

5/20/07

**Men That God Uses**  
**Act 3:1-26**

The apostles had been obedient to the command of Jesus to tarry in Jerusalem and they were endowed with power from on high to be empowered for service.

1. They were baptized with the Holy Spirit and spoke in the various dialects.
2. Peter stood and preached the scriptural fulfillment and the person of Jesus for salvation and 3,000 were added to the church.

The apostles have continued to be the witnesses of Jesus at Jerusalem as He said they would through signs and wonders and God began to add daily to the church those who were being saved. Acts 2:42-43, 46-47

\* We must be careful not to limit the miraculous to miracles, for the spiritual realm is all supernatural!

As they continued daily with one accord in the temple, it should be no surprise that the next event, the healing of the lame man is said to of taken place in the temple.

We want to study the healing of the lame man at the temple gate, which describes to us the kind of people God uses. Acts 3:1-26

- I. God uses people who make themselves available. vs. 1-10
- II. God uses people who point people to Jesus. vs. 11-16
- III. God uses people who offer salvation to others. vs. 17-26

**I. God uses people who make themselves available. vs. 1-10**

- A. Peter and John were men committed to God. vs. 1
  1. They went up together to the temple as their usual manner.
    - a. The reference to “going up” means the temple is the highest elevation of the city, like Jerusalem. one never went down to Jerusalem, from every direction you travel up in elevation.
    - b. The Pentecost experience notice had not caused them to think themselves more spiritual than the people or some kind of celebrities!
    - c. They had a heart for the people to be saved and were flexible.
    - d. This couldn't of been too long after Pentecost.
  2. They were going at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.
    - a. The ninth hour was at 3:00 P.M. , after sacrifice and at 9. A.M.

- b. The sixth to the ninth hour there was darkness at the crucifixion. Matt. 27:45-46
- c. The apostles continued to go to temple but not to sacrifice.
- 3. They were men of opposite personalities.
  - a. Peter, James and John were the inner circle of Jesus.
  - b. Prior to Pentecost Jesus told Peter his manner of death and he said to Jesus, “But Lord what about this man? Jesus said to him, “If I will that he remain till I come, **what** is that to you? You follow Me.” Jn. 21:21-22  
\* Starting a rumor that John would not die till the Lord returned!
  - c. After Pentecost Peter and John are working together. Acts 3:1, 3, 11, 4:13, 19, 8:14
    - 1) Peter was impulsive, a go-getter.
    - 2) John was more reserved.
- B. Peter and John were ready to be used by God in a common everyday situation. vs. 2-8
  - 1. The lame man was laid at the temple gate to beg for his living. vs. 2
    - a. The man had been lame from his mother’s womb, a pitiful and helpless congenital condition.

- b. He was carried by friends or love ones and laid him daily at the temple gate called Beautiful, to ask alms from those entering the temple.  
\* He was a sharp contrast to the name of the gate Beautiful, thought to be the Nicanor Gate, which led from the court of the Gentiles to the court of the women , which Josephus describes the beauty of the gate decorated with Corinthian brass, plated with gold, silver and bronze work. also called the Corinthian Gate.
- 2. The lame man proceeded to asked for alms as usual. vs. 3-5
  - a. The lame man seeing Peter and John about to go in to the temple asked for alms. vs. 3
    - 1) The word for temple “hieron” depicts the temple area.
    - 2) He asked “erotao” means to beg and is in the imperfect tense, suggesting he asked repeatedly.
    - 3) Alms “eleemosune” refers to a donation for the poor, the root word is mercy or pity.
  - b. Peter fixing his eyes on the lame man said, “Look at us”. vs. 4
    - 1) This was not a suggestion.

- 2) This was a command, it is in the aorist imperative tense.
- e. The lame man gave them his attention expecting to receive something from them. vs. 5
  - 1) The word attention “epecho” means looked steadfastly, fixing on them.
    - \* It is the same word for the disciples when they saw Jesus ascend to heaven. Acts 1:10
  - 2) Perhaps the man had heard Peter at the day of Pentecost and recognized him, or have seen Peter and John enter regularly.
- 3. Peter was used by God to proclaim to the lame man his healing. vs. 6-7
  - a. Peter commands him again, “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.” vs. 6
    - 1) Jesus Christ of Nazareth was continuing His ministry through the apostles as He promised.
    - 2) The power and authority was of Jesus. vs. 16, 4:10, 18, 30
    - 3) Peter at this point manifested various gifts of the Holy Spirit, a word of knowledge and a word of wisdom.

