

## INTRODUCTION

Miracle and message, word and deed ministry in Acts following the pattern shown by Jesus himself. Tim Keller - "Word ministry and deed ministry go hand in hand. If one side outpaces the other, it all falls apart." That's what we see here and throughout the book of Acts. Overview statement: Let's walk through the miracle and then Peter's explanation which is basically him using it as an arrow or sign pointing to a Person, namely Jesus.

## THE MIRACLE (verses 1-10)

Bonafide miracle - born lame - describe man, asking alms, Peter and John give him something far better than money. They raise him up and immediately his feet and ankles made strong (for someone who had never walked). He began walking, leaping, and praising God. The people saw... and gathered!

## THE MESSAGE

**Peter addresses the crowd (verses 11-12) - don't fix your attention on us or this miracle, but the One it points to.**

*11 While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's.*

*12 And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk?"*

After Peter sees the astonished crowds gathering saying, "don't be astonished at us or this sign, but follow the sign to its destination - Jesus!" That is essentially the rest of the message. **Don't look at us. And don't even look mainly look at this man who is now healed. Look at what this points to.** And Peter says this miracle points to Jesus in 5 ways: our Healer, our Righteous Substitute, our life, our hope, and our confidence in the trustworthiness of God's promises.

## The miracle points to JESUS is our HEALER (verses 5-6, 12b, 16)

What does a healing like this teach us about what GOD thinks of sickness, disease, and disability? Physical healing shows us something about God. It is part of his nature to heal. In fact, one of the names of God we see in the OT is in Exodus 15:26 - "I am the LORD your Healer." As Jesus was healing, it says in Matthew 8:17 - "this is what was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases."

It is interesting, when Peter and John get this man's attention who was expecting to receive some money, Peter quickly dashes those hopes only to give him a gift far superior than gold or silver. He said, "I don't have any money to give you - not even a dime. But what I do have, I give to you, "In Jesus name, rise and walk!" And once the crowd gathered, Peter quickly redirects the attention of the crowd from him and John and onto Jesus. Look at verse 12 says, "*Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk?*"

Peter says, "Don't look at us; it's not our fault!" Peter wants to make it clear that the power didn't come from him to perform this miracle. And his godliness didn't merit it. Peter gives his explanation of how this miracle happened in verse 16.

*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.*

His name, by faith in his name → the name of Jesus is more than taking "in Jesus name" onto a prayer. It is wholehearted commitment and trust in the reality of Jesus and who he is. So it is faith in the Person and work of Jesus. The next phrase seems kind of strange - "the faith that is through Jesus". I think what this means is that the faith Peter exercised to perform this work was a gift given from Jesus to Peter, so that when Peter said, "In the name of Jesus," he was essentially saying, "I am saying these words, but Jesus is going to heal you now. I am speaking for him." And what Peter "gave" the lame man was a gift of healing from Jesus. So does God still heal like this? Yes, I see nothing in the bible to indicate he does not. Think with me, why did God heal in the bible? Why? Compassion, glory to God, Demonstration of kingdom, sign to unbelievers - this healing. So should we pray for the sick? Yes,

a thousand times yes! The Spirit may and will at times give us gifts of healing to deliver to people like he did Peter. This miracle is a sign pointing to Jesus our Healer.

**This miracle points to JESUS as our Perfect Substitute (verses 13-14)**

You see, we have a bigger problem than physical ailments. Our bigger problem, is our sin-sick souls which need healing. God's answer is Jesus, of course. But in an unusual way and we see a hint of it here in verses 13-14:

*13 The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. 14 But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you...*

Jesus is called the Holy and Righteous One - clearly a reference to his deity, that he is God. But the adjectives "holy and righteous" are not an accident. Peter is reminding the hearers of the trial of Jesus when Pilate wanted to release Jesus, but the Jewish leaders and the mob (including them!) "crucify him!" It was the Holy and righteous One they denied. We rightly cry injustice when an innocent man is accused of a crime. Even more when he is punished for a crime he didn't commit. What about when the perfectly holy and righteous God is treated like a common criminal. And worse, they ask for a murderer to go free while Jesus be executed like a murderer.

This a picture of the kind of salvation we all need and what Jesus actually did on the cross. "He was numbered with transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12) though he never sinned so that transgressors could be forgiven and go free. Listen to these words Peter wrote many years later:, "He himself bore our sins [not his own] in his body on a tree that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you are healed (1 Peter 2:24). 1 Peter 3:18. This is the healing we all need today, now! Sins removed, dead to sin, alive to righteousness, and brought to God through our perfect Substitute, Jesus Christ.

