

Arise and Walk

Acts 3:1-16

Introduction:

In Acts 3 we read about a man who was completely dependent on others. A lame man. We don't know his name.

The story begins with Peter and John going up together to the temple in Jerusalem to pray at the ninth hour which would have been 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The Jews had a practice of praying three times a day: beginning at nine in the morning, continuing at twelve at noon, and concluding at three in the afternoon.

As they were entering the temple at the gate Beautiful (for the extraordinary splendor and magnificence of it), Peter and John saw a lame man begging for money. What a miserable sight to behold! A lame man:

1. He was a cripple, not by accident, but born so; he was lame from his mother's womb, as it should seem, by a paralytic distemper, which weakened his limbs; for it is said in the description of his cure (v. 7), His feet and ankle bones received strength.
2. He was a beggar. Being unable to work for his living, he must live upon the charity of others. He was laid daily by his friends at one of the gates of the temple, a miserable spectacle, unable to do any thing for himself but to ask alms of those that entered into the temple or came out.

He would not have been laid there, and laid there daily, if he had not been used to meet with supplies, daily supplies there.

Peter sees the lame man and hears him. He responds by saying, "Silver and gold have I none.." At first, these words must have disappointed the lame man. No money?

But Peter continues and says to the lame beggar I don't have what you WANT but I have something for you which is much more precious than silver or gold. I have what you NEED. This man was in need of healing: Healing without and healing within! Physical healing and spiritual healing. Complete healing. Whole healing.

Read verses 6-7

"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." 7Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong."

Matthew Henry observes:

" His expectations, notwithstanding, were quite outdone. Peter had not money to give him; but, (1.) He had that which was better, such an interest in heaven, such a power from heaven, as to be able to cure his disease. He gave him that which was better-the cure of his disease, which he would gladly have given a great deal of silver and gold for, if he had had it, and the cure could have been so obtained. This would enable him to work for his living, so that he would not need to beg any more."

The lame beggar visited the temple everyday and begged for his living everyday. He was begging for a long time; it was the only thing he could do and knew how to do .

I want you to think about this. It was just several months ago that the Lord Jesus Christ was in Jerusalem preaching and teaching in the temple. Christ most likely would have seen this lame man begging for money at the gate. Similarly, the lame man was there at the temple and must have heard Christ preach.

When Peter declared to the lame beggar ...in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk. Thoughts of the lame man must have flashed back to the time when Jesus was preaching in the temple. “I know that name Jesus,” he must have thought. “I heard Jesus preach. I was there when the multitudes gathered around him and everyone was amazed at his teaching in the temple.”

Now Peter comes and commands the lame man to walk in the name of Jesus Christ! Is this some harsh-cruel joke from Peter; to command a lame man to walk! A lame man can't walk!

The lame man could have responded in different ways:

1. I *can't* walk. Don't you see how I am! 2. I *don't* want to walk. I am comfortable the way I am. People take care of me. Why should I walk? Or 3. I *can* walk and I *want* to walk. I need to walk!

And incredibly we read in verse 7: “And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. The lame man could walk!”

How this wonderfully illustrates the power of Jesus Christ in the lives of sinners.

Ephesians 2:4-6

4But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

1 Peter 2:24

24Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

This man, as soon as he could leap, leaped for joy in God, and praised him. Here was that scripture fulfilled in Isaiah 35:6

Isaiah 35:6

“Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.”

Now that this man was newly cured he was in this excess of joy and thankfulness.

All true converts walk and praise God; but perhaps young converts leap more in his praises. Christ put a new song in his heart!

Application

As you can imagine a big commotion had stirred among the people. *They knew it was he that sat begging at the beautiful gate of the temple*, v. 10. He had sat there so long that they all knew him; and for this reason he was chosen to be the vessel of this mercy.

Now they were not so perverse as to make any doubt whether he was the same man, as the Pharisees had questioned concerning the blind man that Christ cured, Jn. 9:9, 18.

They now saw him *walking, and praising God* (v. 9), and perhaps took notice of a change in his mind; for he was now as loud in praising God as he had before been in begging relief. The best evidence that it was a complete cure was that he now praised God for it.

They were astonished at it: They were *filled with wonder and amazement* (v. 10); *greatly wondering*. There seems to have been this effect of the pouring out of the Spirit, that the people, at least those in Jerusalem, were much more affected with the miracles the apostles wrought than they had been with those of the same kind that had been wrought by Christ himself.

All the people ran together unto them in Solomon's porch: some only to gratify their curiosity with the sight of men that had such power; others with a desire to hear them preach, concluding that their doctrine must needs be of divine origin, which thus had a divine ratification. They flocked to them in Solomon's porch, a part of the court of the Gentiles, where Solomon had built the outer porch of the temple. Here the people met, to see this great sight.

APPLICATION

When Peter saw it (the people coming over to him), he took this opportunity to preach Christ.

We read in verses 12-16

Verse 12

Why look ye so earnestly on us; suggesting, that they ought to look to God, and observe his divine power, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified, whose apostles they were, and in whose name, and by whose power they had wrought this miracle; which shows that they were not self-seeking and vain glorious men, but discovers great sincerity and integrity, much love to Christ, and great regard to his honour, and to the glory of God: as though by our own power and holiness we had made this man to walk?

Verse 13

The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob,....

John Gill in his commentary writes

“These titles of God, which are used in the Old Testament, [Exodus 3:6](#) the apostle chooses to retain, partly to distinguish him from the gods of the Gentiles, and partly to show his regard to the God of Israel, the one, only true, and living God; and that, though he and his fellow apostles were preachers of Christ, yet they were not setters forth of another, or a strange God, but believed in the same God their forefathers did, and to whom they ascribe the glory of this miracle.”

