

Title: The Healing of a Lame Man

Text: 3:1-18

Turn to Acts chapter 3, please. Acts chapter 3 beginning at Vs 1. We have just finished chapter 2. We discovered what the Church should be doing. We are not here dealing with what the major denominations think about the church. We are here studying what the Bible says about the church. And we have just looked at those exciting Verses of chapter 2. Now, we come to chapter 3 beginning at Vs 1.....

(Read 3:1-18)

Let us look to the Lord in Prayer

I don't think there is a question about which people are concerned then the question ~~of~~ why people suffer and why people experience things like this man in Acts chapter 3. Here is a lame man born lame. And hardly a weeks goes by then someone ask me or perhaps ask you: WHY IS IT THAT IF ~~A~~ GOD IS A EQD OF LOVE, WHY IS IT THAT PEOPLE SUFFER? Why ~~is/it/~~ are there physical abnormalities? Why is there deases and suffer? Why do people suffer?

And I want to say to you that we are not new with that ~~Q~~uestioning mind. For in the O.T. it is one of the great questions. In fact, the O.T. prophets used to say: "WHY DID THE WICKED PROSPER," It seemed like the wicked had less suffering.

And yet we learn from the Bible that both wicked and righteous suffer in this way.

But, they used to look at the wicked and it seemed that the wicked prospered more than the righteous. And they ask: WHY DO THE WICKED PROSPER AND THE RIHTHOUS SUFFER?

It is one of the great questions. I am not sure that I can give an adequate answer to that question in the time we have today. I know that there are some 15 reasons why God brings suffering. But, let me just share with you a few things leading up to the situation of the lame man.

I believe with all my heart that God has a special love for people who are suffering physically. I believe I can prove that.

I believe that the man who is lame, the man who is blind, the man who suffers a physical loss, the man who is poor, even, is an object of a special love of God. That God has more love centered in these people than we will ever begin to understand or know.

In the O.T. Moses was quite confounded about the thought that God had given to him. He said, I can't speak eloquent. I don't have the kind of vocabulary that I need."

And the Lord God said unto Moses in Exodus chapter 4:11 : "Who made man's mouth? or who makes him dumb or deaf, or seeing or blind? IS IT NOT I, THE LORD?..."

I find that people will do anything to avoid blaming God for physical problems. And yet, God accepts the blame. And he says, "IS IT NOT I, THE LORD."

Who made the dumb, and the deaf, and the blind? Is it not I, the Lord?"

Job wrote that afflictions does not come out off the dust, affliction comes from God. God brings it. In Job 13:15 Job said after all he had suffered, physical. He said: "Though He slay me, Yet, will I trust in Him."

In Job 23:10, Job answering his critics, and this becomes the key text of Job. He said: "But He knows the way I take; When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

What a tremendous statement. He knows the way I take. And when I have been tried or tested, I shall come forth as Gold....

In John chapter 9 verse 1-3, Jesus and his disciples met a man who was born blind. The disciples ask a question that every person ask in his mind. Who did sin? This man or his parents?

And Jesus said, "Neither, but it was in order that the works of God might be displayed in him.".....Neither sinned. But God wants to do a wonderful work in his life.

Then, I read in Isaiah chapter 35:6. In speaking about the Messiah who is about to come and rule over the entire earth. It says that then shall the lame man leap like a deer. For the Messiah will come and he will heal.

In 2 Samuel chapter 4 and 9, I learn of a lame man in the O.T. named Mephibosheth, a son of Jonathan. And after Jonathan had been killed, David the great king wanted to show kindness unto Jonathan's household for he loved Jonathan. As you know, this is one of the great ~~love~~ stories of command ship in the Bible. Two men who were under pressure and persecution. And their hearts had been united together in one common effort and purpose and goal. And Jonathan had died. And David wanted to do something for his household. And so the servant of the house said that Jonathan had a lame son by the name of Mephibosheth. And David said: "Bring him into my household."...


Not only did David bring him into his household, but he said that the son of Jonathan shall eat with me continually all the days of his life.

