

Ryan Milne

Acts / Healing; Miracle / Acts 3:1–10

The enthroned King pours out his power to restore the helpless and authenticate his witnesses.

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The King Pours Out His Power

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Introduction

Awakening Church, for the past two weeks we have been witnessing the glorious dawn of a new covenant age of fulfillment. In Acts chapter 1, we stood on the Mount of Olives and watched as our crucified and risen Savior ascended into the heavens to take his seat as the reigning, enthroned King. In Acts chapter 2, we stood in Jerusalem as that enthroned King poured out his promised Holy Spirit in a rushing wind and cloven tongues of fire, igniting his church with unstoppable gospel boldness and converting three thousand souls through a single sermon.

This morning, as we open our Bibles to Acts chapter 3, the scene shifts from those cosmic implications of Christ ascending and pouring out his Spirit down to the ground again. This morning, Luke brings us down to the pavement of real life to show us the practical, restoring power of Christ's kingdom. So as we walk together to the temple gate, we will watch as the enthroned King pours out his sovereign power upon a hopeless cripple, transforming a helpless beggar into a walking worshiper.

Now as we prepare to read this text, I want you to understand the main point of what Luke is recording for us this morning. This miracle is not just an impressive medical recovery. Luke records this miracle to show us that the risen and ascended Christ is continuing his sovereign work through his appointed apostles. The physical healing of this helpless beggar is a visible sign that the promised messianic kingdom has arrived. It is a foretaste of the final, bodily restoration that Christ will accomplish at the resurrection. The emphasis in this text is not on Peter, his power, or his holiness. The emphasis is entirely on Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Sermon Text: Acts 3:1-10

Call: “*The grass withers and the flower fades,*”

Response: “*But the word of the Lord endures forever.*”

The King Pours Out His Power

1. The Cripple (v1-3)

1.1 The Hour and the Shadow (v1)

Acts 3:1 “Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.”

Look with me at **verse 1**. Luke begins with a simple historical fact. The ninth hour was about three in the afternoon. This was an established Jewish hour of prayer, and it went with the time of the afternoon sacrifice. And what are the apostles doing? They are going to the temple. They are still participating in the established Jewish pattern of prayer.

It’s helpful for us to understand that the apostles didn’t see Christianity as a new religion disconnected from everything God had done before. They understood Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel. They knew that Christ had offered the one final sacrifice for sin, so they were not going to the temple because another sacrifice was needed. The Lamb of God had already been slain, and the shadows were giving way to the reality they had always anticipated.

Luke doesn’t tell us why Peter and John chose to go to the temple at this particular hour beyond telling us that it was the hour of prayer. But we certainly know what their presence there would soon accomplish. The temple placed them among the very people to whom they were announcing that God had fulfilled his promises in Jesus Christ.

As we move through the book of Acts, we will progressively be shown a growing distinction between Christ’s church and unbelieving Israel. But here, at the beginning, the apostles are still moving within the familiar structures of their Jewish heritage while proclaiming that everything those structures anticipated has found its fulfillment in Christ.

So, this is the setting God has sovereignly arranged for our text this morning. Peter and John go up at the hour of prayer and stand within the shadow of the temple system. But Christ has come, and the final sacrifice has been offered. The King who fulfilled everything those

sacrifices anticipated is enthroned in heaven, and now he is about to break into this ordinary afternoon with a visible display of his power.

1.2 The Beggar and the Gate (v2-3)

Acts 3:2–3 “And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple. Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms.”

Now in **verse 2**, after setting our scene, Luke introduces us to the man at the center of this event. We get to see that one of the first things established is this man's condition. To feel the weight of this moment, we need to understand his absolute desperation. For a disabled person in the first century, begging was not a career choice. It was a matter of daily survival, and this man was lame from birth. So we know this was not a temporary injury. It was a congenital, lifelong state of helplessness. The next thing Luke establishes is that his condition was publicly known. He was a permanent fixture at the temple gate, he was laid there daily! Luke makes this clear so we know the coming miracle is both undeniable and publicly verifiable.

