

STUDY NOTES

The Acts of the Apostles

A MESSAGE SERIES AT NEW CITY CHURCH (Spring 2016)

WWW.NEWCITYPHX.COM/SERMONS - BRIAN KRUCKENBERG

The following content is based on the message “The Miracle of Healing” spoken on 02/22/16 by Brian Kruckenberg at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis of the message but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these Study Notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective communities.

THE SCRIPTURE

Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.² 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.³ Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms.⁴ And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.”⁵ And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them.⁶ 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!”⁷ And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.⁸ And leaping up he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.⁹ And all the people saw him walking and praising God,¹⁰ 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.¹¹ While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon’s.¹² And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: “Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk?¹³ The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him.¹⁴ But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,¹⁵ and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.¹⁶ And his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all.

ACTS 3:1-16

HOW GOD USES MIRACLES

In Acts the miracles always propelled the movement of Jesus, confirming God’s presence in the spread of the gospel or as a sign that enabled faith.

Because of faith in Jesus Christ this man’s legs were made strong even though he had been lame since birth. We see in this passage, as with every other story or account of a miracle in the bible that it is done in the name of Jesus.

- *Do you doubt that miracles can still happen? If so, talk about why.*

EXPECT THE MIRACULOUS

Peter tells the onlookers that they shouldn’t be in awe over what had happened. After all, he says, man didn’t do this, but God. He then goes on to describe the God of Abraham, Issac and Jacob healed this lame man through God’s servant, Jesus, whom they had killed!

This would have struck a cord with the people listening because they were Jews who knew full well that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob could heal. They knew this because God created everything and they believed that. Now Peter was telling them that this same God was restoring all things through Jesus Christ.

- *Do you see how miracles are really a sign of God restoring things to what they were always intended to be?*
- *Do you understand what sin has done to all of creation, including our bodies, minds and souls?*

SABOTAGING LIFE

Peter wastes no time in telling them what they (the men listening) did when they killed Jesus. They didn’t just kill a man, they killed the “Author of life.” Take a moment and ponder that statement. They KILLED the AUTHOR of life. The One who could give them exactly what they needed and deep down wanted, abundant life, was the one they tried to destroy. If we look at our own lives, I imagine we can see many times where we sabotage that what we most want. Further, if we understand sin, we have to see our role in the crucifixion of Jesus.

- *How have you “destroyed” or “killed” the very things in your life that you most desire?*
- *Why do you think you have done this?*
- *How this destructive be eliminated or at least limited in your life?*

AMAZING GRACE

While certainly we all have sinned and fall short of God's glory, Peter very clearly gives us hope and shares the grace of God. He says if we repent and turn back to God, confessing our sin, then God will restore us and give us times of refreshing.

Peter most certainly could relate. We learn in the Gospels that Peter denied Jesus not once, not twice, but THREE times. Peter is not claiming that THEY denied Jesus but he knew that he had too and that Grace had been extended to him. Jesus had forgiven him of his sin. Perhaps this is why Peter could preach so powerfully about Jesus, His resurrection and His forgiveness. We can see that Peter must have truly believed that in Christ he was new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

- *Do you believe that God can, does and will forgive your sins through Jesus?*
- *Can you describe that forgiveness in your life? If you cannot, maybe you haven't let the truth of forgiveness really set you free.*

TRUE HEALING

It is no accident that one of the very first things this man does after being healed is to run into the temple. He had found **spiritual acceptance** when he was healed and not simply physical healing. For the first time he was deemed worthy to enter the house of worship. This theme will repeat itself in Acts. Those who were rejected as unworthy for worship in the old religion of Israel (Leviticus 21; 2 Samuel 5) found full acceptance in the name of Jesus, whether a lame beggar, an Ethiopian eunuch, a woman, or a Gentile. The healing of this man physically pales in comparison to the spiritual healing he received.

Think about this: if this man lived until he was 80 then he would have legs that carried him for another 40 years. But what about after that? What about life after death? The truth is we live for eternity and a healed soul and spirit is infinitely more valuable than new legs. In Luke 10, Jesus gives 72 people the power and authority to heal and cast out demons. When they return from doing so, they rejoice at what they had witnessed. No doubt they had seen many miracles! But what does Jesus tell them? He says, don't be so impressed with the physical power but rejoice because your names are written in the book of life!

- *Do you value your salvation more than physical healing or wholeness on this earth?*
- *Stated another way: Do you value the things of heaven more than the things of earth?*
- *Talk about why it is so difficult for us to keep things in the right perspective.*