

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 04.30.2023

STAND UP AND WALK – ACTS 3:1-10

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles or observations stood out to you from this week’s message? Discuss with your group.

We heard from Pastor James Class this weekend. James tells us “One of my absolute favorite passages entire Bible is Acts 3. In a lot of ways this chapter reflects my own personal testimony - how God saved and delivered me. I was lost in my sin, but one day Jesus changed everything. This is also a passage that God used to call me to preach.” Let’s get into our lesson...

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

1. What struck you most from Pastor James sermon?
2. Have you ever been so sick that you needed someone else to help you?
3. How did you feel toward the person that helped get better?

Digging Deeper in God’s Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 3:1-5

When the church first started, the people in Jerusalem met each afternoon at the temple at 3 p.m. to pray. One day as Peter and John went to pray, they met a man who was crippled and unable to walk. He had been crippled ever since he was born. Since the government did not have a welfare program to help the sick and crippled, it was necessary for the man to sit by the side of the street and ask people to give him money or food so that he could live. This is still true in many countries today. This particular man was sitting and begging near the gate of the temple.

1. What was the lame man expecting from Peter and John?
2. Why do you think Peter commanded the man to look at them (v. 4)?
3. How did Peter heal the man?
4. Did Peter have any doubt that the man would be healed?
5. How quickly was the man healed?

Verse 4 describes how Peter and John looked straight at the man. The first step in helping someone in need is seeing the person your life intersects with. Peter and John saw more than a lame beggar. They saw a person who had needs far deeper than financial, and they saw the opportunity to meet those needs. They told the man to look at them. This encounter was both intense and intentional. The apostles were filled with the confidence that the Holy Spirit’s power was about to be demonstrated in the life of a person for whom Christ had died.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 3:6-10

The disciples not only were to receive Jesus’ love, but they also were to extend it to others. Remaining in Christ’s love did not mean that they merely basked in their blessings but that they would live in such a way that His love was evident to everyone they met.

1. How did Peter’s response to the man contradict the man’s expectations? Are there ways that we put limits on God’s working in our lives? To what does Peter’s phrase “what I have I give you” refer (v. 6)?

“PROMISES” in 2023

2. On what authority did Peter heal the man? Why is this significant?

Peter told the man that he had no money, but he had something far better. He then commanded, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” This verse is not meant to discourage us from giving money to people who are in need. One way God’s power works to meet material needs is through those who love Him. Gifts of money can express the love and care of Christ. Scripture encourages believers to give to others (2:45; see also James 2:15-16). This verse does indicate, however, that financial needs are not the most significant needs we have. Our greatest need is to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Another need is to know that someone cares, that we are valued by another. All of us need to be treated with dignity, respect, and consideration.

3. What might a modern-day example of this encounter look like?

4. What lessons can we learn from the actions and words of Peter and John?

While Peter and John were the messengers, the message was all about Jesus. As we go about our daily lives, we should be sensitive to the needs around us and how God may want to use us as His messengers of the gospel.

5. Wonder and amazement were common responses among the early church and people who witnessed their work. Are these responses to God’s power common in our church? Why or why not?

6. What do you think keeps us from feeling the same sense of awe about what God is doing in our midst?

Peter and John healed the lame man through the power and authority of Jesus. They allowed the Holy Spirit—who Jesus sent in His place—to work through them. Jesus had included Peter and John, along with James, in a sort of inner circle of disciples. He had taken them with Him on the mount of transfiguration and deeper into the garden of Gethsemane, evidently preparing them for significant leadership responsibilities. Both men would have seen Jesus meet people’s physical and spiritual needs many times during His earthly ministry.

Applying God’s Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

The man that was healed had been in this debilitating condition his entire life, some 40 years! Imagine being stuck in the same place day after day with no improvement and no hope of getting better. Then on one particular day, just before a prayer service a man named Peter came and boldly proclaimed that Jesus could change his life. After 40 years of suffering, Jesus entered in and changed his life completely in a moment of time. Many people today are crippled by sin. One part of them knows it’s wrong and the other part finds pleasure in it. They feel stuck, addicted to bondage and in the back of their mind they know that there is judgement coming. Many people are crippled by fear, anxiety, depression, and the cares of the world. As Christians God uses us to speak into someone’s life and set the captives free! Jesus changes everything!

1. How can we follow Jesus’ example of associating with the “sick”? What might we have to sacrifice to do so?

2. What could our group do together to meet people’s healing needs and bring them to Jesus?

PRAYER – Close in prayer, thanking God that He cares about the whole person—physical and spiritual. Pray for any specific healing needs your group may have. Pray that even today God would impress upon your group members’ hearts to get involved in the needs of others.

“Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” (Acts 3:6)