

Power & Paralysis

Peter & John Transform Lives Inside and Outside of the Church

The Empowered Church Series - Part 5

Feb 4-5, 2023

Acts 3

Introduction

- **INVITATION WEEKEND Visitors: The Year of POWER** – God has amazing gifts and help for His people.
 - **Power & Authority for King’s kids** - Two of those gifts are Power and Authority which come from our identity as Children of God. Since God is our Father and He is King, and the Bible says that He transforms us into His children when we give our lives to Him, that means we are princes and princesses. Our job is not to use that authority and power for ourselves but to do the things that Jesus would have done and with the love that He did them. We are empowered to not just be changed ourselves but to help others around us be blessed.
 - **The Year of the Holy Spirit** – Since there’s no Power other than what God gives us this is kind of the year of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Person of God who interacts with us the most today. When you pray and ask for help and blessings from God, it’s most likely that the Holy Spirit is the One responding and working with you. So, we are trying to get to know Him more.
 - **The Book of Acts** – so we are walking line by line through the Book of Acts in the Bible to learn what it can look like to walk with the Holy Spirit, using our Power and Authority that He gives us.
- **Context & Set Up** – So far in our story, we are in part 5 today, Jesus finished up His earthly ministry and told His followers that He was going to go away but would be sending the Holy Spirit in His place. They were told to wait around in Jerusalem for a little bit until they were given power to do their ministry. They waited and on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down upon the 120 followers of Jesus in a dramatic fashion. They were anointed with power and boldness. They started their ministry, sharing the good news that Jesus can save people from their sins, and helping people practically through miracles, signs & wonders.
- **A Story of Transformation** – We are about to read a miraculous story of healing & transformation¹. It’s a famous one. But underlying the obvious miracle of making a man

¹ “This is the first of fourteen miracles in Acts (Peter: 3:1–10; 5:1–11; 5:17–26; 9:32–35, 36–42; an angel of God: 12:1–19, 20–23; Paul: 13:4–12; 14:8–11; 16:16–19 with Silas; 16:20–34 with Silas; 20:7–12; 28:3–6, 7–8 [survives a snake bite and performs a healing]; Pesch 1986a: 144–45). There are four healings (three paralytics, one with fever), two raisings from the dead, four liberation miracles (two person-freeings and two exorcisms), three judgment miracles, and one preservation miracle (Paul at Malta). Four of these categories (paralytic healing, raising from the dead, liberation and judgment miracles) have parallels between Peter and Paul, the hero of the last half of Acts. There are also ten summary notices of miracles in the book (Schneider 1980: 305; 2:43; 5:12, 15, 16; 6:8; 8:6–7, 13; 14:3; 19:11–12; 28:9). The paralytic healing is paralleled between Jesus (Luke 5:17–26), Peter (Acts 3:1–10), and Paul (Acts 14:8–11). God’s power through Jesus is the point of these accounts, which also portray the release that Jesus’s work gives to those who receive it.” Baker Exegetical Commentary New Testament, Darrell Bock.

walk, **there is a whole other level of healing occurring that most of us miss.** We are going to dig into that.

- **What do you think you need?** – I have a question for you. **What do you pray about?** When it gets to the asking for stuff, what do you say? **What do you think you need?** Would God agree with it? Does He see it the same way?
- **The Challenge of Financial Benevolence** – We get a lot of requests for financial help at Bridgeway. Fielding those is one of the most difficult jobs to have. We have limited funds, so how do we know who to give it to and how much? I don't know if you know this or not but we have a leader on our staff, **Christine Reeves**, that has her Masters in Social Work and actually runs an **intern program of Social Workers** from Sac State who are getting their hours. We have professional social workers who take these requests and dig into what's really going on and what would really help.
- **A Hypothetical Example** – imagine someone comes to us and says they need \$350 to pay their bills before their power and water is shut off. It sounds legit and helpful right? Everyone needs power and water, and we would pay it direct to the utilities company, so it's not misused. But when we dig into it we find out that they live alone in a bad situation, and they haven't been making their bills for the last 6 months. In fact, even if we pay the bill this month, there is nothing in place for them to pay it next month, or the following. We find out that they are on state disability and are currently addicted to meth. They have burned every bridge with family and friends. Let me ask you a question: Will the \$350 fix their problem? Why not? **There's a million other things broken that won't support that help to actually be a help.**
- **Some of Our Prayers** – SOME of our prayers are like that. We pray for a **spouse** but we are so unhealthy that the marriage would be a mess. We pray for a car but we haven't been responsible with our finances to keep paying on the car. We ask for a **new job** but we've hated our last 3 jobs and there's no indicator that the jobs were the problem. Are you following me?
- **Paralyzed Man Lowered Down** – when a paralyzed man was lowered down in front of Jesus through a hole in the roof to be physically healed, Jesus' first words were, 'your sins are forgiven,' with no mention of physical healing. That's not what he came for, but it's what he really needed.

God KNOWS exactly what is NEEDED

Lesson

- **Divine Appointment**
 - **Peter and John Encounter a Paralyzed Man at the Temple**

- **Acts 3:1-26** – “Now Peter and John were going up² [the steps from the outer court of the Gentiles to the inner court] to the temple³ at the hour of prayer⁴, the ninth hour⁵ [3pm]. ² And a man lame from birth⁶ was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate⁷ to ask alms of those entering the temple. ³ Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked⁸ to receive alms.”
- **Why Peter and John were together and alone** – why were Peter and John together? And where are the rest of the team? It’s likely that during the 3 years with Jesus, they had fused together as a dynamic duo. John came in with his brother, James and they were the Sons of Thunder. But for some reason Jesus seemed to mix up the guys into teams of two and they weren’t always the assumed groupings. It’s likely that Peter was the oldest disciple (only one named married) and John was the youngest (lived the longest). Perhaps Jesus set them

² Peter and John, went up the steps leading from the outer court to the inner courts,⁷ in order to be present in the Court of Israel for the service of prayer which accompanied the evening sacrifice (about 3 p.m.),” NICNT

