



Our culture is tired of hearing Christians make incredible claims about life transformation, only to find out we've been faking it the whole time. But as we will see today, transformed people prove the transforming Gospel.

BIG TRUTH: *Transformed People prove the Transforming Gospel.*

We ended with this passage last week.

Acts 2:47b (NET)

⁴⁷...the Lord was adding to their number every day those who were being saved.

Every day people were being saved from their sins as they trusted Jesus as their Messiah. And again, at the end of today's teaching, we will sin many follow Jesus.

This is what I think Jesus meant when he said these words:

John 14:12 (ESV)

¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and **greater works than these will he do**, because I am going to the Father.

What's **THAT** all about? The apostles never walked on water. And while we see one person raised from the dead, we don't see them raise someone who had been dead for 4 days (i.e. Lazarus). We never hear of the apostles feeding over 5000 with a boy's lunch, like Jesus did.

These **greater works** cannot refer to **greater quality**, but **greater quantity**. Jesus could only be in one place at one time, but the apostles & their disciples, sometimes going different directions, would take the gospel to the planet in the power of the Spirit. The miracles of Jesus would be multiplied as the apostles & other disciples were given the ability to heal & cast out demons.

But these **greater works** go beyond miracles that heal broken bodies. These **greater works** transformed sinful souls. Think about it for a moment: Jesus had many people check Him out, and several hundred follow Him over the course of a few years. But on Pentecost Sunday, 3000 bowed their knees to King Jesus...3000 in ONE DAY!

A Trip to the Temple

Acts 3:1 (NET) ¹ Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time for prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

Peter and John were still Jewish. They didn't think that following Jesus was a new religion, called Christianity. Instead, they saw that Jesus as the long awaited Jewish Messiah who had come to fulfill the Jewish scriptures. Jewish followers of Jesus didn't stop going to the Jewish temple (Jesus called that place "my Father's house" in Luke 2:49 & Jn. 2:16).

In the name of Jesus Christ...

Acts 3:6-9 (NET) ⁶ But Peter said, “I have no silver or gold, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, stand up and walk!” ⁷ Then Peter took hold of him by the right hand and raised him up, and at once the man’s feet and ankles were made strong.⁸ He jumped up, stood and began walking around, and **he entered the temple courts with them, walking and leaping and praising God.** ⁹ All the people saw him walking and praising God,¹⁰ and they recognized him as the man who used to sit and ask for donations at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, and they were filled with astonishment and amazement at what had happened to him.

They told this man, lame from birth, to stand & walk, *in the name of Jesus Christ*. This wasn’t & ISN’T a set of magic words. Peter & John weren’t telling him to walk because of their abilities, but to walk *in the name of Jesus Christ - by the authority of Jesus*.

No rehab nor no crutches were needed. Immediately, this man’s bones & muscles became strong. And here’s the greatest part. This is the **FIRST** time this man had ever entered the temple area on his own two feet! Many scholars think it’s likely that this man, who many considered ritually unclean, had never been in the temple courts before.¹

Everybody recognized the guy walking, leaping, & jumping as the same they had seen begging at the temple for years and years. This was no sham. He really was healed! The news spread and many Jews came to the temple to see it for themselves, seeking an explanation for how this man’s life could be so radically changed.

Transformed People Prove the Transforming Gospel.

Acts 3:11–20 (NET) ¹¹ While the man was hanging on to Peter and John, all the people, completely astounded, ran together to them in the covered walkway called Solomon’s Portico.¹² When Peter saw this, he declared to the people, “Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this? Why do you stare at us as if we had made this man walk by our own power or piety? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our forefathers, has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate after he had decided to release him. ¹⁴ But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a man who was a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵ You killed **the Originator** [NIV, ESV: ‘Author’] **of life, whom God raised from the dead.** To this fact we are witnesses!¹⁶ And on the basis of faith in Jesus’ name, his very name has made this man—whom you see and know—strong. The faith that is through Jesus has given him this complete health in the presence of you all. ¹⁷ And now, brothers, I know you acted in ignorance, as your rulers did too. ¹⁸ But the things God foretold long ago through all the prophets—that his Christ would suffer—he has fulfilled in this way. ¹⁹ Therefore **repent and turn back so that your sins may be wiped out,** ²⁰ so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and so that he may send the Messiah appointed for you—that is, Jesus.

Jesus had been CONVICTED by the same men who RAN this temple!

¹ Craig S. Keener, Acts: An Exegetical Commentary & 2: Introduction and 1:1–14:28, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012–2013), 1049. * Biblical law excluded the disabled only from the priesthood (Lev 21:18),⁶⁸ but Qumran applied this law to restrict their presence in the community (1QSa II, 5–6).

And in that same place, the disciples of Jesus were declaring:

- 🕒 Jesus was the **Originator**/Author of Life, **raised from the dead**.
- 🕒 Jesus was the **Christ**/Messiah the people had been waiting on
- 🕒 **Faith in the RISEN JESUS** had healed this man!

If that wasn't enough, Peter points back to the Scriptures to demonstrate that Jesus was the Messiah the Jewish people had been longing for (read vv.21-24), the prophet like Moses and the ultimate fulfillment of the old prophecy to Father Abraham.

Promise to Abraham Fulfilled in Jesus

Acts 3:25–26 (NET) ²⁵ You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your ancestors, saying to Abraham, ‘*And in your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed.*’²⁶ God raised up his servant and sent him first to you, to bless you by turning each one of you from your iniquities.”

God intends to use the people of Israel to take the Gospel to the Planet in the power of the Spirit. It starts in Jerusalem and will move out from there. In this way, *all the nations of the earth will be blessed*. And THAT has been the plan since the very beginning. **Transformed people prove the transforming Gospel.**

Some Receive, Some Reject

Acts 4:1–4 (NET) ¹ While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests and the commander of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them, ² angry because they were teaching the people and **announcing in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.** ³ So they seized them and put them in jail until the next day (for it was already evening). ⁴ But **many** of those who had listened to the message **believed**, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

120 grew to over 3000, God added daily, now around 5000 believers IN JERUSALEM as **transformed people prove the transforming Gospel.**

BIG Question: Is your life PROVING or POLLUTING the message of Jesus?

Is your life BELIEVABLE? Are you sharing the gospel of Jesus with others?

- We have sinned against a Holy God and need forgiveness. Jesus offers it.
- We all long for fullness in life: purpose & hope. This is found in Jesus, the originator/author of life brings times of refreshing by His very real Presence!

Transformed People prove the Transforming Gospel.

Please call us if we can answer any questions or help you in any way.

Jackie Watts (Lead Pastor): (850) 673-1582

TJ Green (Associate/Student Pastor): (423) 991-2793

Shannon Curtis (Children's Coordinator): (850) 528-6488

Betty Maher (Executive Assistant): (850) 973-3266 - church office