That was not even true of the great princes of Israel, But it was true of one lame man. The son of Jonathan...

Well, what does that teach us? It teaches us God's great love. For that story becomes one of the key stories in the entire Bible. David, who represents Christ, showed his love to a lame man. He shall eat at my table all the days of his life.

In Luke 14 we read of a great supper. And Jesus said that a man offered a tremendous dinner and invited hundreds of ~~people~~ important people to come to it. And many made excuses. Some ridiculous excuses. Some excuses that could easily be explained as being merely ignoring the invitation....

After these excuses had been given the man who gave the great dinner said this ~~to~~ to his servants: "Go out into the city and bring back the lame, the poor, and the blind.



In Jeremiah 31:8, again God in prophecying^d the great future kingdom to be set up on earth. Listen to what God says: "I will gather them from all parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, and a great company shall return here."

The blind, the lame, the poor....God loves them.

In Matthew chapter 11:5 Jesus told his disciples to go to John the Baptist who was in prison at this time, and say to John these words: "THE BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT AND THE LAME WALK, THE LEPERS ARE CLEANSED AND THE DEAF HEAR, AND THE DEAD ARE RAISED UP, AND THE POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM."

I would like you to turn in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 15. As I want you to see a very important text in this regard. Matthew chapter 15 and notice Vs 30.....Matthew 15 verse 30.....

(Read Matthew 15:29-31)

Turn over to chapter 21 of Matthew. Chapter 21 and verse 14.(READ)

This happened in ~~YIM~~ at the time he was casting out the money changers in the temple. At one moment he was ~~asting~~ casting out the money changers. And he said: "DON'T MAKE MY HOUSE A DEN OF THIVES. It is a house of prayer dedicated to God." He cast them out. And in the next moment the lame and the blind are coming to him and he is healing them.

What am I trying to say?....I am trying to say much of what Luke 14:13 says when it says this: "When you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.".....JESUS SAID THAT....

I shared all of this with you to build up to our story in Acts 3. And help you to see something about those Apostles that made them and the world about them say "they turned the world upside down".....To see one side of the Apostles that you may not have seen. And that is the side of compassion. The side of concern. The side of the love of people whom God loved.

Do you remember the Bible said that the common people heard Jesus gladly. The same thing was true of the Apostles. It was the poor, and the crippled, and the lame, and the blind. It was these people who were coming to Jesus. And these people are also coming across the path of the Apostles.

Now, I would like to point out a few facts from Acts chapter 3. Turn back to Acts 3, please.... I would like to point out several facts from this story.

(1) And number one is to notice the condition of this man who born lame.

And I want to apply this because the Bible says in Hebrews 12 that all of us are like spiritually lame people. That much of the experiences of our lives demonstrate that we are spiritually lame. We don't walk right. We are spiritually blind. We don't see right. And what a tremendous illustration. Here is the lame man, born lame. And spiritually we are born in that condition. We can't walk right. We are born blind. We can't see right. Jesus said that if a man was born again he would see the kingdom of God. Many of us here today are just plain lame spiritually....

Perhaps we have come to confess Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour. But we have never ~~confessed~~ ^{progressed} much beyond that point. And we fall within that teaching of Hebrews 12: Lame people...struggling along with feeble needs and hands that hang down in total discouragement. SPIRITUAL LAMENESS.

The man was lame from his birth. And one of the interesting facts about this man was that according to Vs 2 he was set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called BEAUTIFUL."

Can you picture this in your mind? Multitudes of people passed by this man every day.

I want to go a step further....Peter and John passed by this man all the time.....Did you every stop and ask yourself the question: WHY DID THEY SEE HIM NOW?.....Why didn't they see him before?.....Why didn't they stop before and heal him?.....They passed this poor ~~blind~~ lame man day after day after day. They never stopped to help him....Multitudes passed by. And some would ^{know} ~~through~~ him some alms as they passed by..

