

“Meeting the Real Needs”

Acts 3:1-8

Intro:

- Two disciples, Peter and John, head to the temple during a very busy time of the day in order to present the gospel to people going into the temple. **vs. 1**
 - Peter and John were busy doing what God had instructed them to do.
- On their way into the temple, Peter and John come across a man who is asking for help. **vs. 2-3**
 - The Bible tells us this man had been lame since birth, and that someone brought him every day to lay in front of the temple to see what help he could get.
- Peter’s response is one that the lame man wanted to hear; but the outcome was far greater than the lame man could have imagined. **vs. 4-7**
 - The lame man expected to receive something; but did not expect to receive healing.
- The lame man does not leave ungrateful or silent. **vs. 8**
 - He leaves the spot he had been laying at for so many years and tells all what God had done for him.

“This man’s outward physical condition is a picture of people’s spiritual inward condition.”

Tran:

- Peter and John were seeking out people to help. **vs. 1**
 - Many want to be used of God to help people; but never place themselves in a place of people who are in need of help.
- It is interesting to note that, for years, the lame man was brought to a “religious” place; but left never receiving what he was searching for. **vs. 2**
 - So many come to a place of “religion” seeking for help but leave never having received what they truly need. It is our job to give people what they need, not what they think they want.
- Peter and John took the time to slow down and invest into those in need. **vs. 3-5**
 - So many people are never used by God, as a conduit of His blessings to others, because they are too busy, doing spiritual things, to take the time that’s necessary to touch and change a life.
- Peter and John were not concerned about creating a scene that would produce an emotional stir in the religious community, they genuinely cared about the well-being of an individual life. **vs. 6-8**
 - So many Christians are seeking to get “the big story” that they miss out on the blessings on being used by God to touch an individual life.

App:

- This story teaches us that it is not the job of the church or the Christian to solve the physical needs of every individual.
 - The church is not an extension of the welfare program. God never intended for the church to be used as His personal credit card to be charged whenever someone wanted something.
- This story does not teach that the church can solve everyone's physical problems; but it does teach us that the can show the compassion of Christ to all men and meet their needs on a spiritual level.
 - How many people come to church seeking to have a carnal need met; but can leave with the real need being met at a spiritual level.
- **This story teaches does not teach us that because we have a spiritual obligation, we can ignore the inconvenience of the physical problem.**
 - May churches will use the “we are not an extension of welfare” motto as an excuse to be lazy and inconsiderate of other people's needs.
- This story shows us the danger of applying our spiritual jargon as a band-aid to the spiritual needs of people God brings our way to help.
 - I wonder how many “spiritual” people walked by this man, gave him something, and even felt bad for him while saying, “I'll pray for you”; but never told the ones who were bringing him to the temple where to find Jesus. (**This man was alive while Jesus was on earth**)
 - So often in an attempt to patch people's problems, we overlook our responsibility of showing people how to get to Jesus, the one who can heal them.

I. **Recognize the hunger and desire man has to find help for his problems.**

- In our story, we find someone carrying enough about the lame man to bring him, every day, to a place where they thought his needs would be met.
 - How many times do we read about people coming to Jesus in search of answer for a question or help for a problem?
- A. It is as instinctive for an individual to seek something or someone greater than themselves, as it is for a bird to fly south for the winter.
- i. **Acts 8:26-31** *“And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. [27] And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, [28] Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. [29] Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. [30] And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? [31] And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.”*
 - ii. **Rom. 10:13-14** *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. [14] How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”*

- iii. **Prov. 18:1** *“Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.”*
 - iv. **Prov. 28:5** *“Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things.”*
- B. Those who do not know Christ, whether its through salvation or a personal relationship, know that what they have is not enough and are seeking for someone to show them a better way.
- **Acts 17:19-23** *“And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? [20] For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. [21] (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.) [22] Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. [23] For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.”*
 - i. Man is constantly seeking for knowledge.
 - ii. Man is constantly seeking a better way.
 - iii. Man is constantly seeking for love.
 - iv. Man is constantly seeking acceptance.
- **II Tim. 3:7** *“Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

II. Recognize Christians hold the answer to the problems people are trying to solve.

- A. We have been given the word of truth.
- i. Just as Jesus dwelt among man as the walking word of God, we have been given an every-word Bible to read and study. **John 1:14** *“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”*
 - **Mt. 4:4** *“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”*
 - ii. When someone stands and teaches or preaches the Bible, in context, we do not have to wonder from where they got their information. **I Thess. 2:13** *“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”*
 - iii. It is our responsibility to read, study, and understand the Word of God on our own. We are not to be solely dependent on others to tell us what the Bible says. **II Tim. 2:15** *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*
 - **John 16:13** *“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”*

B. It is our responsibility to tell others about the truth that we have been given.

- i. **Mt. 5:16** *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”*
- ii. **II Cor. 5:18-19** *“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; [19] To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”*
- iii. **I Thess. 1:7-8** *“So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. [8] For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.”*
- iv. **Rom. 10:14-15** *“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? [15] And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”*

Close:

- We need to recognize that people have needs and it's our job to be yielded to the Holy Spirit so God can work through us to meet those needs.
- How many people do we pass every day and how many people come to our church every week and never find they help they need because **I** am not sensitive to the Holy Spirit?

Rom. 10:15b

“...How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”

Review Questions

1. What 2 disciples were used by God in our story today to help meet the needs of the lame man? **Peter & John.**
2. What was the medical condition of the man in our story who was laying in front of the temple? **He was lame.**
3. This story teaches does not teach us that because we have a spiritual obligation, we can ignore the inconvenience of the **???????** problem. **Physical.**
4. We need to recognize the **?????** man has to find help for his problems. **Desire.**
5. We need to recognize Christians hold the **???????** to the problems people are trying to solve. **Answer.**