

Seasons of Refreshing

ACTS 3:1-26

4/25/2021

LEARN

- **Use** your preferred Bible study method to read and explore Acts 3:1-26.
- **Read** through the Teaching Plan. Record your insights for personal reflection and application and use them to interact with your group during the discussions. Read the Commentary and use it when applicable.
- **Research** *continuationism* and *cessationism*. Do you support one or the other or parts of both? How does what you believe influence how you read the book of Acts? How does it influence your view of how the church should fulfill her calling?

LEAD

- **Customize** the lesson for your group. Use the designated Discussion questions or swap them for the ones included in the Learner guide. Plan for adequate discussion time for the questions you selected.
- **Pray** for guidance from the Holy Spirit during the study. Don't be afraid to use silence as a time to receive and answer from the Spirit or for someone else to share an insight.
- **Emphasize** the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the entire passage. For instance, you can point out how Peter used the same miracle-then-message method Jesus often used during His ministry.

LISTEN

- **Listen** to the answers and insights that are shared during your group time. Use them for your own growth and to help others in your group who might need to grow in those areas as well.

LOVE

- **Abide** in Jesus this week by intentionally seeking opportunities to share the gospel.
- **Pray** for your group members to be ready and willing to be the ordinary people God uses to fulfill the calling of the church through the Spirit.

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MAIN POINT

The church fulfills her calling when we help people find healing and hope through faith in Jesus.

OPEN

- Prayer / Welcome / Announcements: firstnorfolk.org/thisweek
- Ask the assistant group leader to mark attendance for your group and review the [small group guidelines](#).

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Has God ever used someone to meet a need in your life in a powerful way? Or, has God ever used you to meet someone else's need in a powerful way? If so, share what happened.

We follow Jesus' lead when it comes to ministering to others. In the Gospels, we see Him meet both physical and spiritual needs of people He came in contact with. When we meet these needs, we give evidence the Spirit is working in our lives and open the door to sharing the gospel. Keep this question in the back of your mind throughout our study: How can I fulfill the church's calling by sharing the news about how God refreshes people through belief in the death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ?

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 3:1-5

- Why did Peter and John continue to pray at the temple in spite of the fact that the religious leaders and the Jewish people were complicit in Jesus' death? What does this tell us about how they viewed the church's calling?
- What do we know about Jewish society at this point in history that would tell us why the lame man had to beg for alms? How did Peter and John respond to the man's plea? Why do you think they responded in this way?



DISCUSS

Describe a time when you were made aware of an opportunity for ministry and did not take advantage of it. What kept you from doing so? If you were presented with that opportunity again, what would you do differently?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 3:6-10

- What stood out to you in this passage and why?
- In Kenneth O. Gangel's commentary on verse 6 he wrote, "God never asks us to give what we don't have; He expects us to give to those in need from what He has given us, and always to do it in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth." Is Gangel's statement biblical? Is it applicable to Peter's actions? Is it applicable to believers today? Explain.



DISCUSS

The lame man was healed physically and spiritually. Can an act of kindness be called "ministry" or considered to be part of the church's calling without the spiritual component? Why or why not?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 3:11-16

- Why did Peter begin his sermon with self-denial? What might have happened to this gospel opportunity if he and John had taken credit for the miraculous healing of the lame man?
- How do verses 12-15 support the truth of verse 16?



DISCUSS

Peter was direct with his assertion that the Jewish people were responsible for Jesus' death. Why did they need to hear this as part of the gospel? Why do all non-believers need to hear about their sin as it relates to Jesus' death? Why do all believers need to be reminded about the same?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 3:17-26

- What did Peter tell the crowd in verse 17? Does this absolve them of their guilt for the part they played in Jesus' death? Discuss.
- Peter mentions spiritual refreshment as one of the benefits of genuine repentance. How does this refreshment manifest itself in the earthly life of a believer?



DISCUSS

Think about how Peter used the Old Testament in this sermon. What did his audience learn about God's faithfulness?

APPLICATION

The apostles, filled with the Spirit, confidently proclaimed Scripture and applied it to the needs and struggles of people around them. How can we model this today?