But they cared little about those who were suffering. The Bible tells or gives us many examples of that. And history tells us that most of the religious leaders of that day cared little about the poor. ~~They/~~

And so I ask myself the question. What brought forth this sudden concern of the part of Peter and John? And that is the second thing I want to share with you. What was this concern behind Peter and John? Am I reading into the text to say this to you that the only way to explain this is THE HOLY Spirit.....

Peter and John who passed this lame man day after day after day. And maybe they gave alms and maybe they didn't. But they did not have the concern that they had on this occasion and the question is WHY?..... Because Peter and John had little concern for anyone but themselves until the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit. And as a result of those two events these men were CHANGED...HOW DO I KNOW THAT?

Look at Vs 4...It says, "Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze upon him.".....It means to look at someone with such intensity that you can not take your eyes off of them. This wasn't a passing glance. Peter and John fastened their ~~ve~~ eyes upon this man. Their eyes are just glued on this man. And they can't take their eyes away from him.

Here is a man who is lame. And he had been placed at the gate of the temple called beautiful. And he had laid there ~~all~~ these years. And who cared about him.....

I think about how little care we have for people who are suffering. And if we are to be in those exciting days of that N.T. church, we must understand that they cared for people. No matter who they were. If one member of the body suffered, all the body suffers with it as 1 Corin. 12 teaches.... So, we see a new Peter and John changed by the Holy Spirit who glue their eyes on this man who was lame.

And it is an interesting thing what Peter says.

You know, they tell us about these beggars. That they never looked up. They never looked up. This man was lame. He wasn't blind. He was just lame. So, they never looked up. They just sat there and they begged. Alms for the poor. Alms for the poor.....

And so many people would pass by. And they didn't care.....And notice what Peter and John said: "LOOK AT US!"....

And can you picture that lame man looking up and thinking ..Boy, I must be getting something good here. And Peter said: "I do not possess silver and gold.".....By the way, that is one of my favorite passages to prove that Peter was not the first Pop.....I do not possess silver and gold....

And you know, I think of many of us. And that illustration may seem quite silly to you. But do you know, many of us are like that.....We have the silver and gold. Some of us say, "Well, I can't give my money."...And we really have it. But, let's suppose we don't.....We forget that the Apostle ~~did/hay~~ didn't have any money, either.

The first time someone says, "Care, for the lame, the poor, the blind. Care for them. Love them." The first thing you think off is the money you have to dish out for them.....

If you have it to give, praise God. Don't give it to be seen of men. Give it according to Christ. But, if you don't have it. Is there anything we can do for the lame?I say to you just as surely as Peter healed them. And I believe in miracle. And if you share the gospel with a lame man, you willn't have to worry about his physical healing. For one day when Christ comes he will leap as a deer. That is what the Bible says..

You see there is something we can do....You say, "well, we have to reach all people." You know, the more I read the Gospels there is one thing that keeps convicting me...And that is: it is the poor....it is the common, it is those who are physical deformed, those who have handicaps, It is those kind of people that Jesus works with....Have you ever noticed that?....

Almost without exception...Oh, there was Nicodemus and the Roman Cenurion. Those were wealthy men. But on the whole the multitudes are poor people coming to Jesus. The common people heard him gladly....

It is great refreshing news, those who are in dispair, those who are suffering, are the ones most ready to hear the message of Christ.

Here is the lame man. And Peter and John gazed upon him and said: "LOOK UPON US".....

What a difference the Holy Spirit makes. They past this man many times before. But now they fixed their ~~yes~~ eyes upon him....AND I LOVE THAT and I hope you see its message....

Now, what was the cure? What happened to this man? Notice it carefully Vs 6... Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you:" WHAT DID HE HAVE?.....

He had authority in Jeus Christ....."In the name of Jesus Christ the Na~~re~~ren - walk.".....Now, the next verse is very important. If I were there, and I wasn't quite sure of that authority, do you know what I would have done?....."IN the name of Jeus Christ, ~~walk~~ walk".....WHAT DO YOU THINK JOHN? Is he going to so it?...