³ The apostles continued to live as observant Jews, attending the set services of worship in the Jerusalem temple. The two principal daily services accompanied the offering of the morning and evening sacrifices....The outer court of the temple as rebuilt and extended by Herod did not form part of the sacred precincts in the strictest sense: it was open to Gentiles, and therefore sometimes called the Court of the Gentiles (see p. 409, 46). From this court one might ascend steps to pass through the barrier which separated it from the inner courts. Notices in Greek and Latin were fixed to this barrier, warning Gentiles not to penetrate farther, on pain of death (see p. 409, nn. 47, 48, and 49, on 21:28–29). The Beautiful Gate was probably one of the gates leading through the barrier. The first of the inner courts, containing the treasury (cf. Mark 12:41–44), was called the Court of the Women because Jewish women might enter thus far, but no farther. Jewish laymen might proceed farther, into the Court of Israel. Beyond this was the Court of the Priests (containing, among other things, the altar of burnt offering); at the west end of this inmost court stood the sanctuary building (the ναός), with its two compartments, the holy place and the holy of holies.” NICNT

⁴ “Here it is the afternoon time of prayer, the ninth hour on a sunrise schedule, or three in the afternoon. It is also the time of the afternoon Tamid offering (the continual burnt offering; Exod. 29:39; Num. 28:3–4; *m. Tamid*; Fitzmyer 1998: 277). This was one of two key prayer times in the day, the other being at nine in the morning (Dan. 9:21; Jdt. 9:1; Josephus, *Ant.* 14.4.3 §65). The afternoon hour was also the time of the vision of Cornelius in Acts 10:3, 30. Peter and John are the key characters, and this is the first explicit mention of John (they are paired in 4:13, 19; 8:14). In the passage, however, Peter does the speaking.” Baker Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament.

⁵ “The Jewish day began at 6 am and ended at 6 pm. For devout Jews, there were three special times for prayer—morning, noon and evening. They agreed that prayer was effective wherever it was offered, but they felt that it was doubly precious when offered in the Temple courts. It is very interesting that the apostles kept up the customs in which they had been trained. It was the hour of prayer, and Peter and John were going into the Temple to observe it.” William Barclay Commentary

⁶ “The setting turns to a man who has been lame from birth (ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός, *ek koilias mētros*, literally, from the mother’s womb).” Baker Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament

⁷ “the “Beautiful Gate.” This may be identical with the Nicanor Gate, as it is called in the Mishnah, leading into the Court of the Women; the name here given to it may be more readily understood if it is further identified with the gate of Corinthian bronze described by Josephus, of such exquisite workmanship that it “far exceeded in value those gates that were plated with silver and set in gold.” NICNT

⁸ “The exchange leading to the miracle follows in these verses. The man is asking (ἤρώτα, *ērōta*) for alms. The imperfect tense points to repeated appeals or some kind of ongoing appeal to the two apostles. The lame man would have made this request of all who were passing by to go to the temple.” BECNT

up together because of that. Maybe it was something else. Also, we find out that Jesus had a core of key disciples that were closest to him: Peter, James, and John (inner 3), so they must have been close, bonding through those experiences. We find out in Acts 12 that James is going to be the first Apostle murdered/martyred. Maybe Jesus wanted John to have a more long-term partner as His beloved and youngest. Regardless Peter and John were a team (they are mentioned together again: Acts 4:13, 19; 8:14) and here they are going to the temple. Maybe everyone else was on their way or already there.

- **Why were they going to the temple?** – There were morning and evening sacrifices that had people accompany them with prayer. The Apostles, at least Peter and John, were attending one of those and likely attended they rather consistently.
- **The example of Jesus** – Even though Jesus was raised (born = Bethlehem; raised = Nazareth) and tended to do most of His work in the North of Israel (Galilee area – homebase was Capernaum), He made a number of trips to the South and spent considerable time in the capital city of Jerusalem. When He was there He spent a lot of time in the Temple teaching. The disciples saw this and duplicated His example. The temple was THE place to talk about spiritual things and talk about God’s interaction with the Jews. It was a place for public discourse. It was set up for people to teach and talk.
 - Lk 19:45–48 – *“And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold,⁴⁶ saying to them, ‘It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of robbers.”⁴⁷ And **he was teaching daily in the temple**. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him,⁴⁸ but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.”*
- **They went DAILY** – how do we know that? There are multiple passages (see below) that talk about them constantly being in the temple. It was part of their ministry strategy.
 - Ac 2:46 – *“And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes,...”*
 - Lk 24:52–53 – *“And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,⁵³ and were continually in the temple blessing God.”*
 - Ac 5:42 – *“And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.”*
- **What’s the hour of prayer?** The prayers that accompanied the morning and evening sacrifices at the temple. Not all Jews needed to go, it was just set times that prayers were being offered up by the priests and people would choose to come and go to pray along with them. The temple couldn’t hold all the Jews if they came, so it was random people who felt led to go during those times. It was a gathering time as well, so it was a perfect opportunity for the Apostles to minister.

- **What's the ninth hour?** 3pm. The afternoon. They call that 'evening' (i.e. evening prayers). You need to remember that Sabbath begins at sundown on Friday through sundown on Saturday. So, preparation for sundown will begin earlier. That means to be consistent on timings, the temple during the other days needed to get their stuff done from 3-5, before the sun went down so they could be home for sabbath on the 7th day.
- **Why is it significant that the man was lame from birth?** – I'm certain there are a number of things it could mean and certainly a lot of opinions about why Luke records it. Here's a couple things that come to mind for me.
 - **Everyone knew this guy** – it was not going to be a hidden miracle. It was not the woman of blood who hid her condition. It was not someone obscure. This was a man who had NEVER walked, so no one could say that it was a bogus healing and that the man had been faking it. It added to the validity of the healing as well as the exposure of the testimony.
 - **It's a Lifestyle** – this man NEVER walked. That means that from infancy he was treated different and couldn't do what other kids did. They didn't have wheelchairs or ADA back then. It was a more limited life. Additionally, many Jews believed that children born with disabilities were cursed by God so there was a social stigma. In a culture that had to work hard just to make a living people with disabilities were considered a burden since they couldn't contribute.
 - **A Mindset** – when someone is disabled, the only way to cope on a daily basis is to accept the limitation in your mind, otherwise it's frustration constantly. Now, some are able to simultaneously accept it as a reality but not a reality that must hold them back, and some don't. I have had a lifelong mental illness disability and never let it stop me, but just to be able to cope, I had to accept that it was a constant thing and that shapes your perspective on the world. It alters your mindset. Some of that is necessary and some of that is unhealthy. To overcome any disability, mindset and perspective is the most important.
 - **More "Difficult" Healing** – Just like the story of the mute man with a demon (couldn't personally/verbally confess the demon out), the Jews felt that certain healings were more difficult or even impossible. They knew that God does miracles and they believed in healing, but a healing of someone who broke their leg was seen as different than someone who was born that way and never walked. Now, that's incorrect from God's point of view, nothing is more difficult for Him. But that's the cultural expectation. This was going to highlight this particular healing when it happens.
- **He was carried and laid DAILY at the temple gate** – This man was unable to do traditional labor work. Could he have? We'll talk about that, but he didn't. He was raised in a life of begging. Since he didn't get a ton of money and needed to keep his spot he was put there every day and left there to 'work' his day.