- b. Peter took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones receive strength. vs. 7
  - 1) This is the only appearance of the phrase, “feet and ankle bones” in the New Testament and are medical terms.
  - 2) “Receive strength” appears two other times. Acts 3:16, 16:5
  - 3) Peter now exercised more gifts of the Holy Spirit, the gift of faith, miracles and healing.
- 4. The lame man leaped up and walked in the temple for the first time. vs. 8
  - a. The phrase leaping up “exallomai” appears one time in the New Testament, a medical term, meaning to spring forth, the ankle bones coming into their sockets.
    - \* A sign of the kingdom Age. Is. 35:6
  - b. This was instantaneous, the change from the aorist “he stood” to the imperfect “walked” details the process.
  - c. The healing was lasting, the word walking in the Greek is the present imperative expressing enduring action and leaping as the cripple at Lystra. Acts 14:10

d. For forty years this man was crippled, his feet turned inward beneath his legs, instead of flat. Acts 4:22

C. The people witnessed the healing of the lame man. vs. 9-10

1. The observation of the people was that all saw him walking and praising God. vs. 9
  - a. They were witnesses to the miracles as he walked, hearing his expression of gratitude to God in praise.
  - b. Four times the word “walk” is stated to emphasize the miracle. vs. 6e, 8, 9
2. The people knew he was the one begging alms at the Beautiful Gate. vs. 10a

\* But he was walking and leaping, praising God, no longer crippled.
3. The people were filled with wonder and amazement, due to what had happened to him. vs. 10b
  - a. The word wonder “thambos” means to be in shock, astonished or dumbfounded.
  - b. The word amazement “ekstasis” means to be thrown out of mind by excitement, or ecstasy!
  - c. Their eyes were seeing the man healed but their minds could not accommodate the reality!

### **Illustration**

Thomas Aquinas when he visited Pope Innocent II found him counting a large sum of money. “Ah, Thomas said the Pope, “the church can no longer say, ‘silver and gold have none’, said the Pope. “That is true, Your Holiness,” said Aquinas, “but then, neither can it now say ‘Arise and walk.’”

### **Application**

1. Often people say they want to be used by God but they are never around to be used.
  - a. The priority is first to be consistent to come to church to study and grow in the word.
  - b. Then as you are growing and developing, be praying that God would speak to you on where and how He would have you to serve.
  - c. Then make yourself available to one of the existing ministries, letting God confirm your service or redirect you.
  - d. It is easier to steer a moving object, than one that is standing still!
 

\* “But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.” 2Tim. 2:20-21
2. God often uses people that are completely opposite, bringing about an incredible compliment.

- a. Think about who you married, not someone like you but completely opposite and you complement each other.
- b. I think of God putting Mario and myself together all these years, about 43, yet our gifts complement the church.
- c. This goes for the rest of the ministers as well and all who are involved in ministry, God using our different personalities and diverse gifts to magnify unity and bring glory to Him.

\* “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.” 1Cor. 12:4-7

**3.** Miracles are the mere suspension of natural laws that govern are every day life by the Jesus Who gave us life.

- a. Jesus is sovereign as He performs them.
- b. Jesus is not limited in the difficulty of the defect, abnormality or disease.
- c. Jesus is not always believed when He heals someone.
- d. Do you not think Jesus and the apostles passed the lame man many times. but now was God’s will to be accomplished, being sovereign in all things.

\* “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His **will**, He hears us.” 1Jn. 5:14

*God uses people who make themselves available!*

## **II. God uses people who point people to Jesus. vs. 11-16**

\* This is Peter’s second sermon to Israel!