Before we move on, we need to pause here and guard our own hearts against a deadly, first century assumption. When they saw this kind of physical suffering, their fallen minds jumped to the wrong conclusion. It caused questions to be asked like, "What sin caused this?" The disciples themselves made this same mistake in John chapter 9 when they asked Jesus, "Who sinned, this man or his parents?" But, Jesus rejected their premise entirely. All sickness exists because we live in a world broken by sin, but we can't conclude, then or now, that a specific person's suffering is a direct judgment for a specific personal sin.

So, Luke is painting the picture for us of complete physical helplessness. This man we are introduced to doesn't walk to the temple, he gets carried. He doesn't provide for himself, he gets laid at the gate to beg. Luke is giving us all the information we need to see what's about to happen. This lame beggar, laid daily at the gate is completely unable to change his own situation. What we get to see when we meet this man is a living portrait of human brokenness and dependency.

Now, look at the contrast in the scene that has been set. We are standing at a gate called Beautiful, and right beside it lies a broken man.

We don't know with certainty which of the temple gates Luke identifies as the Beautiful Gate, so I don't want to build too much upon its appearance, but Luke has given us enough. There is something striking about the picture itself. Beside a gate known for beauty lies a man whose body has been broken from birth.

There is beauty all around him, but none of that beauty can restore him. He can be carried to the temple, he can be laid beside the gate, he can receive the generosity of worshipers passing by, but after more than forty years of life, he is still lying there.

But we shouldn't make the mistake of assuming everyone entering this gate was a hypocrite who lacked a heart of mercy. God had commanded his people to care for the poor, and the fact that this man was laid there daily suggests that at least some of the worshipers passing through that gate were putting silver into his hand. Their alms were genuinely good. They were acts of mercy toward a man who depended upon the generosity of others.

What I don't want to do is diminish the goodness of that ordinary mercy just so we can magnify the miracle. There is nothing insignificant about feeding the hungry, or caring for the poor. God commands his people to be generous, and those gifts really do matter.

But provision is not the same thing as restoration.

Their silver could provide for this man in his broken condition, but their silver couldn't restore what was broken. They could help feed him, they could help clothe him, and they could make his life as a lame man a little easier. But after the silver had been given and the worshipers had passed through the gate, the man was still sitting there, unable to walk.

The worshipers could give him something genuinely good, but Christ was about to give him something they could never provide. They could put silver in his hand, but Christ could put strength in his feet.

Then in **verse 3**, the man acts according to his daily pattern. He sees Peter and John, and he asks for what he thinks he needs. He asks for alms. He is asking for provision, and there is nothing wrong with that request. But he has absolutely no idea what Christ is about to give him.

He asks for something that might help him live another day in his broken condition. Christ is about to restore what has been broken from birth.

That is the difference between provision and restoration. The people could offer him alms,

but only the King could tell this lame man to rise up and walk.

2. The Command (v4-7)

2.1 The Attention and the Alms (v4-5)

Acts 3:4–5 “And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.” And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them.”

In **verse 4**, the story now pivots with three simple words. Look at us. The man has just asked Peter and John for alms, and Peter directs his gaze at him, John does the same, and Peter commands the man to give them his attention.

Luke slows the scene down here. The apostle is about to speak directly to this man in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, and before he does, he fixes the man’s attention upon them.

And notice that John is not merely standing somewhere in the background. Luke specifically tells us that Peter looked intently at the man, “as did John.” Both apostles are present as witnesses to what Christ is about to do. The man has asked them for something. Now they make sure he is looking directly at them when he hears the answer.

In **verse 5**, the man obeys. He fixes his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them.

And that expectation makes perfect sense. He’s sitting at the temple gate for one reason, He’s there to ask for alms. Peter and John have stopped and are looking directly at him. They have commanded his attention so naturally, he expects that some silver is about to be placed into his hand.

The man knows what he wants, but he has absolutely no idea what Christ is about to give him.

He is hoping for enough money to help him through another day. He is expecting provision

for the same broken condition he woke up with that morning. He expects that after this encounter is over, Peter and John will walk through the gate and he will remain sitting where he was before.

But Christ has something far greater for him than what he expects.

And there is a wonderful reminder of the generosity of our God here, and we can marvel at the fact that Christ isn't limited by the expectations of this man.

This beggar is thinking about silver. Christ is about to make him walk. He is expecting to remain a beggar with just a little more provision in his hand. Christ is about to completely change his condition. This man asks for something good, but through his apostles, the risen King is about to give him something he never imagined asking for.