**This miracle points to JESUS as our LIFE (verse 15) →**

*15 and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.*

What a title: Author of Life. It is translated Prince of Life (NASB). It could be translated Captain. It all means the same thing. He has life in himself and he has won it for us as well! At the beginning when Adam sinned, the pronouncement came, "You shall surely die" and that death sentence has spread to all of us. But Jesus, has won the victory over death, for the Author of Life has been raised.

So now, for those who belong to Jesus, the saying is true, "Whoever lives and believes in me shall never die!" How? Because the Author of Life has risen from the death. He is the resurrection and the life.

What happens when the Author of Life is killed and then raised? He kills death! He puts death to death! Jesus is the head and fountain of our life now and forevermore. I love what Paul says in Colossians 3:4: "When Christ, who is our life appears..." Christ, who is our life. What is your life? What is life to you? Some hobby, work, a person, etc.? O, do not think you must wait until you die in order to know and experience this eternal life. Jesus the Author of this life - he gives it freely to all who run to him for it! Be like Christian in The Pilgrim's Progress and flee from all that does not satisfy and run to Jesus, the Author of Life: "**Life, life, eternal life!**"

**This miracle points to JESUS as our HOPE (verse 21)**

Hope is lost for so many! I mean NT hope. Not hope for a better day tomorrow, though that may be needed too. I mean an unshakable confidence in an eternal future - or as Peter says "imperishable, undefiled, and unfading". Look at verse 21:

*21 [Jesus] 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.*

What is this time for *restoring all things*? The word restore means to “set things back in order”. In other words, to bring things to perfection - to restore Eden. It is the day when Jesus returns and makes everything new. He will completely renovate all of creation which is subject to decay and brokenness. It’s what Paul talks about in Romans 8:21: “*the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*” Creation itself, including our bodies. They will be made new, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Corinthians 15). We will be changed. And these bodies, which are weak will be made indestructible. Death, the final enemy will be put under the feet of Jesus forever.

The healing of Acts 3 and every temporary healing, are all precursors in anticipation of the future event when Jesus will make all things new - including our bodies. You know what this means? God hates sickness and disease far more than you and I do. So much so, he is committed to restoring the world to a state of perfection where there will be no more of it. It has no place in the new heavens and new earth - Jesus will restore all things. Just how expansive will this restoration be? Isaiah 11:6-9 gives a picture:

*6 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. 9 They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.*

Joni Eraekson Tada (paralyzed) said, “*When I get my glorified body, the first thing I’m going to do with my resurrected legs is to fall down on grateful, glorified knees. Then I’m sure Jesus will be delighted to watch me stretch glorified muscles and dance on tiptoe.*” Do you hope for that day? You were made for it. Jesus is our hope!

### **This miracle points to JESUS as our confidence in all God’s promises (verses 18, 22-25)**

What is our confidence that all these things are true - Jesus our Healer, Substitute, Life, and Hope? Peter used the opportunity of this miracle to point his listeners not inward to personal intuition for validation but to the trustworthiness of God’s word. He pointed them time and again to the words of a God who cannot lie, whose word cannot fall to the ground, and whose words will not return void. Peter highlights Jesus as the fulfillment of OT prophecy and the guarantee of God’s promises for his people.

In verse 18, Peter says that what God spoke by the mouth of his prophets, “***that the Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.***”

In verse 24, Peter says, “*And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days.*” All the prophets spoke of Christ, and the days of his death and resurrection and God did it.

And verse 25, Peter goes all the way back to Abraham, the ultimate Jewish patriarch and said, “*You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘**And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.**’*”

If God spoke through the prophets and did what he said over and over again, is there any reason to believe he will not be good on all his promises which find their massive “YES” in Jesus? God’s word is true and can be fully trusted.

So this amazing miracle performed for a lame man points us to far more than just a temporary healing (as precious as it is). It serves as a sign, pointing us to our Healer, Substitute, Life, Hope, and Confidence - Jesus Christ. (Go into response if time permits)

**THE RESPONSE: It’s not surprising, Peter calls for a fitting response to this. It is very simple. If this is true:**

**1) Repent and Run to Jesus** - Verse 19 says, “*Repent therefore, and turn back*” This is a command. Change the way you think about Jesus. And run to him! He’s far better than you ever imagined.

**2) Show and tell how wonderful Jesus is**