

Acts 3:1-10; 4:1-22

The Playbook

Image Church // One More Week 1

Introduction

Good morning Image Family... And a Big Happy New Year!

If you're a guest with us we're so glad that you're here with us! We would love to meet you and would love for you to jump in on what we're doing here- we have some exciting days ahead- moving into a new space **in the next few months**- so this is a great time to jump in!!

Well, this morning we're kicking off a brand-new series called **One More** where we're going to be navigating through our call to be about **one more** coming to Jesus...

We're going to look at the heart of evangelism as we navigate our call, our role, the cost, and our confidence... And we're even going to get into some very practical things when it comes to evangelism...

If you're here and you're new to Christianity this is a great series for you to learn more about what you believe and if you're a **non-Christian** this is going to be a great series for you to explore Christianity more...

So, if you have your bible turn to Acts 3...

- Acts is the scrapbook of the start of the church...
- Just a few chapters in and you have 2 guys that used to run with Jesus... One of them is *bless your heart Peter!* Love this because it reminds me that God can use me too!

The Holy Spirit has come, and these guys have been released to the mission that Jesus gave to them to be His witnesses by making disciples- Christ followers...

They were to tell people about Jesus and recruit people to be followers of Jesus which means adopting the ways of Jesus...

Acts 3:1-10

1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple for the time of prayer at three in the afternoon. **2** A man who was lame from birth was being carried there. He was placed each day at the temple gate called Beautiful, so that he could beg from those entering the temple. **3** When he saw Peter and John about to enter the temple, he asked for money. **4** Peter, along with John, looked straight at him and said, "Look at us." **5** So he turned to them, expecting to get something from them. **6** But Peter said, "I don't have silver or gold, but what I do have, I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, 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 and started to walk, and he entered the temple 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. So they were filled with awe and astonishment at what had happened to him.

Ok, so you've got this man that would sit outside of the Temple and beg each day for money in hopes of bettering his situation and current state...

The text tells us this man was "*lame from birth*" – literally means "*from the mother's womb*". So, this has been a lifelong state for him...

So, he's at the gate minding his own business with his cup out asking for money... and then Peter and John walk by and he casually asks them for money and... *and then Peter hits him with a "Look at Me"* ... let's be honest, that weird...

- Try that next time at Starbucks with the Barista...

- Or at the gym... look at me, can you spot me?

So, this guy's probably weirded out, but at the same time excited because he assumes this means he's about to get some money...

Then Peter says the unthinkable: "Silver and Gold I do not have, but what I have I give to you, in the NAME OF JESUS get up and walk!"
Then Peter pulls they guy up and all the sudden he's healed!

This guy got something alright, but he got something totally different than what he was expecting! Not just physically- he got something *even greater spiritually!*

In **verse 16** Peter highlights the spiritual reality of this guy- that he had **responded** by faith in the name of Jesus... **His greatest need...**

There's something that we need to from this man and what happens here...

What I love about the miracles in the Bible is that not only do they point to the power and glory of God, but they also point to our hearts...

What we need to see is that we need the same thing that this man needed... You say *I'm not lame, that may be true*, you may not be physically lame, but your heart is...

Watch this... this man was lame from birth... His ligaments were deformed and because of that he was unable to walk into the temple... And there was nothing that he could do to change that ***born that way!***

In the same way, our hearts are deformed from birth because of sin... And we are ***spiritually lame*** and unable to walk into the presence of God...

Psalms 51:5 shows us that: **Indeed, I was guilty when I was born; I was sinful when my mother conceived me...** And there is nothing that we can do to change that... ***We were born that way...***

But, *in the same way* that the Lame Man was fully **restored** and able to walk into the temple, you and I can be fully **restored** and able to walk into the presence of God through the finished work of Jesus!

In his life He did what you could never do, and in His death, he paid the penalty that you owed for your sin, and then in His resurrection He offers you new life in Him...