As we move into verses 6 and 7, let's watch the power of that King put strength into feet that have never walked.

2.2 The Poverty and the Power (v6-7)

Acts 3:6-7 "But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong."

Here in **verse 6**, we reach the climax of the passage, and Peter begins with the very thing this man is expecting to receive. I have no silver and gold. The man expects Peter to reach into his pocket and put something into his hand, but Peter immediately tells him that the ordinary provision he expects is not what he is about to receive.

Peter has no silver to give him, but Peter does have something.

Silver would have been good, silver could have fed this man. Silver could have helped him through another day, but silver would have left him sitting right there at the gate.

Peter is about to give him something money could never purchase.

And there is a warning here for Awakening. Our confidence can never ultimately rest in our buildings, our budgets, our programs, or our material resources. Those things can be good

gifts, and they can be faithfully used for the work of the kingdom. But none of them possesses the power we are about to witness in this passage.

When Martyn Lloyd Jones wrote about this, used Peter's words to warn that the modern church can be tempted to reverse this verse. We can reach a place where we have silver and gold, but lack confidence in the very thing Peter possessed.

Awakening Church, we should gladly use every resource God gives us, while at the same time, never placing our confidence in those resources. Our confidence rests in the risen and reigning Christ.

But Peter does have something to give him.

And what does he have?

He has a commission and a command, rooted in a name. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!

What a word!

Then in **verse 7**, that word becomes action. Charles Spurgeon writes in his commentary that the word of power is followed by the hand of love. Peter took him by the right hand and raised him up. The Apostle didn't just speak the command, he reached down, took this helpless man by the hand, and raised him to his feet.

And the result? It was immediate, objective, complete, and publicly verifiable. Luke tells us that immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. This man had been lame from birth, and in Acts chapter 4 we get told that he was more than forty years old. His feet had never carried him, his ankles had never supported his weight, but at the command given in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, strength immediately filled what had been powerless from birth.

But Awakening Church, I think there is good reason to believe that Christ did more for this man than strengthen his ankles.

Now, I want to be careful here because an outward physical miracle doesn't necessarily mean that the person who receives it has also received inward spiritual life. We see that

clearly in the ministry of Jesus himself. In Luke chapter 17, Jesus healed ten lepers. All ten experienced the physical power of Christ. But only one returned, fell at the feet of Jesus, and gave glory to God.

So physical healing by itself doesn't prove regeneration.

But when we look into Acts 3, something more seems to be happening with this man.

Watch what Luke shows us after he is healed. He doesn't simply receive his legs and disappear. He enters the temple with the apostles. He walks. He leaps. He praises God. Then in verse 11 he clings to Peter and John. And even when opposition comes, Acts chapter 4 still finds this healed man standing with the Apostles.

There is good reason to believe that this man received something far greater than working ankles.

But I also want to be careful not to claim more than Luke tells us. Luke never stops the story and says, At this exact moment the Holy Spirit regenerated his heart. So I don't think we should insist upon the precise moment when regeneration occurred.

What Luke does give us is a physical miracle that pictures a spiritual reality. John Calvin saw this connection clearly too and in his commentary on this passage, Calvin describes this healing as a figure of our spiritual restoration. And we can see why if we listen again to the command.

“In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!”

Humanly speaking, that is an impossible command.

Peter is commanding a man who has never walked to stand on feet that have never worked. The command requires something this man doesn't naturally possess. But the command of Christ comes with the power of Christ.

Peter commands him to walk, and Christ supplies what the helpless man lacks. The command doesn't discover some hidden strength already inside of him. The power comes from outside of him, and immediately his feet and ankles are made strong.

And Calvin sees in this a picture of what God does spiritually through his Word and Spirit.

The Scriptures teach that God effectually calls his people by his Word and Spirit. We are not just spiritually injured people who need a little assistance. Scripture says we are dead in our trespasses and sins. The gospel commands sinners everywhere to repent and believe in Jesus Christ, but fallen man doesn't possess the spiritual ability to raise himself from death.

So God doesn't merely issue the command and then wait for us to manufacture the ability to obey it.

He gives what he commands.

By his Word and Spirit, God calls his people out of darkness and into light. He takes away the heart of stone and gives a heart of flesh. He renews the will, he grants repentance, he grants faith, and he draws sinners to his Son.