PRAYER

Close in prayer, thanking God for His power at work and blessing us with seasons of refreshing. Thank Him for transforming us into Jesus' image and working through us to bring more people to Him. Give your group members the opportunity to voice their own prayers of gratitude and praise as they reflect on the calling God has entrusted to us and the Holy Spirit who empowers us to carry it out.

COMMENTARY

ACTS 3:1-26

3:1 Peter and John continued to participate in Jewish rituals and worship, and early Christians regularly gathered in the "temple complex" (2:46). This is fitting, for Christianity began as a form of contemporary Judaism that accepted Jesus as Messiah. The beginning stages of the church's separation from Judaism are recounted in Acts as Christian leaders such as Peter and Paul continued boldly to proclaim Jesus as Messiah. The full and final split of Christianity from Judaism came by the time of the first Jewish revolt against Rome (a.d. 66-70).

3:2. This is the first healing miracle in Acts. The man was "lame" from birth and was daily carried to "the temple gate called Beautiful" so he could beg for money. In the era before governmental aid for needy persons, it was the kindness of strangers and loved ones that kept men such as this alive.

3:6. It is good for the lame man that Peter and John had neither "silver or gold" to hand out, for what they did have to offer was of far greater value—healing power through "Jesus Christ." Rather than a temporary fix, the man was given a permanent remedy for his physical and spiritual problems.

3:7. The book of Acts recounts several healing miracles (e.g., 9:32-34,36-42). During the Hellenistic period, knowledge of science and medicine was advanced enough that the bystanders recognized without a doubt that Peter had enacted a miracle. The mention of the strengthening of the lame man's "feet and ankles" may provide indirect support for the traditional view that the author, Luke, was a physician.

3:12. Recognizing that the onlookers were "amazed," Peter seized the chance to testify about Jesus Christ. Signs of God's power can point to the truth about Jesus (Jn 3:2; 14:11).

3:13-15. Peter told his hearers in Solomon's Colonnade, which was part of the temple complex, that Jesus Christ was God's "Servant." And yet the people had "handed" Him "over" to Pilate and denied Him even though Pilate had judged Him to be innocent (Lk 23:20-25). Peter emphasized the heinous nature of this deed by calling Jesus the "Holy and Righteous One" and by noting that they had asked Pilate to release a "murderer" in place of Jesus. Thus they killed the "source of life" instead of one who had taken life. But "God raised" Jesus "from the dead," a fact to which both Peter and John were "witnesses."

3:16. Peter and John had a chance to claim credit for the miraculous healing of the man, but instead insisted that it was “faith in His [Jesus] name” that “made this man strong.” The apostles were merely God’s chosen instruments for conveying the miracle.

3:18. The prophecy that the “Messiah” would suffer is an apparent reference to the Suffering Servant of Isa 52:13-53:12. The suffering of the servant for sins (Isa 53:10) had been fulfilled through Jesus.

3:19. On the basis of what he had said about who Jesus was, how He was treated by the Jewish people, and how God had vindicated Him by raising Him from the dead, Peter called on his audience to “repent and turn back” to God so that their “sins may be wiped out.”

3:20-21. Early Christians looked with expectation to the second coming of Jesus and the “restoration of all things” that accompanies the establishment of His earthly kingdom. God had foretold the time of “restoration” through the prophets, starting as far back as Moses (v. 22; see also Rm 8:18-25).

3:22-24 Peter appealed to Dt 18:15-19, where Moses foretold Israel that “God will raise up for you a Prophet like me.” Over time this came to be recognized as a Messianic prophecy. Anyone who rejects Messiah “will be completely cut off” from God’s people. Peter also appealed to all the prophets throughout Israel’s history, for all of them had “announced these days.” Jesus Himself taught the apostles to recognize this about the OT (Lk 24:27).

3:25-26. The Jews listening to Peter were “sons of the prophets” and inheritors of the covenant God made with Abraham. Thus they had a personal stake in the words of the prophets and the Pentateuch, but so do all the peoples of earth. After all, God’s covenant with Abraham promised that all the earth would be blessed through Abraham’s seed, a reference ultimately to Jesus Christ, God’s “Servant.”