- **Prime Location**⁹ - Somehow this guy got a prime location. Think about how prime this was: you get the inner gate of the temple, where the Gentiles have to stop, and the Jews can go in. That means you are constantly interacting with not just your own people (Jews), but religious people who give money to God and are told to help the poor¹⁰. This is a prime location. You have to imagine there are fights about who gets to be where. There is no indicator that he had to share the spot (or this story gets weirder since one would be left out).
- **Good and Bad (rejection)** – although the location was good and he was more likely to be around people who had softer hearts, there was still a stigma to him, and many people would look upon him with disdain. It was a life of constant rejection.
- **An Accommodating Lifestyle** – I do not know what’s possible for people with disabilities in the ancient world. I know that some that had leprosy held high roles (e.g. Naaman; Simon the leper, etc.) while others were begging and desperate. I know that medical care was weak back then so there had to be a lot of people with physical abnormalities, so perhaps a lot of the workforce had disabilities. You do what you have to do. Just because his legs didn’t work doesn’t mean his hands didn’t work. Was there something else he could have done? Was he able to have this life because he got the prime spot at the temple and didn’t need to work? Somehow his life bent around his disability. He was not so much of an ‘overcomer’ as an ‘accommodator’.
- **Dominated by 10%** - Isn’t it strange that only 10% of his body was disabled but it dominated the whole?¹¹ Was that necessary? I think that we all need to ask this question of ourselves on an annual basis: **Am I allowing a small portion of trauma to dictate my whole life?** I don’t know what your trauma is, and in no way am I minimizing it. You are the only one who can determine the significance of your trauma, although I think that counseling and therapy allows someone wiser to help you define it. But my point is that we ALL have trauma. Some of our trauma is easily overcome and some is not. But if we look back at our lives at the end and recognize that the trauma was only a small part of our lives and yet it dominated the whole, would we be pleased or proud of that? **Why does**

⁹ In the middle east, it was the custom for beggars to sit at the entrance to a temple or a shrine. Such a place was considered the best of all positions because, when people are on their way to worship God, they are disposed to be generous to others.” William Barclay Commentary

¹⁰ “The lame man is there to ask alms of the worshipers; giving alms was a responsibility that Judaism took seriously as an expression of compassion that God honored (Luke 11:41; 12:33; Acts 3:3, 10; 9:36; 10:2, 4, 31; 24:17; also Matt. 6:2–4; Bock 1996: 1114, 1166; Sir. 3:30; 7:10; 29:12; Tob. 2:14; 4:7–11; 12:8–9; 14:8–11; 2 En. 63.1–2; *m. Pe’ah* 1.1). Tobit 4:10–11 reads, “For almsgiving delivers from death and keeps you from going into the Darkness. Indeed, almsgiving, for all who practice it, is an excellent offering in the presence of the Most High” (NRSV).” BECNT

¹¹ “The fact that the condition is from birth intensifies its severity. Van der Horst (1989: 37) argues that *χωλός* (*chōlos*, lame) refers not to complete paralysis but to damage to feet, ankles, knees, or hips. So the man is crippled but not completely paralyzed.” Baker Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament

Satan get to not just knock us down one time, but also convince us to stay down for the rest of our lives?

- **Focusing on the parts that do work** – this man focused more on the parts of his body that didn't work, but what would his life look like if he focused on the parts that did work? What would our lives look like if we didn't obsess over what we didn't have, or couldn't do, and focused more on what we did have and could do? Maybe we aren't gifted with **physical prowess** but our minds are sharp as a razor. Maybe we aren't good **academically** but we are great with street smarts. Maybe we aren't a fashion **model** but our personality is gold. **When we focus on what we lack, the luster fades from the giftings we do have.**
- **Rising above disadvantage** – all of us have some disadvantage that we can focus on. We didn't grow up in the right neighborhood, we didn't have the right skills, we didn't have any money, we didn't have healthy parents, we didn't have access to job opportunities, etc. our job is to rise above our disadvantages. Yes, it's more difficult for us than the person next to us, but they are probably struggling with something we take for granted. Some disadvantages shouldn't be there and need to be fixed, but some are just part of living in a broken world. While we are fixing the things we can fix, it's important that we individually rise above our disadvantages and not let them shut us down.
- **His community allowed it (help or enabling?)** – **there is no way that this guy could have had this lifestyle if people didn't carry him** there and set him up every day. He had a system and people around him who made this possible. **We can either see this as a good thing and praise his community, or we can see them as enabling and setting him up for a tiny life.** I don't know which it is.
- **The Difference Shows in the Heart (shrinking worlds)** – you can tell the difference between help and enablement by the fruit of your efforts. **If your help allows someone to grow, thrive and become the most of who God built them to be, then it's a help. If their world shrinks, they shrink, their heart shrinks, as you help them, then it's enabling.** Does their world expand in health or shrink in acceptance?
 - **How do we balance our response – not just 'suck it up'. But not enabling either.**
- **Daily & Daily means they passed him all the time, why this time?** – If the apostles and Church were daily at the temple and Peter and John went daily, then that means they passed this guy all the time. Why did they heal him today? Why not a long time ago? What was different this time? I don't know the answer to it, but I have some guesses.