If we look again at the man standing in front of Peter we see what happened.

The command comes.

Rise up and walk.

He can't walk.

Christ supplies the power.

And the helpless man rises.

That physical miracle is not identical to regeneration, and I don't want to confuse the healing of his body with the saving of his soul. But I think Calvin was right to see in this a beautiful picture of our spiritual restoration. God's saving call doesn't merely tell spiritually helpless sinners what they ought to do. By his Spirit, God sovereignly supplies what his people lack and brings them willingly to Christ.

And there is good reason to believe that this man came to know that grace personally. His praise, his attachment to the apostles, and his continued identification with them all point in that direction. We will see that fruit beginning in the very next verse.

But whether his regeneration occurred at the exact instant his ankles were strengthened is

something Luke doesn't tell us.

What Luke does tell us is more than enough.

Jesus Christ of Nazareth speaks with sovereign authority.

The helpless man receives strength he didn't possess.

The lame man rises.

And all the glory belongs to the King.

Now, as we move into verse 8, we have already seen the undeniable evidence of his new legs. But I want to look closely at what follows and ask whether Luke also gives us evidence of a new heart.

3. The Consequences (v8-10)

3.1 The Leap and the Temple (v8)

Acts 3:8 "And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God."

Look at the immediate result in **verse 8**. Luke gives us a rapid fire sequence of actions. He is "leaping up," he "stood," he "began to walk." A man who had been carried his entire life is now moving under his own power. But it is not just functional, it is exuberant. He is walking and leaping.

And where might we have heard of such a thing before? I think Luke is deliberately echoing the prophet Isaiah. In Isaiah chapter 35, the prophet describes the coming salvation of God and the dawning of the Messianic age. And what is one of the signs? Isaiah 35:6 says, "then shall the lame man leap like a deer."

Do you see what Luke is putting together? This isn't just some impressive medical recovery. This is another signpost pointing directly to Jesus Christ. The healing of this man's legs is a visible announcement that the promised Messianic kingdom has arrived in power. The King has come, and he is doing exactly what Isaiah said he would do.

But the evidence of his new legs is only half the story. Where is the evidence of his new heart? Look at where he goes and what he does.

He entered the temple with them. I don't want to move too quickly past those words. Luke doesn't just tell us that the man can walk. He tells us where those new legs take him. He goes with Peter and John into the temple.

For years this man had been carried to this place and laid at the gate, but today is different. Today he isn't carried there by someone else, he rises on strengthened feet and enters the temple himself.

And notice that he enters "with them." He stays with the apostles who Christ has just used to show him this amazing mercy.

Now, entering the temple doesn't by itself prove that this man has been regenerated. There were plenty of unregenerate men who walked into that temple every day. But Luke is beginning to show us something about this man's response to what Christ has done for him.

His new legs do not carry him away from the Apostles, they carry him with the apostles into the place of worship.

And what does he do when he gets there? He is "praising God". His restored body immediately becomes an instrument of worship.

Now we need to ask another important question. Is this praise evidence that something has happened in this man beyond the healing of his body?

We should still be careful. A man who has been unable to walk for more than forty years has just been completely healed. It would be entirely natural for him to be overwhelmed with gratitude. So the fact that he praises God, by itself, doesn't prove that he has been regenerated, but Luke doesn't give us only this one moment.

We can look ahead to the pattern that begins to emerge.

- He enters the temple with Peter and John.
- He praises God.
- In verse 11, he clings to Peter and John.
- And after opposition arises, Acts chapter 4 still finds this healed man standing beside the apostles.

None of those details, taken by themselves, require us to conclude that Luke is documenting the precise moment of this man's conversion. But taken together, I think they give us good reason to believe that Christ has done something more for this man than restore his body.

His response doesn't look like a man who simply received his legs and went back to his old life.

He stays near the apostles.

He enters the place of worship.

And his first recorded response is praise to God.

I think we will see that this man's praise was not a fleeting emotion, it was the beginning of an eternal reality. And this, Awakening Church, points us to the ultimate purpose of our own salvation.

Christ doesn't just restore what is broken to make us comfortable. He restores what is broken for the glory of God. The Bible promises a perfectly restored creation, inhabited by a perfectly restored people, in perfectly restored and resurrected bodies.