**A.** The people naturally identified Peter and John with the healing. vs. 11

- 1.** The lame man held on to Peter and John.
  - a. The man’s natural response to his healing was expressing his joy with those who had told him to walk. vs. 11a
  - b. The man was not going to let them go, the word held “krateo” is used for a police arrest, firm. Matt. 14:3, 21:46
- 2.** The people responded to the excitement of the lame man. vs. 11b
  - a. All the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon’s.
    - 1)** This was the outer court of the temple, the court of the Gentiles.
    - 2)** The porch of Solomon was along the eastern wall.
    - 3)** In these colonnades the scribes partook in debates. Lk. 2:46, 19:47, Jn. 10:23

- 4) The merchants as well as the money changers officiated their business there. Lk. 19:45f, Jn. 2:14-16
  - 5) The Christians also gathered there. Acts 2:46, 5:12, 5:20
  - b. All the people were greatly amazed. vs. 11c
    - 1) They recognized the man as being the one who begged for alms.
    - 2) They were quite astonished marveling is the word amazed “ekthambos”.
- B.** Peter instantly denied any and all credit for the healing. vs. 12
- 1. Peter quickly saw the danger, so he responded to the people. vs. 12a
    - a. Peter perceive as he saw the people the logical conclusion of the people.
    - b. Peter understood the potential for the corruption of the Gospel and their ministry by taking the credit or glory for what God had done!
  - 2. Peter immediately corrected the wrong conclusion of the people to credit them for the healing. vs. 12c-e
    - a. Peter asked “Men of Israel”, addressing them with their national honor. vs. 12c

- b. Peter then said, “Why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?” vs. 12d-e
    - 1) The power “dunamis” meant inherent power, it did not originate from them to heal the lame man.
    - 2) Godliness “eusebeia” meant piety towards God, it neither was the cause for the healing of the man.
    - 3) They were mere instruments. Acts 2:43, 5:12
      - \* “God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various **miracles**, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?” Heb 2:4
- C.** Peter declared Jesus had healed the lame man. vs. 13-16
- 1. Peter pointed out the power behind the healing, “The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus.” vs. 13a-e
    - a. This was the heritage of the Jew, given first in Exodus. vs. 13a-c
      - \* Ex. 3:6, 15, 4:5
    - b. The man Peter included himself “our fathers”. vs. 13d

- c. The punch-line was then stated,  
“Glorified His Servant Jesus”. vs. 13e  
\* Is. 42:1, 50:10, 52:13-53:12, 55:5
- 2. Peter pointed out their participation in the sentencing of Jesus. vs. 13e-15
  - a. They pleaded for the death of Jesus before Pilate, “Whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go.” vs. 13e-f
    - 1) Whom you delivered up, emphatic.
    - 2) Denied, refuses or disregarded, disgracing Him.
    - 3) When he determined to let him go. Lk. 23:2, Jn. 19:14-15, Acts 2:23
  - b. They preferred a murderer over their Messiah, “But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,” vs. 14
    - 1) The Holy One refers to the sinless Messiah.
    - 2) The just “dikaios” means the righteous, the perfect One in His dealings with man. Is. 53:11, Jn. 19:15, Acts 7:52, 22:14, 28:18, 1Pet. 3:18, 1Jn. 2:1
    - 3) The murderer is Barabas, the unholy, unjust criminal who deserved death.  
\* Chiastic form is evident.

- 4) What a contrast of their choice, killing the One who can give life and save the one who took life!
- 3. Peter pointed out their personal guilty for the death of Jesus. vs. 15
  - a. Peter says, “And killed the Prince of life”. vs. 15a
    - 1) The word Prince “archegos” means the chief leader, one who takes the lead in anything.
    - 2) The author, architect and originator of life. Acts 5:31, Heb. 2:10, 12:2
  - b. Peter told them Jesus was alive, “Whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.” vs. 15b-c
    - 1) They were accountable for the death of Jesus.
    - 2) The apostles were eye witnesses of the risen Christ.
    - 3) The resurrection is the key to the Gospel. Acts 1:8, 22, 2:23-24
- 4. Peter points out clearly the source and power of the healing of the lame man. vs. 16
  - a. “And His name”, his person and character. vs. 16a
  - b. “Through faith in His name. vs. 16b
  - c. “Has made this man strong, whom you see and know.” vs. 16c-d
  - d. “Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect

soundness in the presence of you all.”  
vs. 16e-f

- 1) All are emphatic.
- 2) The One in whom the Father is glorified in, His Servant Jesus. vs. 12e

### **Illustration**

Gahazi, the servant of Elisha was struck with leprosy, as he went after reward for the healing of Naaman, after Elisha had denied all reward.

\* Now he went in and stood before his master.