You see, a lot of us think this way. Even when we come to God, now, and pray ~~for~~ healing.cc Do I believe in healing?.....Absouletely..... Absoulely.....Do I believe in men who have the direct power within themselves to ~~han~~ lay hands on the sick and they shall recovery?..... YES, I BELIEVE IN THAT. BUT, ONLY THE APOSTLES.....No one tody..... Mark 16 says about those Apostle.....Jesus said: "Signs will follow them to confirm the spoken word."

And one of those sign is that they will lay their hands on the sick and they shall recovery. The Apostles had the same power, the same ability as Jesus Christ. He gave it to them. He said: "In my authority, in my name, you will do the same thing." And they confirmed the spoken word until we got the written word.

But, you know. This Bible still teaches that the prayer of faith shall save the sick...James chapter 5...AND THE LORD SHALL RAISE HIM UP.

And so like the scripture teaches...We come to God and say: "God, HEAL".....WHAT DO YOU THINK...WILL HE OR WILL HE NOT?.....

Oh, God knows us so well....He knows the weakness of our faith.... He says, "Oh, you of little faith.".....If we had the faith of a grain of mustered seed, we could say to these mountains, BE REMOVED AND THEY WOULD BE REMOVED.....

And I am always remind of that illustration of the farmer who wanted a mountain in the middle of the corn field removed so that he could plant more corn. And one day he looked at that mountain and he said: "LORD, REMOVE THAT MOUNTAIN."....Then the farmer went to bed and the next morning he got up and ran to the window and he looked out ...and the mountain was still there. And he said: WELL, I KNEW IT WOULDN'T BE GONE."...

Do you understand the point?....Little faith....You see faith does not lie resistant in man, it lies in the power and might of God. So

So, every time anyone of us comes to God to believe him we demonstrate we are of little faith. AREN'T YOU GLAD FOR YOUR POSITION IN CHRIST?..... Oh, how I praise God for that. I praise God that God isn't dealing with me on the bases of my weak faith which I exercise day after day. I glad that I can say" PRAISE THE LORD, I have been placed into Christ through a simple decision. That is the greatest truth of the Bible. I am in Christ by faith. And thank God, nothing can change that position.

So, the cure came from Jesus Christ. The authority of Christ was exercised. And these Apostles had that power.

Now, notice what happed? Vs 7.... "And seizing him by the right hand," Peter exercised his faith in the authority Christ had given him....He took him by the right hand and lifted him up...AND WHAT HAPPED?

The Bible says in Vs 7..."And immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened.".....I like that.....This cure was no slow healing... It happened immediately.....HOW DID IT HAPPEN?.....Look down at Vs 16

"AND ON THE BASIS OF FAITH IN HIS NEAME, IT IS THE NAME OF JESUS WHICH HAS STRENGTHENED THIS MAN."

Drew a line back to Vs 7. Immediately his feet and ankles were strengthened....Vs 16 ...Through faith in his name hath made this man stronge.....

The healing came through faith in Jesus Christ and his power. Not in Peter and John's strength to heal him.....

It was immediate.....HOW IMMEDIATE?.....HOW MUCH OF A CURE?.....
Vs 8....And with a leap, he stood upright and began to walk and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God."

Can you picture what happened? He had been laying there all this time. A poor begger, lame from his birth.....

And I think what a parallel that is to us in Christ. We lay at the feet of the temples of men, of religionusity, of churchanity, and we hope to have an answer. And we are there year after year after year and there is not help. And one person comes along with the message of Christ.... And what happens.. IMMEDIATELY WE ARE HEALED...Spiritual and physical healing. It is fantastic to see what happeded....LEAPING....AND PRAISING God....

I can just picture that man ruining down the temple aisle LEAPING AND SHORTING AND PRAISEING GOD.....

And of course he ~~they~~ drew a crowd....They had seem him...And that is the wonderful thing about this. When ever a miralce happens the crowd is curious...Did you notice the curiosity of the crowd in Vs 9 thru 12?....

Vs 9 tells us that they say him..

Vs 10 tells us they were filled with wonder and amazement.

Vs 11 says they were full of amazement.....

THE CURIOSITY OF THE CROWD OVER A MIRACLE.....