- **Divine Appointments with Common Situations/People** – A divine appointment is a God-set up. It means that He has something in mind that He wants to do and He's going to do it through you. It could be a chance meeting, a rare phone call, an opportunity, or it could be simply God wants to do something different in a scenario that you've been in a million times. **Too often we write situations off because 'nothing ever happens there.'** But if God wants to do something there, something CAN happen there. Don't let your lack of faith shrink God's opportunities. Our job is to keep our eyes and ears open for the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- **Leading of the Holy Spirit** – If I were to put my money down on a bet, I would bet that the reason Peter and John did the healing on this day, is because they were attuned to the Holy Spirit's voice and leading and the HS said, 'it's go time.' It must have been a momentary revelation, impression, thought, idea, because there's no indication that Peter and John had planned for this, or that they went through this gate to get to this guy. It seems rather random, and I think that's how life tends to work. **Are we listening to the Holy Spirit to a degree that He can change our direction and focus in a moment?**
- **Why is the name of the gate (Beautiful) mentioned?** – The Beautiful Gate seems to be the *Nicanor Gate* which is one of the entrances to the Court of Women (separating the Gentile side from the Jewish side of which the outermost area was for women, who could go no further than this next part). It's called Beautiful because it was more ornate than many of the other gates. It was apparently Corinthian bronze with amazing craftsmanship. The normal gates were plated with silver and gold, so they weren't bad either.
- **Beautiful Gate: Ugly Situation** – Was Luke mentioning the name of the Gate to give his readers a visual of where they were at in the temple, or was he trying to say something deeper? I don't know. I do know that it's odd enough so that I'm going to think about it a bit more. Isn't it ironic that we have a guy in a bad situation, an ugly situation of begging and being rejected, in the Temple of God, at the Beautiful gate? Isn't it weird that **the most expensively designed gate in the Temple happens to be the backdrop of someone begging for alms?**
- **Lame Man or Lame Church?** – **why should a paralyzed man sit in a church every day and not receive the power of God?** The Temple, the church is supposed to be **God's house**. Shouldn't you be able to knock on the door of God's house and get a response? Yet this man was allowed to sit there day after day in suffering with no relief. Why? Was it that God didn't want to heal him? I don't believe that God wants to heal everyone of everything. Yet, we know from this story that God did want to heal him. So that can't be it. But maybe God was waiting for the right timing. That's legit. But I would hope that he had been ministered to, and prayed over, again and again and again by those in the temple along the way.

- **My Frustrating Question** – **Why people still suffer at Bridgeway** is a question I ask myself all the time at Bridgeway. One of my most frustrating moments is when one of my friends had to go to another church across the country to get healed of what ailed her. That made me so mad. EVERYONE who God wants to heal should be able to be healed in our midst, in Bridgeway. They shouldn't have to go to another church that believes in miracles more or prays more or seeks God for the supernatural more. They should be able to be healed HERE.
- **Unable to go further?**¹² – Because of the stigma of the disability it's possible that this is as far as this man was allowed to go into the temple, but that is not totally clear to me (if it's true or not). I know that skin diseases made worshipers unclean but to what degree physical disability did is not clear. Leviticus 21:16-24 states that no priests with physical disabilities were allowed to minister before God. That sounds mean and weird, but we have to remember that God was using Israel and this whole system to make a spiritual point (they were a living drama) and the point was that brokenness/sin separates from God. But it's not clear to me that all disabled people were blocked from going into the temple. There is some reference to blocking them by David in 2 Sam 5:7-8 but he may be speaking of something temporary there.
- **What does it mean to ask for alms?** – asking for alms is the religious method of begging. Alms are money or food given to the poor.
- **He asks for alms from P&J** – This man is asking for what he thinks he needs. He's asking for what he thinks is available. It would be the best of his hopes. But God had something far greater, something he didn't even imagine at that time (maybe he did at one point but perhaps had given up when he was disappointed over and over again by his prayers seemingly gone unanswered). In the same way, **our world is craving what they think will satisfy or at least the best they think they can get**. And yet, the Lord has something waiting for them that is far beyond anything they ever imagined. This man asked for money but needed power.
- **Standing Ovation**
 - **Peter Heals a Paralyzed Man in the Name of the Lord**
 - **Acts 3:4-8** – *“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*

¹² “(Lev. 21:17–20; 2 Sam. 5:8 prohibited his entry as a lame man; Polhill 1992: 128)” BECNT

the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth¹³, rise up and walk¹⁴!”⁷ And he took him by the right hand¹⁵ 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 leaping¹⁶ and praising God.”

- **Look at US** – Why? Peter does all the stuff. Why look at us? It could be simply a matter of directing attention and Peter knew that he and John were a team. THEY were empowered of God regardless of who took the lead on this one. The point was that they represented Jesus and so this man was called to receive something and they needed his attention for the gift to be given properly.
- **He expected to receive money from them (he looked at them)** – His whole life was centered around money. It’s what kept him alive. So of course, he was going to assume that is what they were going to give him. It’s interesting that he had addressed them first and then looked away. That is the nature of begging. You ask and then you just assume they will say no and move on to the next person. But now that he was called back to attention he had to re-look at them.
- **I don’t have money¹⁷** –
 - **The Reverse Message of the Church Today** - Interestingly today the Church has tons of money and no power. What we say now (collectively) is **“I don’t have any power but here’s some cash**. Be well.” That’s the kind of stuff that makes me so passionate about pursuing the Holy Spirit’s supernatural ministry. What Peter and John gave him in Jesus’ name was FAR SUPERIOR to money which is so temporary and rarely life transformational. I cannot accept that God is done with miracles today.
 - **What I DO have, I will give to you** – I find the **confidence** that Peter exudes as shocking and motivating. This is technically the first miracle don’t since Pentecost by the Apostles (at least recorded). Sure, they did a lot of miracles when Jesus was around and when He sent them out with His power and

¹³ “The NT has thirteen occurrences of the description of Jesus as a Nazorean, seven of which are in Acts (Matt. 2:23; 26:71; Luke 18:37; John 18:5, 7; 19:19; Acts 2:22; 3:6; 4:10; 6:14; 22:8; 24:5; 26:9). Jesus grew up in Nazareth, and this description of Jesus keeps intact his hometown roots. It is in the name of Jesus Christ, that is, in the authority of his still active messianic person, that this man can have his legs healed and walk. Peter is now replicating the kind of work Jesus performed in his ministry, but only as one who mediates what Jesus has the authority to do.” BECNT