**Elisha** said to him, “Where did you go, Gehazi?”  
And he said, “Your servant did not go anywhere.”  
2Kings 5:25

### **Application**

1. How many men and women in history have taken glory for the things God has done and it began to be all about them.

- a. Saul began humble in the eyes of God and slowly became great in his own eyes, until God took his life away by the hand of the Philistines.
- b. I know men in ministry who began so well, overjoyed that God would forgive them of their sins and even call them to ministry but through the years they began to abuse their power and position.

c. The problem with being used of God is that we forget we are only the instrument, not the cause of the success.

\* “For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.” 2Cor. 4:5-7

2. The danger today is to trust in so many things for the success of the church, except the Lord Jesus.

- a. The study of Church Growth principles.
- b. The principles of marketing.
- c. The model of “Seeker Friendly” churches, not speaking about sin and repentance but rather a very non-threatening message to make the unsaved comfortable.
- d. Then you can write your success books and all look to you as a “Guru of Christianity”.  
\* “Do not be **wise** in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.” Prov. 3:7

3. The greatest perversion is the prostituting of the gifts and calling of God for money, robbing the

people of God and giving the non-believer another reason to oppose Christianity.

- a. There are professional fund raisers that go into churches and raise the amount the church wants and they get a percentage.
- b. There are churches that are always begging the congregation for money.
- c. There are radio ministries that are an embarrassment as they plead for money, saying that if they don't get the money, they will have to get off the air", get off!
- d. If God is in the work God will provide.

\* Paul said, "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:19

4. The best way to do ministry is to simply do what Jesus calls you to do and nothing else.

- a. Don't attempt to be something He has not called or gifted you to do.
- b. Don't compare yourself to anyone else.
- c. Don't try to build you kingdom but be about the Fathers business of the Kingdom.
- d. Don't ever believe the applause and adoration of people, tell them it is Jesus who is doing all things!

\* "But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised

God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence." 1Cor. 1:27-29

*God uses people who point people to Jesus!*

### III. God uses people who offer salvation to others. vs. 17-26

A. Peter offered the people forgiveness of their sins. vs. 17-21a

1. He told them they did it through spiritual ignorance as their rulers. vs.17

a. Jesus asked for their forgiveness from the cross. Lk. 23:34

b. They were ignorant of the Scriptures, like Paul. Matt. 22:29, Lk. 23:34, Jn. 5:39, 1Tim. 1:13

2. He told them the sufferings of Jesus needed to be fulfilled according to prophecy. vs.18

\* Is. 53, Ps. 22, 1Pet. 1:10-12

3. He told the people how they could be forgiven of their sins, including their betrayal and rejection of Jesus. vs.19-21a

a. Repent therefore and be converted. vs. 19a

1) The word repent "metanoeo" means to change one's mind, the

- process. Acts 2:38, 8:22, 9:35, 11:21, 14:15, 15:19
- 2) The word converted “epistrepho” means to turn again, the outcome of repentance.
4. He told them the efficiency behind the act of repentance, “that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,” vs. 19b-c
    - a. The phrase Blotted out “exaleipho” means to wash in every part or to wipe off or away.
    - b. The phrase times of Refreshing “kairos anapsuxis” has the idea of seasonal or periodical revitalizing by His Spirit, the quality of the new life in Christ.
      - \* The Jews understood this as the coming of Messiah in glory but the context is the new birth.
    - c. The source is clear, “From the presence of the Lord,” He being the source of forgiveness and complete redemption, from start to finish.
  5. Peter told them Jesus would be coming again. vs. 20-21a
    - a. The Father had promised, “And that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before.” vs. 20

- b. The Father appointed the time, “Whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things.” vs. 21
    - 1) The time of restoration of all things begins at the Second Coming.
    - 2) The term restoration of all things “apokatastasis” means to the perfect state before the fall, when the Kingdom is set up for Israel, running to the New heaven and earth. Matt. 19:38, Rom. 11:25-26, 1Cor. 15:14, 2Pet. 3:10-12, Rev. 21-22, Is. 2, 34:4, 51:6, 65:17, Joel 2, Ezk. 40-48
    - 3) An Eschatological term used particular in the LXX
    - 4) This does not mean that all things, even Satan will be restored, as some teach.
- B. Peter referred to the prophets, who God spoke through regarding Jesus. vs. 21b-26
    1. God gave the revelation, “Which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.” vs. 21b  
\* Gen. 3:15, 2Pet. 1:20-21
    2. Moses prophesied about the first coming of Jesus. vs. 22-23
      - a. One like Moses from their brethren, anointed, mediator, seed of Abraham,

