

Series: How Jesus Acts Through Us Today; *Sermon:* **How Faith Can Free Us from Fear**; *Delivered by* **Dr. Josh Moody**, senior pastor, on March 15, 2020

Bible text explored: Acts 3:1–4:4

³Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. ²And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple. ³Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. ⁴And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.” ⁵And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶But Peter said, “I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!” ⁷And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. ⁸And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. ⁹And all the people saw him walking and praising God, ¹⁰and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

¹¹While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon’s. ¹²And 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? ¹³The 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. ¹⁴But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, ¹⁵and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶And 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.

¹⁷“And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. ¹⁹Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, ²⁰that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, ²¹whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. ²²Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. ²³And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.’ ²⁴And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days. ²⁵You 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.’ ²⁶God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.”

⁴And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, ²greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand. [ESV]

Review and application:

1. Who (vv. 6, 12, 16) were Peter and John careful to credit as the source of the healing recorded in this encounter?
What about Jesus' identity and power did his *name* convey?
2. Spirit-inspired traits propelled Peter and John to be channels of this divine healing. How alert were they (vv. 4-5) to the situation of others?
By seizing the initiative (vv. 6-7), how did they awaken hope?
3. They explained what was at stake beginning in v.12. Whose sovereign purpose (v. 13) had the people resisted?
How (vv. 14-15) had they rebelled? (See also *John 19:12.*)
Who (v. 18) had the prophets said would be sent to pay the penalty for their sin? (See *Isa. 53:5-6.*)
What two steps (v. 19) were essential for blotting out their sins?
4. What (vv. 3-6) needed to change about the hurting cripple's focus?
5. While Peter helped him up (v. 7), what essential contribution (v. 16) was up to the lame man?
What (vv. 8-9) was the cripple's spontaneous response to his healing?
How (v. 11) did he demonstrate a new allegiance?
6. How (vv. 20-21) should anticipating the second coming of Christ steady our path in a world shaken by uncertainty and fears?
A societal crisis is also an opportunity to reassess what is enduring. How could social distancing clear time for family devotions or Bible study?
How could we interact with acquaintances made suddenly open to our sharing the good news?