¹⁴ “The present imperative “walk” (περιπάτει, *peripatei*) looks to his being able continuously to walk. In effect, Peter has given him a new life, which is precisely what the miracles represent, as Peter’s subsequent speech will show.” BECNT

¹⁵ “These verses give the proof of the healing. Peter lifts the man up by taking his right hand. The accusative (αὐτόν, *auton*) with “taking hold” here is a less common construction, since normally this verb takes a genitive (Moule 1959: 36n2). Perhaps the right hand had been extended, expecting alms (Fitzmyer 1998: 279).” BECNT

¹⁶ “Again, on the present occasion, the very conduct of the former cripple was itself a token, to those who had eyes to see, of the advent of the new age. Of the new age it had been said long before, “then shall the lame man leap like a hart” (Isa. 35:6).” NICNT

¹⁷ “According to Cornelius a Lapide, Thomas Aquinas once called on Pope Innocent II when the latter was counting out a large sum of money. “You see, Thomas,” said the Pope, “the church can no longer say, ‘Silver and gold have I none.’ ” “True, holy father,” was the reply; “neither can she now say, ‘Rise and walk.’ ” The moral of this tale may be pondered by any Christian body that enjoys a fair degree of temporal prosperity.” NICNT

authority, but this was the first time recorded that they put into play the power of the Holy Spirit they had received. It's a new era, but they were rolling strong, like nothing had changed. I love it. I want that confidence. I struggle because I don't know when the Lord wants to heal and when He does not. I believe my confidence will grow when I learn how to hear Him better.

- **What I HAVE? – in what sense? Storehouse vs. conduit** – One of the things I've tried to understand over the decades is whether we are supposed to be conduits of God's power or storehouses of God's power? **If we are conduits, then it's merely power flowing THROUGH us. If it's storehouses, then God gives us some of His power to dole out to others with responsibility.** Peter is talking like it's a storehouse concept, but all my experience has been conduit. Maybe when you know the voice of the Lord so well it doesn't matter, but I don't have that clarity. If it's conduit then it's going to shut on and off, seemingly randomly to us, based on the will of God. If it's warehouse then we get to use it and grow in our stewardship of His power. I've heard of far too many healings by people who aren't great people of character and it seems that they are able to be storehouses of their gift and anointing. And maybe that's the difference: anointing versus gifting, versus normal Christian reality (that's another discussion to have). The bottom line, for me, is whether we have God's power at our disposal or we are simply waiting for His flow. I don't have an answer to this yet.
- **Healing in the Name of Jesus** – what does this mean? How do you heal in a name? Peter rephrases it a bit in verse 16 later. It seems to be a combination of: 1.) notifying the person that it's not innate healing from Peter, but it's FROM JESUS only; 2.) The belief that Peter had of who Jesus was and what Jesus could do. 3.) The belief that the man had to stand up at the name of Jesus in confidence and his faith allowed the power of God to flow (unlike Nazareth). **The phrase 'in my name' means 'operating on my behalf' – being an ambassador with my full authorization and empowerment.'**
 - Ac 3:16 – *“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.”*
 - Ac 9:34 – *“And Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed.” And immediately he rose.”*
 - **In my name** – The phrase, 'in my name' used by Jesus is used in many different contexts. We learn in John 14:12-14 that it's a super important concept to understand, but when we dig into it, we see that it's a common phrase that explains how someone is operating under another's authority.
 - Jn 14:12–14 - *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.” (cf. John 15:16)*

- Mt 18:5 - *“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me,...”*
- Mt 18:20 – *“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”*
- Mt 24:5 – *“For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray.”*
- Mk 9:39 – *“But Jesus said, “Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me.”*
- Mk 16:17–18 – *“And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸ they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.”*
- Jn 10:25–26 – *“Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me,...”*
- Ac 10:48 – *“And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.”*
- **Defining what that means** – Mt 10:42 - *“And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”*
- **Why use the phrase, ‘Jesus Christ of Nazareth?’** – is that something we should do? Is it contextual for the time and place? What is Peter highlighting? He doesn’t always use this term. The term Jesus of Nazareth is valuable for a couple of reasons: 1.) Peter points out that He was local, they could have known Him. He is Jewish. He was one of them. 2.) Jesus of Nazareth doesn’t get confused with all the other Joshua’s in Israel, which was a common name. 3.) Jesus of Nazareth was kind of a moniker that people used to talk about that famous guy who does miracles and casts out demons. Yup, that guy.
 - **Do we need to use it when praying, healing or doing miracles?** - In one sense I like using it because I want the enemy, or whatever I am praying against, to be very clear on who I am standing under in power. On the other hand I tend to find myself sliding into ‘magical thinking’ that if I say the right words, more power will flow. So, I think we need to always assess our motives and what our heart intent is.
- **The boldness to tell a paralyzed person to stand up** – This is gutsy. What if God didn’t want to heal that guy right then and he has to fall back down? Peter was ready to go and absolutely confident that God would back up the command. I love it. I dream of operating like this.
- **Peter helps him up (takes him by the right hand and helped him up)** – It’s likely that the man had extended his right hand hoping for money to be transferred, so Peter took that hand and combined it with what Jesus had given Him. He put something else into his hand other than money. He put power.
 - **Why did Peter Help at all?** – Clearly Peter didn’t have to help a guy up who was being healed. We see multiple healings where it’s said from a distance

and the people get up on their own. Perhaps this was simply a natural reaction to grab the guy knowing what was going to happen. Or we can say it was deeper than that and that Peter was boosting this man's faith (Priming the pump?). He could have pulled back in disbelief, but Peter pulled him forward and up. Maybe we need to increase the faith of the people we pray for as well and emotionally pull them forward and up.