And you know, when the miralce of God happends in your heart when you come to know Christ, the Bible says you are a new creation, old things pass away and all things become new. And when that miracle happens, I say to you when it really occures, THE CROWD IS STILL JUST AS CURIOUS...as it was of the lame man. They wonder. They are filled with amazement. They watch you. They question: IS IT REAL?....Good old John as got religion.... Let's watch him. Let's see what happens.....THE CROWD IS ALWAYS CURIOUS WHEN THE MIRACLEOUS HAPPENS....

A fellow said once, "If you really believe in Jesus Christ, don't you believe a miracle could happen right now?".....I said, "absolutely. I certainly do."

He said, "Well, don't do it. Let me cut your arm off and then you can heal it."

I said, "well, don't do it. It might hurt. But I said I would be so forward."....He said, "well, what do you mean?" "Because", I said, "I believe this is under the control of God." God is in control of all this healing processes.

He said, "well, if God is alive He will heal everybody." I said, "WHY?" He said, "so everybody could have a good life." I said, "WHY"....Every person has to die.....WHY.....

He said, "People go to the hospital to get better"....?WHY??..I said, "WHY?" "I don't know, he said, I guess just to have a good time." I said, "WHY".... And we went on and on until he got so mad.....

And I said, "You know, you haven't really discovered what it is all about yet." "You haven't got down to the key issue yet"

And folks, we might look at healing and some little way that we are controlling God after our own desires. God may seem fit to heal miraculously today, at a moment of time through faith and prayer of individuals. But, he may think in His divine plan that it is far better to put suffering into that life so that He may bring comfort into that life by which they can comfort anyone else who might be in trouble. That he may by all means win some. He may desire to keep suffering in that life to build patience and mold and form the life. So, that it will be fashioned after Christ. It will be tested and purified knowing the trying of our faith works patience. He may desire to put suffering into that life as 1 Peter 3 tells so that we will be sanctified by the ~~God~~ Lord God in our hearts. And we will have an answer for every person who ask us a reason for the hope that is in. That verse is in the content of physical suffering....

The point is and I have seen it so many times, Christian who are

suffering physical...And people ask: "Why doesn't God heal them right now?" Because, God is using it in their lives to touch the life somebody else. And the peace of Christ in a Christian's life, who is suffering, has been instrumental in winning scores to Christ. I have seen it happen...

So, we look to God and we say, "Father, what is your will. What is your plan, What is purpose."

I believe in miracles. The greatest miracle I could ever see happen is to see a soul saved.....To see a person come to Christ and receive him as Lord and Saviour.....WHY?.....Because the healing issue is only temporary. Everyone still must die. That is what the Bible teaches. But, the moment He is healed, spiritually, he shall live forever....The Bible says the moment we believe in Christ we shall receive eternal life. And when Christ comes again there will be no more sickness, no more sin, no more suffering, no more death. The former things will be past away and God will make all things new.....

And all the suffering of this present time is not worthy to be compared with the glory that will one ~~of~~ day be ours.....

Do you rejoice in that? I sure do. Everyday I visit someone in the hospital, I thank God that one day it will be over.

It will be over for all believers. But, it willn't be over for non-believers. The great issue is whether or not you have come to Christ. And that is what Peter dealt with in Vs 12- 18.....For when he brings ~~forth~~ forth his commentary on what happened, he immediately takes thm back to Jesus. You are wandering, he is saying, why this man is healed. I am telling you that it wasn't through our power, Vs 12, it wasn't because of our holiness.

If someone comes along to you and tells you that they have power, they have a holiness of life that can heal people, they are lying.... Because the Apostles themselves who could lay hands on the sick, clearly taught that they did not have the power within themselves.

And how were they healed? Vs 13 says: "The God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob, the God of our father, has glorified His Son, and he is the one who can heal....."

Did you know that the word "healing" is used interchangeably with "healing sins" as well as "healing sickness." That is very fascinating. For we all need spiritual healing far more than we do physical healing.