“For Moses truly said to the fathers,  
‘The LORD your God will raise up  
for you a Prophet like me from your  
brethren.’ vs. 22a-b

\* The Pharisees asked John if he was  
that prophet. Deut. 18:15-19, Jn.  
1:21-23

- b. One to be obeyed, “Him you shall  
hear in all things, whatever He says to  
you.” vs. 22c
- c. One who would judge those who  
rejected Him, “And it shall be that  
every soul who will not hear that  
Prophet shall be utterly destroyed  
from among the people.” vs. 23
  - 1) Human like Moses.
  - 2) Divine distinct from Moses.
  - 3) “I will execute vengeance upon  
him”, declares the LXX.
  - 4) The judgment came in 70 A.D.
- 3. Samuel and all the prophets prophesied,  
“Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel  
and those who follow, as many as have  
spoken, have also foretold these days.”  
vs. 24
  - a. He was the last judge and the first of  
the prophets.
  - b. He stands at the head and represents  
what the other equally proclaimed  
about Messiah.

- c. Jesus was of the seed of David. 2Sam.  
7:12, Rom. 1:3
- 4. Abraham prophesied, through whom the  
all the earth would be blessed in view of  
redemption. vs. 25
  - a. Peter points his finger at them, “You  
are sons of the prophets, and of the  
covenant which God made with our  
fathers.” vs. 25a-b
    - 1) They were familiar with God’s  
power to heal.
    - 2) The word “you” is emphatic with  
the article, they had treated “the  
prophet, far worst than their father  
treated Moses. (Lenski)
  - b. God said to Abraham, ‘And in your  
seed all the families of the earth shall  
be blessed.’ vs. 25c-d
    - 1) God gave the promise to Abraham.  
Gen. 12:3, 18:18, 22:18
    - 2) Seed is singular, indicative of the  
Messiah. Gen. 26:4, Gal. 3:16
- 5. Peter gives the interpretation to all the  
prophets, they spoke of Jesus, the  
Messiah. vs. 26
  - a. Jesus was sent to the Jews, “To you  
first, God, having raised up His  
Servant Jesus,” vs. 26a-c
    - 1) The word first is emphatic, coming  
at the beginning of the sentence,  
implying greater privilege and

- greater responsibility and accountability. Rom. 1:16, 2:10
- 2) They had rejected Jesus prior to His death and resurrection and Peter has just warned them of the danger of doing it again.
  - 3) Paul went first to the synagogue, then to the Gentiles but he closed the book of Acts by turning away from the Jew due to their hardened heart. Acts 28:28
- b. Jesus was sent to forgive their sins, “Sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.” vs. 26d
- 1) The prophet Ezekiel warned them of turning from their iniquities “poneria” depravity, wickedness. Ezk. 3:19, 18:27, 33:14
  - 2) Peter will tell the rulers, “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

### Illustration

If you are born once, you are born in the devil’s family, if you are born twice, you are born in God’s family. #5290 Vol. 1

### Application

1. No amount of works or good deeds can save a person and assure them of eternal life in heaven with Jesus.
  - a. Salvation is by grace through faith, Eph. 2:8-9
  - b. Salvation is dealing with your sins by and through repentance. 2Cor. 7:10
  - c. Salvation is only in the person and name of Jesus, for He is the Savior of the world. Jn. 4:42
2. The entire Old Testament is about Jesus.
  - a. “From Genesis to Malachi, “Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come--In the **volume** of the book it is written of Me--To do Your will, O God.” Heb. 10:7
  - b. Matthew to Revelation confirm this, “For the testimony of Jesus is the **spirit** of prophecy.” Rev. 19:10g
3. The decision is up to every person individually to repent and be saved, according to the Gospel.
  - a. “That if you **confess** with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” Rom. 10:9
  - b. “And the **Spirit** and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.” Rev. 22:17

*God uses people who offer salvation to others!*

**Conclusion**

Remember the people who God uses.

- I. People who make themselves available!
- II. People who point people to Jesus!
- III. People who offer salvation to others!