In that new creation, we will not just be worshipping, our entire existence will be worship. We will glorify God in our work, in our relationships, in our exploration of his creation, and in our ruling with him over it. Every thought, every word, and every deed will be an act of perfect, joyful praise to the God who saved us. This man's praise is the firstfruits of that final reality. His new legs carry him into the temple, and his response directs our attention where it belongs. He praises the God from whom this extraordinary mercy has come.

So while the physical miracle was absolutely amazing, this man's response gives us good reason to believe that Christ's mercy toward him extended beyond the restoration of his body. He isn't just walking. He's walking and worshiping, and it keeps getting better.

3.2 The Fruits and the Wonder (v9-10)

Acts 3:9–10 “And all the people saw him walking and praising God, and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.”

This miracle was not isolated to some private corner. In **verse 9**, Luke pushes the evidence directly into public view. All the people saw him walking and praising God.

Look at what the crowd sees...

- They see him walking.

That is undeniable evidence of what has happened to his body. The man who had been lame from birth is now moving through the temple on strengthened feet.

- But they also hear him praising God.

The crowd doesn't just witness a change in this man's physical condition. They witness his response to what has happened. The same man who was sitting outside the gate asking for alms is now walking through the temple giving praise to God.

And as we have already seen, that praise doesn't stand alone. Luke continues to show us this man staying near the apostles and identifying himself with them. So while his walking publicly verifies the physical miracle, his praise continues to strengthen the evidence that something more than physical restoration is happening in this man.

The evidence was undeniable, and it was on full display. This whole time, Luke has been building a careful case for the public reality of this miracle. Think about all the layers of verification he gave us.

- The disability was from birth.
- The man was publicly known.
- He occupied a regular, public location.
- The healing was immediate and complete.
- And now, the crowd personally observes him walking and they recognize him.

Verse 10 makes this impossible to miss because they "recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms." This wasn't some stranger brought in for a faith healing, late night tent show. This was the man they passed by every single day. They knew his previous condition, they could see his present condition, and the difference between them blew them away.

And what was the result? They were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

So here we are again, just as with Pentecost, the crowd is now gathered and they are captivated. God, in his perfect providence, has set the stage again. He has performed a real, verifiable, undeniable miracle that has produced a confused and amazed audience.

But as always with these crowds, wonder, on its own, is not enough. Without sound doctrine to guide it, wonder can turn into idolatry. The people are amazed, but they don't yet understand.

And this is where we need to understand the purpose of the miracle. I can't say this enough. The miracle serves the Word.

This entire event, from the healing, to the leaping, to the praise, to the wonder of the crowd, is not an end in itself. The miracle is a sign that demands an explanation.

And Peter is about to give it.

In fact, Pastor Mike's next sermon will give us the inspired interpretation of everything we have just witnessed. When the crowd looks at Peter and John in amazement, Peter

immediately redirects their attention away from the apostles. He asks them, “Why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk?”

That’s the point, Peter didn’t make this man walk by his own power. Peter didn’t make this man walk because of his own holiness.

The risen Christ did this.

Here is what I want us to see. The miracle displays the power of Christ. It authenticates the witnesses Christ appointed, and then it creates the occasion for Peter to preach the Word and explain what they have just witnessed.

The crowd sees the sign.

But the sign points beyond itself.

It points to the King.

And that is why wonder is not enough. The people are amazed, but amazement can’t save them. They need to understand who Jesus is. They need to understand what they have done. They need to repent and turn back to God.

The miracle has captured their attention, and next week the Word will explain the miracle and summon them to Christ.

God has gathered the audience again. The evidence is standing right in front of them. And next week, Peter is going to preach the King.

4. Application And Call To Christ

Awakening Church, picture the scene one last time.

People are streaming toward the temple through the gate called Beautiful. They are walking on strong legs while beside them sits a man who can’t walk at all. We might naturally place ourselves among the healthy people and look down at the broken man, but spiritually

speaking, we are much more like the helpless man lying beside the gate.

Scripture describes our natural spiritual condition in language every bit as desperate. In Ephesians 2, it says we were dead in our trespasses and sins. We were not spiritually limping, and we didn't just need a little assistance.

We needed resurrection.

