imagine! Actually having...

- three set periods,
- three concentrated times,

- three prayer sessions,

...when we can shut the world out and focus solely upon God.

Such was the prayer life of Peter and John, and such was the reason Jesus was able to work through them in meeting the desperate needs of suffering men.

**"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour" (Acts 3:1).**

**"On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour" (Acts 10:9).**

**"Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice" (Psalms 55:17).**

**"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (Daniel 6:10).**

## DEEPER STUDY #2

(3:6) **Name—Jesus Christ, Name:** to call upon the name of someone means to call upon the authority, power, office, nature, and character of the person. The person's name stands for all that the person is.

⇒ A king may send a decree throughout his kingdom. The decree goes out *under* his name, under his authority.

⇒ A government or business official may send a memo throughout his department. The memo goes out *under* his name, under his authority.

When Peter said, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk," he was proclaiming: "It is the name, the power, the authority, the Person of Jesus Christ who will heal you." Jesus Christ is alive—His power, His authority, His name, His Person is still active upon earth.

Now note three critical facts about calling upon "the name of Jesus Christ."

1. It is the name or the power of Jesus that meets the need. It is not Peter, nor is it silver and gold. Silver and gold can never bring health, not permanently. Ill health or disease or accident eventually catches us all; and when it does, no amount of money is of any help. It is Christ alone—His presence and power—that can meet our need.

2. Peter *knew* that the power of Jesus Christ dwelt *within* Christ Himself and only in Christ. But he also knew that he *possessed* the presence and power of Christ within his body, and that he was a *called* representative of Christ upon earth.

Note what Peter said: "Such as I have give I thee." He had the presence and power of Christ. It was that which he could give. In fact, that was his very purpose for being on earth, to represent Christ and to share Christ's power with those who were sick and hurting throughout the world.

3. Peter acted first, not the man. Peter was the Lord's representative (ambassador). Jesus had no way to reach the man; He had already ascended into heaven. Jesus had no body, no hands, no feet, no voice upon earth except those of the men and women whom He had left behind. Note two critical things.

⇒ If any act or work was to be done for God, they had to do it.

⇒ Only what they did would get done.

**Thought 1**. The same is true of us. Just think of the awesome truth: we are the ones who must act and take the first step.

⇒ Only what we do will get done.

⇒ If any act or work is to be done for God, we have to do it. There is no one else.

**"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).**

**"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15:16).**

**"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21).**

**"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**

**"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).**

Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - Commentary - The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Acts.