And may I take you just for a moment to that passage that I referred to in Hebrews 12.....I would like to share one other thought with you on this issue of being lame.....

If you are here today and you sense within your life a vacuum, a void, a meaninglessness, a lack of a personal relationship with God that you can be assured of, perhaps your belief in God is weak and external; but you have never personally accepted Him, I say to you that you are like the man who is born lame. The man who is born blind. For the Bible says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

And the moment you come to Christ, God heals your soul. The Bible teaches that the moment you accept Christ death on the cross, his shed blood for the forgiveness of your sins, at that moment you are healed.....The Bible says that all of our ~~affirmatives~~ infirmities and all of our sins and all of iniquities Christ bore in his own body. All of our sin was laid on Him. And all we are like sheep and we go astray, we go our own way. Everything was laid on Christ. And the moment you accept what he has done for you and you ask Him to come into your heart and life, at that moment He gives you eternal life. COMPLETE FORGIVENESS OF ALL SINS...

But you know it is quite sad isn't it, when Christians, those of us who know Christ, still walk in a lame condition.

Now, let me share this with you...Hebrews chapter 12 beginning at Vs 9.

(Read 12:9-11)

Did you notice Vs 11...."those who have been trained by it."

Oh, the training of suffering. Some of you in this audience today have come, but you are suffering. Let us never forget that God is working his plan through us. And he is producing righteousness through our lives. In spite of the pain and the suffering of it.....

Vs 12....."Therefore"....On the basis of everything I have said about

discipline, THEREFORE....WHAT SHOULD I DO?.....strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint."

If you feel that spiritual lame condition, you feel those spiritual hands hanging down, with feeble knees lacking strength, lack power in your life, "LET IT BE HEALED" he says.

Vs 14.....HOW?....Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the lord. See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;"

The moment you are bitter through what you suffer and experience don't think it stops with you. It spreads like a cancer to everybody else....

(Read Vs 16-17)

The whole passage is connected to one thing: DISCIPLINE..Physical suffering in my life and in yours.

The point is that there are many of us who know Christ, but we are spiritual lame. With feeble knees and our hands are hanging down. And there is little of Christ in us. There is bitterness in our hearts. And we would like to see it changed. We would like to see real repentance and a definite change in our Christian experience. We may even seek it with tears like Esau.....

"Pursue Peace"....What does that mean?...That means confidence that God is working his plan out in my life.

And "sanctification" or "Holiness" "without which no one will see the Lord." WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?....The Bible or Jesus said: "Be ye holy for I am holy." God is Holy/ The moment you accept Christ you have a positional Holiness. I am Holy. I am sanctified. I am a saint in Christ...I am set apart for Christ. I need God's holiness. I need to be like God in my life. How can I ~~be~~ do this?..... HOW?....

Understanding God's plan of suffering in our lives is a key to having peace....

And two, resting in his plan no matter how hard it is, is a key to the effectiveness of it upon others.

And three, there is no strength in me.....And the Bible warns about that fact least we fail ~~at~~ the grace of God.

And to this I add 2 Corinthians chapter 12 when Paul himself who went through the physical suffering learned this lesson. GOD SAID, MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU.....MY STRENGTH IS MADE PERFECT IN YOUR WEAKNESS....

How am I going to walk as I ought to walk and not be spiritual lame? How am I going to strengthen the knees in my life? How is my weak hands going to be lefted up? How am I going to experience this power?

By understanding the Grace of God....Not comeing short of it. Not failing it. Not understanding it. But seeing that God's grace is suffieient for me. That when I am weak, then I am strong....WHY?...Because the strength does not lie in human vessels. It lies in the power of God....

And isn't it thrilling to learn that all of us have all the power we will ever need. The moment you ask Christ to come into your life, God invades your life. And there is more power and strength then we could ever use....By faith believe what you aall ready are in Him.....~~Can~~ Claim His promise. Understand his grace...Rest in his plan....Know that he is working out his purpose in your life and in mine. And thank his wonderful name. And realize that the only power and effectiveness to heal the physically sick, to heal the spiritual sick, is in the power of God....

Let us close in prayer