- **IMMEDIATELY his feet and ankles were strong** – instantaneous healing. That's the fun kind, the shocking kind. We love those. But that is not the only kind of healing that Jesus exhibited then, nor now. Sometimes there are partial healings, temporary healings, delayed healings, etc. We cannot just assume that all of Jesus' healings are instantaneous, even if that was the vast majority of Jesus' recorded miracles.
 - Mk 8:22–26 – *“And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. ²³ And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, “Do you see anything?” ²⁴ And he looked up and said, “I see people, but they look like trees, walking.” ²⁵ Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. ²⁶ And he sent him to his home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.”*
- **Leaping Up = faith** – This guy didn't hesitate. For whatever reason he believed Peter and John at their word and exploded up to a standing position. Now you have to remember this guy has NEVER done that, not once. And now he leaps up. That is a prophetic thing (the Messiah was said to heal people and they would 'leap like a deer'), but this guy wasn't thinking that. He reacted immediately and faith-filled and God's power was not hindered at all.
 - The Matter of Faith – I don't have time to walk us through how faith works in healing. I can simply say that it's somewhere between the horrible phrase, 'you don't have enough faith to be healed' and the ignorant phrase, 'God's gonna do what God's gonna do, regardless of you.' Faith matters. The specific answers are in the details.
- **He stood and began to walk**¹⁸ – The greater miracle, to me, is balance¹⁹. He's never walked before. It's not the redesign of atrophied, undeveloped muscles that most stuns me, although that's shocking. It's the ability to balance. Look at how long it takes for a toddler to get up and going. This guy does it instantly. That means there's a matter of healing equilibrium, mindset, brain development, coordination, etc. It's incredible!

¹⁸ “Plainly, then, the power by which Jesus had healed such people during his public ministry was still present and active, exercised no longer directly but through his disciples.” NICNT

¹⁹ Some commentators, scholars view it differently, slower, than I do – “First he practised standing, and when he found he could do that, he put one foot forward and tried to walk; when he found he could do that as well, ordinary walking seemed too humdrum a means of progress. His exultation must find more vigorous expression, so, leaping in the air and bounding along, discovering all that his new limbs were now capable of doing, he accompanied the two apostles into the inner precincts.”

His Holy Spirit. Everyone knew that the disciples claimed no power of their own but that they were witnesses and ambassadors of Jesus Christ, so **He was getting all the appropriate glory.**

- **Why God would heal someone?** – Most people ask the question: why doesn't God heal more. I ask the opposite question: Why does God heal at all. Here's why: God said in the Garden of Eden, 'if you disobey me, you will die.' Our world is living out that declaration and proving God to be true. Whenever God heals, He is in a sense denying the consequences of our sin. Additionally, we know that as long as we are in this body we are separate from God to some degree, so any healing that keeps us here longer not only encourages us to want this life more but keeps us separate from God.
- **Are you telling your testimony?** – This man was loud about his healing. Are you? What has God done in your life that was miraculous, but you aren't talking about it? We have struggled at Bridgeway to get testimonies told and on video so others would be encouraged. **Please tell your story.**
BRIDGEWAY.CHURCH/SHARE
- **They recognized who that guy was (he's been paralyzed for his whole life)** – that added to his testimony and the glory. No one could have said it was bogus. No one could have said that he was natural healed. It was clearly a miracle.
- **They were filled with wonder and amazement** – **This is what we need more of.** Fear of God. Awe. Wonder. Too many of us don't have enough EXPERIENCES with God and it lends to a dull and boring Christianity. We talk about experiences. Unfortunately, conservative churches and leaders have taught that experiences can't be relied upon and that we shouldn't seek them but that the Bible is enough. The Bible is enough for truth but not for relationship. Human beings bond through experiences. We need more of them at Bridgeway, and we will be having more and more as this year goes along.
- **Why did he cling to Peter and John?** – I wonder if it was excitement and wanting to be with the guys who healed him. I wonder if it was hanging on to them just to stabilize during his emotional outburst. Clearly he's not struggling to walk since he's jumping all over the place.
- **The crowd gathered in Solomon's portico** – where is that? What is that? It's a part of the temple that is a covered outdoor location (like a pillared porch – think of the Lincoln Memorial and the Thomas Jefferson memorial in D.C.). It's linked to Solomon, not because Solomon hung out there, Solomon's temple had been wrecked and they were standing in Herod's temple (which would be wrecked again in AD70). It's named because Solomon is a big deal.
- **Peter Preached**
 - **Did He preach before evening prayers or after?** – it reads like it was all one fell swoop, but scholars see it differently²⁴. I don't think it really matters, but when we picture it in our mind it plays out slightly different depending.

²⁴ When the service of prayer and worship was over, Peter and John, together with the man who had been cured of his lameness, came out from the inner area of the temple to the outer court, probably going back through the

- **He took the opportunity that God provided: Do we?** – We are so hesitant to mention that we are Christians or what God has done for us either because: 1.) we are shy people in general and don't know how to share personal information; 2.) We are afraid of looking stupid when people don't believe Christianity; 3.) we are afraid of shutting people down in a time and place where Christianity is not respected, and people don't want to talk about it and find it offensive. But here's the reality: we are His witnesses. We don't live for ourselves; we live for Him. We need to share EVERY TIME it's appropriate.
- **Men of Israel** – how does he know they are Jews? They are in the temple.
- **Why do you wonder at this?** – What kind of question is that? Of course, they are going to stare at someone who just healed a dude. If they looked into it they would realize that Peter and John were Christians, so it was about Jesus, but at first glance it was two guys who just healed a guy. Of course, they are staring at them. But I think that Peter's point was, you know us. You know what we stand for. You know we've never claimed to be healers in our own power. You know that we are all about Jesus. So, why is it that you are looking at us and refusing to look at Jesus, the very One we are all about? Why are you so resistant? Or he simply could be rebuking them for ignorance and staying that way.
- **Why do you stare at US, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk?** – this is a very powerful statement when you break it down.
 - **Why do you look manward?** – don't keep your eyes on man. If mankind is all that you know, then you are going to get lost because there are things happening in our midst that aren't from here, they are heavenly. One of the main problems of the world today are that people think there's no God and find no meaning in life.
 - **Do we teach people to look manward?** – if we do not clearly share that God is the reason why we are the way we are, we are stealing His glory. If we do not tell people that God is real, audibly, then we are allowing them to live in ignorance and stealing God's glory. If we add that to our need to affirmation and approval and direct everyone's to ourselves and what we accomplished we are stealing God's glory.
 - **Another danger of Cessationism** - Denial of the supernatural means that what you are seeing, came from mankind and that steals God's glory too. Not all cessationists reject all miraculous, but some do. We must not do this. God is alive and active today.
 - **It wasn't by our power** – It's by God's power, period.
 - **It wasn't because we are holier** – This is important because **that's exactly what we think as religious people**. The ones who 'can heal' do so because they are the elite. They are the ones that God loves more. They are the

Beautiful Gate, and made their way to the east side of the outer court, along which Solomon's Colonnade ran." NICNT

holier ones. They are the more obedient and moral ones. They are better Christians. But that's not true. It's God doing it and He's the only One worthy of praise.