And in order to awaken their minds, to convict them of their sin,

ingratitude, and folly, the apostle adds, whom ye delivered up; to Pilate, the Roman governor; having first seized him as a thief, bound him as a malefactor, and arraigned, and condemned him to death in the high priest's palace as a blasphemer: and denied him in the presence of Pilate; contrary to his sense of things, who more than once called him the King of the Jews, and wrote this as the superscription over him, when they denied him to be their King Messiah, and the Son of God, saying, they had no king but Caesar:

when he was determined to let him go; or release him; that is, "when he judged it right that he should be released, he thought it was but just and equitable that he should be dismissed, being, in his apprehension, an innocent man; and therefore pressed it on the people to agree to release him, to which he was himself strongly inclined.

Verse 14

The Holy One and the Just' implies moral perfection. The whole narrative of the Crucifixion brings out that impression. Pilate's wife speaks with awe of 'that just person.' Christ responded to his accusers with a question 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?' 'If I have done evil, bear witness of the evil.' Pontius Pilate's words 'I find no fault in Him.' We may take it for granted that the impression Jesus made among His contemporaries was, at the lowest, that He was a pure and good man.

The nation had to choose one of two. Jesus was the one; who was the other? A man half outlaw, half rebel, who had raised some petty revolt against Rome, more as a pretext for robbery and crime than from patriotism, and whose hands reeked with blood. And this was the nation's hero!

Alexander Macclaren, great preacher of the 19th century, comments in his sermon *Prince of Life*:

“The rulers may have condemned Him for blasphemy, but the people had a more practical reason, and in it no doubt the rulers shared. It was not because He claimed to be the Messiah that they gave Him up to Pilate, but because He would not meet their notions of what the Messiah should be and do. If He had called them to arms, not a man of them would have betrayed Him to Pilate, but all, or the more daring of them, would have rallied to His standard. Their hate was the measure of their deep disappointment with His course. If instead of showing love and meekness, He had blown up the coals of religious hatred; if instead of going about doing good, He had mustered the men of lawless Galilee for a revolt, would these fawning hypocrites have dragged him to Pilate on the charge of forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and of claiming to be a King? Why, there was not one of them but would have been glad to murder every tax-gatherer in Palestine, not one of them but bore inextinguishable in his inmost heart the faith in ‘one Christ a King.’

And if that meek and silent martyr had only lifted His finger, He might have had legions of His accusers at His back, ready to sweep Pilate and his soldiers out of Jerusalem. They saw Christ’s goodness and holiness. It did not attract them. They wanted a Messiah who would bring them outward freedom by the use of outward weapons, and so they all shouted ‘Not this man but Barabbas!’ The whole history of the nation was condensed in that one cry—their untamable obstinacy, their blindness to the light of God, their fierce grasp of the promises which they did not understand, their hard worldliness, their cruel patriotism, their unquenchable hatred of their oppressors, which was only equalled by their unquenchable hatred of those who showed them the only

true way for deliverance.”

How many people today respond to Christ the same way? With hatred and contempt!

Verse 15

The word rendered ‘Prince’ means an originator, and hence a leader and hence a lord.

Alexander Macclaren:

“Was it His death only that thus elevated the disciples’ thoughts of Jesus? Strange that if He died and there an end, such a result should have followed. One would have expected His death to have shattered their faith in Him, but somehow it strengthened their faith. Why did they not all continue to lament, as did the two of them on the road to Emmaus: ‘We trusted that this had been He who should have redeemed Israel’—but now we trust no more, and our dreams are buried in His grave? Why did they not go back to Galilee and their nets? What raised their spirits, their courage, and increased their understanding of Him, and their faith in Him? How came His death to be the occasion of consolidating, not of shattering, their fellowship?

How came Peter to be so sure that a man who had died was the ‘Prince of Life’? The answer, the only one psychologically possible, is in what Peter here proclaims to unwilling ears, ‘Whom God raised from the dead.’

The fact of the Resurrection sets the fact of the Death in another

light. Meditating on these twin facts, the Death and Resurrection of Jesus, we hear Himself speaking as He did to John in Patmos: 'I am the Living One who became dead, and lo, I am alive for evermore!'

Think of the tremendous audacity of the claim which they make, that Jesus should be the 'Prince of Life,' and of the strange contradiction to it which the fact that they 'killed' Him seems to give. How could death have power over the Prince of Life? That sounds as if, indeed, the 'sun were turned into darkness,' or as if fire became ice. That brief clause 'ye killed the Prince of Life' must have seemed sheer absurdity to the hearers whose hands were still red with the blood of Jesus.

Verse 16

Verse 16. "*in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,*" and when his name was used in this manner by the apostles; not that either their faith, or his, had any causal influence on the cure, but was the way and means in which they, glorifying Christ, he was pleased to effect this cure:

Christ made this man strong; who was before exceeding weak;
Christ strengthened the parts that were infirm, his feet and ankles,
so that he could use them, and walk with them:

This man whom ye see and know; they knew him before, when he was lame, and now knew him to be the same man, and whom they saw now perfectly well; so that they could be appealed to that there was no fraud or imposture in the case:

the faith which is by Christ, of which he is the object, and the author, and finisher: this is repeated out of affection to Christ, and a passionate concern for the glory of his name;

Ephesians 2:8

“For by grace are ye saved through **faith**; and that not of yourselves: it **is** the **gift** of **God**.”

hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all: he had perfect soundness both in body and mind; this was not done in a corner, but publicly, before them all, at the gate of the temple, where the multitude passed to and fro.

CONCLUSION

Some of you are here this evening and in need of a miracle-the miracle of salvation. You are not saved from your sins! And like this lame man you are completely dependent on the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ to save you. Will you heed the miracle and message today and arise and walk? Let us pray!