And listen, the healing this man received would have changed everything for him! He would have gotten a new chance at life... He no longer would be looked at as an outcast who was useless to society- he would have gotten a whole new identity!

In the same way you and I can receive a new identity through Christ!
One where you're no longer outcast from the presence of God, but where you are now a son or daughter of God!

This is a continual reality...

- Some of you have been off spiritually...
- Some of you have not been sharing the gospel...
- You're not defective- your not decommissioned...
- You don't need a fresh start, you just need to reorient around what you have been given!

Others of you need to embrace the gospel for the first time- you need to receive the new life that the gospel offers you!

It's that message that's at the foundation of the gospel... And it is the starting line for evangelism... ***You will never be motivated to share the gospel if you're not impacted by the gospel!***

Now there's also a few things that we can learn from Peter here...

A. Intentionality

You have to see the intentionality of Peter in all this... Peter noticed **the one**... He saw a guy that most people chose not to see... Peter saw a man in need, and he had compassion...

God didn't verbally tell him to do this, he just did it. He acted with intentionality in response to the **power** of the gospel and the recognition of the **need** for the gospel!

Peter was aware of the people God had put around him and he was intentional to engage this guy, and notice, he met a physical need in order to make a bridge to the greatest need- his spiritual need!

Who has God put around you? Who is the person that you need to be intentional with?

Maybe your gospel presentation starts with an act of compassion?

- Can't end there but maybe it needs to start there...

Something else we see is that they were intentional with a guy that was lame...

We saw this with Jesus and we see it with Peter and John... Brokenness is an incredible space to be internal in...

The physical issue that this man had is evidence of the reality of the brokenness of this world... Every one of us in one way or another have experienced the side effects of brokenness in our lives... Some of you that are going through things, job, school, sickness, family, marriage, hurt, pain, suffering...

This brokenness is caused by sin... The minute sin entered the world brokenness came with it... Creation began to unravel because of the pollution of sin...

And it's in this brokenness that we see the need for restoration...

Here's the incredible part about the resurrection of Jesus... It was just the start of what he is going to do! We saw in **Acts chapter one** that the same way Jesus left He will return and when He does, He will make all things NEW!

In the same way this man was healed, Jesus is going to bring about ultimate and eternal healing for those that have trusted in him!

- *Some of you need to hear that today because you're hurting...*

The gospel points to the total restoration in the midst of brokenness that will come through Christ! ***That's huge hope!***

Listen for brokenness when you're talking to people and step into it ask questions and then press in on the hope of Jesus in the midst of the broken world that we live in...

B. Faith

In **verse 16** when Peter talks about faith in the name of Jesus not only is he talking about this man's faith but about he and John's faith...

Their faith gave way to power... They had faith and God worked through it...

They had a miracle... Well if God thinks you need one then He will give it just like He did for them...

The point here is where is your faith? Is your faith the kind that releases the power of God?

What person are you lacking the faith to believe that God can save them??

C. Starting with Jesus

Something else we see in **verse 16** is an emphasis on the name of Jesus... **The point:** God works through the name of Jesus!

Do you start there??

Jesus is the power source... For many of us our problem is we feel like we need to lean into things other than Jesus... Not saying you can't use other things or that God can't work though it but the problem is most of the time we don't get to Jesus...

We want to dabble in a bunch of other things... We fall for the bait and switch or the straw man stuff as opposed to coming back to Jesus ***who is the power source in our proclamation and salvation...***

Ok let's keep going and see what else we see... Let's pick up in **chapter 4 verse 1...**

Peter is coming off a gospel presentation in light of what happened to this guy...

1 While they were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple police, and the Sadducees confronted them, **2** because they were **annoyed** that they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. **3** So they seized them and took them into custody until the next day since it was already evening.