This man couldn't make himself walk, and we couldn't make ourselves live. He needed power from outside himself, and so did we.

But there is something remarkable about this man, and we can't miss it!!!

Out of all the people walking toward the temple, he is the one who knows exactly how helpless he is. Every morning someone carries him to that gate. There is no pretending that tomorrow he will try harder and finally stand himself up.

And Awakening Church, there is a mercy in knowing how helpless you really are. One of the greatest mercies God can show a sinner is to destroy the illusion that we are fine and show us how desperately we need Christ.

The world often says, "At least we have our health." And health is a genuine mercy from God, but there is something terrifying about a man who can walk and run and enjoy every earthly mercy while having no idea that, apart from Christ, he remains dead in sin and under the judgment of God.

The lame man knows he can't walk.

But... the lost man thinks he's fine.

You can have strong legs and a dead heart. What a mercy when God opens our eyes and shows us the truth.

I can't fix myself. I can't raise myself. I need a Savior.

And Awakening, God has done something for you infinitely greater than what happened physically at the Beautiful Gate. This man received strength in his ankles, but you received life from the dead. This man was raised to his feet, but you were raised with Christ. This man entered an earthly temple, but through Christ, you have been brought near to the living God.

Do you remember what you have received?

Look at this man. He walks, he leaps, he praises God, and then in verse 11, he clings.

For weeks, as I've studied this passage, I've looked at this man and wondered how often we have forgotten how helpless we were. We know the doctrines of grace. We know that we were dead in sin and that Christ made us alive.

But then what happens to us... Monday comes.

And somehow our walking becomes sitting.

Our leaping becomes napping.

Our praising becomes complaining.

Our remembering becomes forgetting.

Awakening, remember where Christ found you.

He didn't find a pretty good person who needed a little adjustment. He found you dead, guilty, and unable to save yourself, and Jesus made you alive. The deeper we understand our helplessness, the more astonishing his grace becomes.

And if you are outside of Christ this morning, you need something silver can't buy and

something you can't produce within yourself.

You need Christ.

The Jesus proclaimed in this passage is risen, ascended, and reigning, so repent and believe in him.

And Christian, remember what your King has done for you. You were helpless, but he didn't leave you helpless. You were dead, but he made you alive. You were guilty, but he justified you.

So when we walk out of here today, let's walk in the newness of life Christ has given us. Praise the God who saved us, and cling to the Christ who first took hold of us.

Remember the man at the Beautiful Gate. He couldn't raise himself, but Christ didn't leave him where he was.

Walking, leaping, praising, clinging.

And may a world watching us see the evidence that our King has not left us where we were either.

All glory be to Christ our King.

Alternate Application

I don't like it when Christianity is reduced to talking about the decisions we make.

“I decided to follow Jesus.”

“I decided I needed to change my life.”

“I decided to give my life to Christ.”

Now don't misunderstand me. Decisions matter. Faith acts. Repentance acts. Christians make real choices, and those choices ought to honor Christ.

I tell my children that constantly. “Honor Christ today!”

I tell them that because I want them to make decisions that really do honor Christ.

But Scripture says there is something even more fundamental than the decisions we make. Before we ever saw Christ as glorious, we were blind. And blind men don't open their own eyes.

So I want you to see!

But Awakening, I don't want you to leave this passage just seeing yourself in this man. I wrote an entire application for this sermon about that. “Look at this man, don't you see yourself”?

I want you to see Christ.

That's what the Apostles want.

In verse 4 ... the Apostles say “Look at us”.

But then next week Peter is going to ask the crowd, “Why are you looking at me?”

Why does he do that?

Because Acts 3 isn't here just to tell us a story that we already know. God has preserved this scene in his word and held it before the church so that through it we would see something of the glory of his Son.

Look at him.

See the compassion of Christ. This man asks for enough money to make it through another day, and Christ gives him something far greater than he knew to ask for.

See the power of Christ. This man has never walked a day in his life, and at the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, useless feet and ankles become strong. There is no rehabilitation. There is no recovery period. When the King exercises his authority, broken legs obey.

See the sufficiency of Christ. Silver and gold could have sustained this man's condition for another day, but Christ could change his condition entirely. He asks for silver, but Christ gives strength.