- **We didn't make him walk, we were used to make him walk – the focus of Bridgeway's healing philosophy.** Our part and God's part. If you don't do your part it doesn't work. How many miracles aren't happening because you aren't willing to walk into risk?
- **It's all about Jesus**
 - **The God of OUR forefathers (Jews talking to Jews)** – This is Jews talking to Jews. It's not like Gentiles are coming in and telling the Jews what to do. They would have been kicked out immediately. This is Peter and John who are Jewish telling their brothers and sisters the truth.
 - **Glorified His servant Jesus** – How did he do that? What does this mean? Could it be, as FF Bruce believes²⁵, that Peter was citing that the healing of the man was glorifying Jesus because since Jesus went up to heaven he was pouring His power out on His witnesses? Or is it the glorification of the Ascension? It could be a lot of things, but in this context it's likely proof that Jesus is alive being exhibited right in that moment.
 - **Whom you murdered when even Pilate was going to set Him free, you cried out for a murderer instead!** – Ouch! Remember it was the Jewish leaders that organized all of this and the crowd that confirmed it. (Luke 23:13-25)
 - **Jesus is the Holy and Righteous One** – what does this title mean? What is Peter trying to highlight? This is a Messianic title. It's grabbing Old Testament language and attributing it to Jesus so that it would mean more to the Jewish people.
 - **You killed the Author of Life²⁶** – what does this title mean? Paul the Apostle lays out the truth that God created the universe through Jesus Christ, in no uncertain terms in the book of Colossians. Jesus is the Author of Life. Jesus called Himself the 'Way, the Truth and the Life.' In every way Jesus is Life.
 - Col 1:15–16 – *“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.”*

²⁵ “The cripple had been cured because Jesus had been glorified. From his place of exaltation Jesus had endowed his disciples with power to act in his name, and to perform mighty works such as he himself had performed in the days of his bodily presence among them.” NICNT

²⁶ “Gk. τὸν ... ἀρχηγὸν τῆς ζωῆς. The word ἀρχηγός is used four times of Christ in the NT. Here and in Heb. 2:10 it denotes him as the source of life or salvation (since “life” and “salvation” are both represented by one Aramaic word, *ḥayyê*, the phrase used here is practically synonymous with τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας in Heb. 2:10; cf. A. F. J. Klijn, “The Term ‘Life’ in Syriac Theology,” *SJT* 5 [1952], pp. 390–97). In 5:31 below ἀρχηγός is used rather in the sense of “prince” or “leader”; in Heb. 12:2 it is applied to Christ as the “pioneer” or “exemplar” of faith (τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγόν).” NICNT

- Heb 1:1–2 – *“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.”* (cf. Heb 11:3)
 - **Thankfully God raised Him from the dead** – that was always the plan, lucky for you.
 - **We are witnesses to His resurrection** – we saw it up close and personal.
 - **How this man was healed**
 - **And His name – by faith in His name²⁷ – has made this man strong** – See the discussion above about faith and healing in the Name of Jesus for more information.
 - **You know this guy and he’s right here as proof, what are you going to do about it?** – you’ve got two choices. You cannot deny what just happened. So now, will you harden your heart because Jesus didn’t fit into your paradigm or will you believe and turn?
 - **The faith that is through Jesus has given the man perfect health (right in front of your eyes)** – What does this mean? It means that through the combined faith of Peter and John operating in the Holy Spirit’s power and the man’s combined faith of trusting that they were truly ambassadors of heaven and Christ, healing was performed.
- **The Bigger Better Message**
 - **Peter Teaches How Christ is the Messiah**
 - *Acts 3:17-26 – “And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance²⁸, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸ But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. ¹⁹ Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, ²⁰ that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. ²² Moses said, [Dt 18:15-19] ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me²⁹ from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. ²³ And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.’ ²⁴ And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these*

²⁷ “the power which had wrought the cure resided in Jesus’ name, and that the man had availed himself of this power by the exercise of faith. There was no merely magical efficacy in the words which Peter pronounced when, in Jesus’ name, he commanded the cripple to walk; the cripple would have known no benefit had he not responded in faith to what Peter said. But once this response of faith was made, the power of the risen Christ filled his body with health and strength.” NICNT

²⁸ Luke 23:34

²⁹ “See John 6:14 and 7:40, where Jesus, as the supplier of bread from heaven and the water of life, is hailed as “the prophet” (the second Moses); cf. John 1:21b, 25, where John denies that he himself is “the prophet.” In the transfiguration narrative the command from the cloud enveloping the divine presence, “listen to him” (Mark 9:7), echoes Deut. 18:15, and identifies Jesus with the expected prophet.” NICNT

days. ²⁵ You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, [Gen 12:3] ‘And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’³⁰ ²⁶ God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.”

- **You acted in ignorance, as did YOUR rulers** – If the Jewish leaders truly thought that Jesus Christ of Nazareth was the Messiah they would have never sent him to be crucified. They were truly ignorant. They even though they were doing God a favor by getting rid of Him. They were deadly wrong. But just as Jesus said, while being crucified, “Forgive them Father, they don’t know what they are doing.” So too are the Apostles saying it now.
- **Jesus fulfilled the Messianic prophecies that He would suffer³¹** – where are those prophecies? How did the Jews miss those? They thought that He would come as a mighty victor the first and only time. Peter seems to be reflecting a lot on Isaiah 52 & 53 about the Suffering Servant passages. There was at least 3 major christologies that the early Church used of Jesus as Messiah: The Son of David; The Elijah of today; the Prophet motif.³²
- **Repent and turn back³³** – It means change your mind to align with the way God sees it and stop doing what you are doing.
- **That your sins may be blotted out** – This is a poetic way to talk about forgiveness. It’s the legal sense in which our sins are being listed to our name in condemnation and accusation (rightfully). But when Jesus Christ dies for our sins and pays OUR price, that record is removed. It’s blotted out and covered over and eliminated.
- **That refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord** – Not until the block of sin is removed can the blessings of God flow appropriately. But once we are forgiven and made children of God and put into a perpetual state of Grace, then God can treat us like He has always wanted to.