Really? *When's the last time someone was arrested for being annoying??*

- ***I can think of some times when I wish this was the case especially when it comes to some of you Georgia fans during football season...***

But watch this! Look at verse 4:

4 But **many of those who heard the message believed**, and the number of the men came to about **five thousand**.

Peter's not even done with his sermon yet and they are taking him away, *and as they are dragging him off* **thousands of people trust in Jesus!!** That's insane!

The **movement of the gospel can't be stopped!** You have to see the power of God at work through the *faithfulness* of Peter and John!

Some of you need to actually believe this...

- You need to proceed with this mentality, stop fearing that you will mess things up or say the wrong thing...
- Many of you have paralysis of analysis- you're failing to believe that the gospel is going to move forward through you in one way or another...
- ***You job is not to save it is to share...***
- You're not articulating *quantum theory* you're talking about the Jesus that saved you...

You need to walk in the power that the gospel gives you... ***Watch how this power play out through Peter...***

Verse 5: The next day, their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem **6** with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and all the members of the high-priestly family. **7** After they had Peter and John stand before them, they began to question them: ***"By what power or in what name have you done this?"***

8 Then Peter was **filled with the Holy Spirit** and said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders: **9** If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a disabled man, by what means he was healed, **10** let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name **of Jesus Christ of Nazareth**, whom **you** crucified and whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing here before you healthy.

11 This Jesus is **the stone rejected by you builders, which has become the cornerstone.**

12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved."

Faith in Jesus... Holy Spirit...

Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit... This was not planned, he didn't prep... He just walked in faith and the power of the Spirit took over and Peter said exactly what needed to be said...

This is where we need to be... Some of you lack the faith to believe in the power of the Spirit...

- *Appeal...*

Verse 13 When they observed the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were **uneducated and untrained men**, they were amazed and recognized that **they had been with Jesus**. **14** And since they saw the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in opposition. **15** After they ordered them to leave the Sanhedrin, they conferred among themselves, **16** saying, "What should we do with these men? For an obvious **sign** has been done through them, clear to everyone living in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it."

One word of caution: the religious leaders acknowledged that the lame man had been healed legitimately... They go so far to call it an **obvious sign**, and that was **so clear** that everyone in Jerusalem knows about it and **no one can deny it!**

And yet they missed it... they missed the very thing that this sign pointed to! **They were too caught up in their religion that they missed the rescuer!**

Listen, there's a lot of people in that same boat today... You grew up hearing about God, you went to church... And but you're missing the reality of the gospel because Christianity is just a religion for you... You would say that you've always known about God, but you have never really surrendered to God as you respond to the finished work of Jesus!

- **Surrender** is the word that draws the line in the sand... You say and know a lot of things but unless you surrender your life to Christ you are not truly saved.

Here's what you need to see... **The religious leaders noticed that there was something different about these men... WHY? Because they have been with Jesus...** Can the same be said of you???

For some of you the reason why you don't share Jesus is because you've never encountered Jesus personally!

Let's keep reading...

Verse 17 [The Sanhedrin- group of religious leaders said] **But so that this does not spread any further among the people, let's threaten them against speaking to anyone in this name again."** **18** So they called for them and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

Listen to what Peter has to say about this... my man is on a roll!

19 Peter and John answered them, "Whether it's right in the sight of God for us to listen to you rather than to God, you decide; **20** for we are **unable** to stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." **21** After threatening them further, they released them. They found **no way to punish them because the people were all giving glory to God over what had been done**. **22** For this **sign** of healing had been performed on a man over forty years old.

Ok, let me hold up for you 2 final takeaways from all of this...

1. Share the gospel in everyday life

Here's something else that I want you to see: **This miracle took place in the streets of everyday life...**

The vast majority of the miracles in the book of Acts happen outside of the corporate gatherings!

Listen, the way that this church will grow is through the ministry you're doing during the week in everyday life!

