

The Ministering Church

(Acts 3)

PASSAGE:

Acts 3:1-16 HCSB Now Peter and John were going up together to the temple complex at the hour of prayer at three in the afternoon. (2) **And a man who was lame from his mother's womb** was carried there and placed every day at the temple gate called Beautiful, so he could beg from those entering the temple complex. (3) When he saw Peter and John about to enter the temple complex, **he asked for help.** (4) Peter, along with John, looked at him intently and said, "Look at us." (5) So he turned to them, **expecting to get something from them.** (6) But Peter said, "I have neither silver nor gold, but **what I have, I give to you:** In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!" (7) **Then, taking him by the right hand he raised him up, and at once his feet and ankles became strong.** (8) So he jumped up, stood, and started to walk, and **he entered the temple complex with them--walking, leaping, and praising God.** (9) All the people saw him walking and praising God, (10) and they recognized that he was the one who used to sit and beg at the Beautiful Gate of the temple complex. So they were filled with awe and astonishment at what had happened to him. (11) **While he was holding on to Peter and John,** all the people, greatly amazed, ran toward them in what is called Solomon's Colonnade. (12) When Peter saw this, he addressed the people: "**Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this? Or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him walk?**" (13) The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you handed over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. (14) But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked to have a murderer given to you. (15) And you killed the source of life, whom God raised from the dead; we are witnesses of this. (16) **By faith in His name, His name has made this man strong,** whom you see and know. **So the faith that comes through Him has given him this perfect health in front of all of you.**

Who they ministered to:

Those outside the Temple, were looking to those inside the temple. Vs 2:
"And a man who was lame from his mother's womb was carried there and placed every day at the temple gate called Beautiful, so he could beg from those entering the temple complex."

- ✎ People are hungry for what the church claims to offer
 - The problem is that so often what the church claims to offer and actually gives are two different things.
- ✎ Social reform should be lead by the church.
- ✎ When God moves and blesses His people, the community around them is blessed as well.

The man at the gate was simply doing what he knew to do.

- ✎ Most unbelievers, are simply living their life and trying to cope as best as they know how.

The early church did not have to look for opportunities to minister. Vs 1:
"Now Peter and John were going up together to the temple complex at the hour of prayer at three in the afternoon."

- ✚ they simply walked in the power and presence of God and the opportunities came their way.
- ✚ The early church ministered where they were and with what they had.

Why they ministered:

They knew who they were. Vs. 4: *“Peter, along with John, looked at him intently and said, “Look at us.””*

- ✚ Priests and Kings
- ✚ Saints called according to God’s purpose
- ✚ Ambassadors for Jesus

They knew what they had. Vs. 6: *“But Peter said, “I have neither silver nor gold, but what I have...”*

- ✚ They knew they had been filled with the Spirit.
- ✚ The power that raised Jesus from the dead dwelt in them.
- ✚ Not out of arrogance or self importance – but because God’s Word said.

They knew who it came from. Vs. 12: *““Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this? Or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him walk?”*

- ✚ They believed they were the temple of God.
- ✚ They knew what had already happened through them on Pentecost was not from them but God.

They knew they could give it. *“...but what I have, I give to you:”*

- ✚ They knew their commission.
- ✚ They knew their calling.
- ✚ They knew their responsibility.

How they ministered:

By faith. Vs. 16: *“By faith ...the faith that comes through Him”*

- ✚ **This is the currency of heaven and the way of life for the believer.**
 - **Romans 1:17** *“For in it God’s righteousness is revealed from faith to faith, just as it is written: The righteous will live by faith.”*
- ✚ **Faith to faith is how we live.**
 - We cannot operate apart from God.
 - His indwelling presence in us gives us power to do His will.
 - His presence dwells in us and flows through us by faith.
- ✚ **God increases our strength by increasing our faith.**
 - **Luke 17:3-5 HCSB** *“Be on your guard. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. (4) And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and comes back to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.” (5) The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.””*
 - They did not ask for more strength to do God’s will, but more faith.
 - **Nehemiah 8:12**, *“...for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”*
 - **Webster’s definition:** “Joy is a delight of the mind, from the consideration of the present or assured approaching possession of a good.”
 - Assurance that God has and will keep His word.

In Jesus' name. Vs. 16: *"By faith in His name, His name has made this man strong, whom you see and know."*

- ✧ **The trick of the enemy is to get us living from "strength to strength."**
 - **Philippians 4:13,** *"I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me."*
 - Christ strengthens me through faith.
 - It is His strength and not mine.
- ✧ **Faith is useless if it is not in the right place.**
 - Our Strength
 - Our faith
 - This is presumptive
 - This leads to deception.
 - God's word is not true because I believe it – rather, I believe it because it is true.
- ✧ **Faith must come from and rest in Jesus.**
 - **Hebrews 12:1-2 HCSB** *"Therefore since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us, and run with endurance the race that lies before us, (2) keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and perfecter of our faith,..."*

The Result of their Ministry:

The man was able to stand on his own feet.

- ✧ Every healing Jesus performed was to make the person healthy and enable him to function as he should.
- ✧ Out goal as a church cannot be simply to minister to those in need, but to raise them up and equip them to be the people God wants them to be.

The man came with them into the temple.

- ✧ When people's physical needs are met they often become more aware of their spiritual needs.
 - **QUOTE:** *"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."*

Conclusion

QUOTE: George MacLeod – *"I simply argue that the cross be raise again – at the center of the market place as well as on the steeple of the church. I am recovering the claim that Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between to candles: But on a cross between two thieves; on a town garage heap.... At the kind of place where cynics talk smut, and thieves curse and soldiers gamble. Because that is where He died, and that is what He died about, and that is where Christ's men ought to be and what church people ought to be about."*

As we seek God and let Him fill us and flow through us, ministry will happen. Miracles and ministry were an everyday part of the life of Jesus and they will be an everyday part of the lives of those He dwells in.