³⁰ This quotation conflates the LXX rendering of Gen. 12:3 (“in you all the families of the earth will be blessed”) and of Gen. 22:18 (“in your posterity all the nations of the earth will be blessed”). Luke probably looks forward to the Gentile mission (cf. Paul’s use of the same promise in Gal. 3:8–9, 16–29).” NICNT

³¹ “For all those things that happened to Jesus in his suffering and death happened in fulfilment of the words of the prophets, who foretold that the Messiah must suffer. True, they did not foretell in so many words that it was the Messiah who was to suffer: they spoke of the obedient Servant of God as suffering for the sins of others. But Jesus himself accepted and fulfilled his messianic mission in the terms of the prophetic account of the Servant and other righteous sufferers,³⁷ and the apostles’ interpretation followed his own.” NICNT

³² “In his present speech at least two, and possibly three, christologies are presented side by side: a “Servant” christology, possibly an “Elijah” christology, and certainly a “prophet” christology. It must not be supposed that these christologies were originally kept separate, each developed independently by one group or school of thought within the primitive church. They have been interwoven throughout the course of Christian history, and such evidence as is available indicates that it was so from the beginning. It has indeed been argued cogently by Martin Hengel that the crucial phase of christological development must be located within the first five years after the death and resurrection of Christ. The various christologies were all integrated by the overriding acknowledgment of Jesus as Lord in a sense implying universal sovereignty.” NICNT

³³ “here is the proclamation of a divine amnesty, offering a free pardon to all who took part in Jesus’ death, if only they acknowledge their error, confess their sin, and turn to God in repentance.” NICNT

- **That he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus** – When we repent and fall at His feet in apology and ownership of our sin, it allows Jesus to do what He came to do for us. The Messiah can finally be the Savior that He is. And that Messiah is Jesus Christ.
- **Whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke through the prophets of old** – There are things, that were shared by the prophets, that need to be completed BEFORE Jesus Christ returns. The plan is still unfolding. So, Jesus is going to stay in heaven until then.
- **Moses’ Messianic Prophecy³⁴** – where is this found in the OT? What did Moses mean? Dt 18:15-19. Moses was talking about how God would send a prophet that would speak for God, but one that would lead to a greater sort of life. He was speaking above his head (he didn’t fully know what he was talking about, as many prophets do). He was prophesying of a Messiah that would come and bring fulfillment. When this Messiah comes He has life, so if you don’t listen to him you are lost in judgment for your sins.
 - **How is Jesus a prophet?** – A prophet is someone who speaks for God. Jesus was the absolute perfect example of a prophet.
 - Jn 12:49–50 – *“For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. ⁵⁰And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”*
 - **Everyone who doesn’t listen to Him will be destroyed** – this is the seriousness of promoting the Gospel message in a timely manner. If we don’t listen to the only one who saves, how shall we be saved?
- **All the Prophets said proclaimed these days (Samuel onward³⁵)** – What days does Peter have in mind? The Last Days. That would entail that the Messiah came first and then was supposed to be killed, raise again, and return. People

³⁴ “Yes, even Moses, first and greatest of Israel’s prophets, looked forward to the day of Christ. There follow words from Deut. 18:15–19 in which Moses warns the Israelites that, when they wish to ascertain the divine will, they must not have recourse to magic arts for this purpose, after the manner of the Canaanites. When the Lord has a communication to make to them, says Moses, he will “raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren—him you shall heed— ... and whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him” (Deut. 18:15, 19). The primary reference of these words of Moses is to the institution of prophets in Israel, as a way appointed by God for making his will known to his people. But well before apostolic times this prophecy was interpreted as pointing to one particular prophet, a second Moses, who would exercise the prophet’s full mediatorial function as Moses had done.⁴⁹ Among the Samaritans, as later among the Ebionites,⁵¹ the Messiah was envisaged in terms of this prophet like Moses, and we have clear evidence in the Fourth Gospel particularly of contemporaries of Jesus who found this form of expectation realized in him. From the earliest days of the apostolic preaching, it appears, this text from Deuteronomy was invoked as a Mosaic prediction of Jesus, and it was regularly included in the “testimony” compilations which circulated in the church.” NICNT

³⁵ “It would be difficult to find a recorded prophecy of Samuel which could be applied to Jesus so explicitly as the words of Moses just quoted; but Samuel was the prophet who anointed David as king and spoke of the establishment of his kingdom, and the promises made to David found their ultimate fulfilment in Jesus (cf. 13:34). And all the words of the prophets similarly found their ultimate fulfilment in him (cf. 10:43).” NICNT

weren't picking up on that. Looking back it seems obvious, but hindsight is 20/20.

- **As Jews you are the lineage who God promised things to and promised things about** – what was the message? *“And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”* Does that mean the Jews or the Messiah specific? Is Peter telling them that Jesus was the fulfillment or that these people needed to get saved so they could be part of God's predetermined plan to spread blessing (gospel) to the whole world? The answer to that is...YES. Jesus was the ultimate fulfillment but when they get saved they get to be a part of the fulfillment.
- **God raised up His servant (Jesus – from the dead) sending Him to you first** – You are the blessed people. You got first access to the Son of God. You didn't handle it well, but you are loved.
- **To bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness** – It's God's blessing, His mercy and grace that we would hear of a way to be saved. We look at being 'forced' to change as a bad thing, but it's the greatest gift because we are hurtling toward destruction.

Conclusion

- **A Message for a Man** – A man was healed and shown that there was so much more. He was introduced to a whole new reality where God was personal and loving to HIM.
- **A Message for a Church** – The Temple was introduced to an 'Empowered Church' (our series name), where there was not just money thrown at something, but the Power of God flowing to heal people and make them whole in ways they didn't imagine.
- **A Message for Us Today** – We must not be limited by what we do not have or what hinders us. What limits us doesn't limit God. We must live not only with the hope of His possible healing and restoration of us but living off the realization that we are blessed people. We may not have everything we want but we have so much.