Listen, **we don't want the church to grow around you we want Image Church to grow because of you!**

Who has God put in your life that you need to be intentional with?
And ***will you be faithful like Peter to live on mission with your actions and your words?***

In the same way that Peter and John had been given the mission of advancing the gospel, we have been given the mission of advancing the gospel...

And what we see is that the way that they lived this out happened in the normal rhythms of life... These guys were just on their way to the temple...

They ***didn't*** develop an evangelism strategy, they didn't create a program or an event, they just looked for opportunities in everyday life to point people to Jesus...

Now, I know you say, *well they had miracles... I don't...* Well, in once sense you do because you can point to the miracle that they did here in scripture... And you can hold up the implications around this miracle to speak to the brokenness of the people that you encounter...

But here's what you also have to understand, ***just because you don't have miracles doesn't mean that the message of the gospel is any less powerful...***

The miracle isn't what saves people, it's the message of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit...

That means that the power of salvation doesn't rest in your ability to do miracles, it rests in the power of the Holy Spirit, which is the same power that resides in you through faith!

The question is: ***will you be faithful to live out the mission by proclaiming the message of Jesus trusting the power of the Spirit with the rest?!?***

Peter and John just kept holding up Jesus and they let God do the rest! Honestly, there's no telling what God would actually do through us if we really did that every opportunity God gave us!

Here's something else you need to see in this, it's the call of Jesus and the mission of the gospel that's the main agenda in their lives...

- ***They were willing to sacrifice their personal agendas for God's agenda....***

In the same way that Jesus gave up His life for yours, you are called to give up your life for Him. That means that your agenda comes second...

- That the mission of the gospel is primary in everyday life and not just something that's an option when it's covenant...

You have to ask yourself the question, are you living a life that's characterized by the mission of the gospel in your everyday life?

Are you being faithful to advance the message of Jesus that God has given you? Or are you more concerned about your personal success or your personal goals that you want to achieve in life?

Do you see the mission that you have been called to and are you trusting in the power of the Spirit and being faithful to hold up Jesus to the people that God has placed around you?

2. The gospel should compel you with boldness

What we see in this series of events in **Acts 3&4** is an incredible boldness out of 2 unlikely guys!

The religious leaders are even blown away by these guys... They call them: **uneducated and untrained men**

- **Untrained:** *original language= idiots (no good way to put it)*

And yet they stand with boldness and conviction as they speak the truth about Jesus in the opportunity that God had given them...

What you have to understand is that what made these men great was not their skill set, it is that they had been with Jesus... They had **encountered** the **grace** and **mercy** of Jesus understanding who they were in Him!

On pastor put it like this: *“Look who did Jesus not pick to continue his ministry? Not one Pharisee, not one Sadducee – the religious elite. Nor did he select the best looking, the most talented, the best educated, the most likely to succeed. Jesus chose 12 ordinary, sinful, insecure people – just like us.”*

You should find hope and confidence in that! Listen, it’s when you feel **enable** that God makes you **able**... It is in and through our inabilities that God chooses to make us strong to prove that it’s not you, its him!

We have to have confidence in the power of God, knowing that He will work through us... That’s His plan all along!

The gospel should compel you with boldness because it’s not your message, it’s God’s message, it’s not your power, it’s God’s power...

Some of yall need to walk with that swag!

You need to embrace the boldness that the gospel offers you, and like Peter and John, you need to be confident to share it!

The biggest thing that hinders our confidence is **fear of man**, the way to get over it... Remember the gospel—

Conclusion [VAMP]

One of the things that characterized the movement of the early church is what Peter says in **Verse 20** for we are **unable to stop speaking about what we have seen and heard**

- ***Is that true for you?***
- ***Is that true for our church?***

Who is your one more... Will you be faithful to pursue them and take a first step by inviting them to Easter here with us? **Remember this is a starting point, not the finish line...**

This opens the door for you to have more spiritual conversations with them, to invite them to Community Group and ultimately, to share the gospel with them!

This gives you a chance to live out the gospel in everyday life, with boldness.