See Christ the Restorer. Isaiah said that when God's salvation came, the lame man would leap like a deer. And here he is, walking and leaping and praising God because the risen Christ is restoring what sin and the curse have broken.

See the generosity of Christ. The man asks for something small because he has no idea what is about to be given to him. He holds out his hand expecting a coin and receives working legs.

See the faithfulness of Christ. Hundreds of years before this man was laid at the Beautiful Gate, God had already spoken through Isaiah: "Behold, your God will come... He will come and save you. Then shall the lame man leap like a deer." And now look at him! The lame man is leaping!

Awakening, do you see Him?

This is our King!

Compassionate toward the helpless. Powerful over what is broken. Sufficient for what we truly need. Generous beyond what we know to ask.

Acts 3 is NOT just calling us to marvel at a man who can suddenly walk.

It's calling us to marvel at the Christ who made him walk.

And that is what I want for us this morning. Not just that we would know one more story about Jesus. Not just that we would understand one more passage in Acts. I want God to open the eyes of our hearts so that we see more of the glory of Christ.

Paul says that God has shone in our hearts. 2 Corinthians 4:6 "For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

So look at him.

We don't need to be talked into thinking Christ is beautiful. We need God to turn on the lights.

And don't miss this.

Jesus isn't just what we see when God turns the lights on.

Jesus is the Light.

John said, John 1:4 "In him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Jesus said, John 8:12 "Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

God has not just given us better eyes and told us to go looking for him.

God has made himself known to us in his Son.

The invisible God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ.

His character is displayed in Christ.

His holiness is displayed in Christ.

His righteousness is displayed in Christ.

His compassion is displayed in Christ.

His mercy is displayed in Christ.

His power is displayed in Christ.

His faithfulness is displayed in Christ.

See your King.

And when you see him as he is, when you see his beauty and his glory and his sufficiency, walking and leaping and praising and clinging don't seem like strange responses at all.

What else would this man do?

What will you do?

5. Questions For Study

Please be encouraged to use these questions for reflection throughout the week and Awakening discipleship group discussions.

1. Peter and John continued going to the temple at the hour of prayer even though they knew Christ had offered the final sacrifice for sin. What does this teach us about how the apostles understood the relationship between Jesus and everything God had previously promised to Israel?
2. The sermon distinguished between provision and restoration. Silver could help the man live in his broken condition, but only Christ could restore what was broken. Why is

ordinary mercy still important? What can ordinary mercy never accomplish that only Christ can do? How can you use ordinary mercy to point those around you to Christ?

3. The sermon described this physical miracle as a picture of effectual calling. The lame man could not make himself walk, so Christ supplied what he lacked. How does this picture help us understand what God does for spiritually helpless sinners through his Word and Spirit? How should the doctrine of effectual calling shape the way we think about our salvation and pray for the lost?
4. The healed man immediately walked and leaped and praised God, and he also clung to the apostles (v11). The sermon warned that over time our leaping can become napping and our remembering can become forgetting. Where have you noticed spiritual slumber creeping into your life? How does remembering your total past helplessness cure this complacency?
5. The sermon said that spiritually we are much more like the helpless beggar than the healthy people walking past him. Why is there mercy in God showing us just how helpless we are? How does knowing that we were dead, guilty, and unable magnify the grace of Christ?

Questions for small children during family devotion:

Please be encouraged to use these questions in family devotion throughout the week, especially for young minds learning about Christ.

1. What was wrong with the man sitting at the temple gate?
Parent guided answer: He could not walk. He was lame from the day he was born and he needed people to carry him everywhere.
2. What did the man expect Peter and John to give him?
Parent guided answer: He expected money. But Peter told him he didn't have any money. Peter gave him something much better in the name of Jesus.
3. Who actually gave the man the power to stand up and walk?
Parent guided answer: Jesus (God) gave him the power. Peter spoke the words but Jesus

used his own power to make the man strong.

4. What did the man do right after his legs were healed?

Parent guided answer: He jumped up and started walking. He went into the temple with Peter and John, walking and leaping and praising God for what God had done for him.

5. What does Jesus heal inside of us that is even better than fixing broken legs?

Parent guided answer: We are dead in our sins and cannot make ourselves alive. God gives his people new life and brings us to Jesus so that we can love him, trust him, and praise him.