

Eternity Daily Bible Study - No. 358
Series: The Primal Church - Acts Chapters 1-8
Verses: Acts 3:11-16
Topic: Through Faith In His Name
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Acts 3:11-16 MKJV And as the lame one who was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. (12) And seeing this, Peter answered the people, Men, Israelites, why do you marvel at this? Or why do you stare at us, as though we had made this man to walk by our own power or holiness? (13) The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His son Jesus, whom you delivered up, denying Him in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to let Him go. (14) But you denied the Holy and Just One and desired a murderer to be given to you. (15) And you killed the Prince of Life, whom God has raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. (16) And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, this one whom you see and know, His name made firm. And the faith which came through Him has given him this perfect soundness before you.

Peter says that the miracle of healing was NOT due to any “power or piety” that the apostles possessed and WAS due to “faith in His name”. The entire credit goes to Jesus – even the faith itself “came through Him”. (verse 16).

Grace is gracious – Jesus gives the faith and does the miracle – and not because of any deserving factor in any person involved. The lame man just wanted money; Peter and John had no special powers. It was Jesus all the way and grace all the way.

People who have great miracles happen to them are frequently “just average folk” - and people who perform miracles are rarely theologians, but tend to be ordinary believers simply acting in Jesus’ name. You cannot qualify for a miracle by “being good” or by being very religious – otherwise all the miracles should have happened to the Pharisees. Instead miracles happen when Jesus gives faith to ordinary folk as a gracious act.

James 2:5 MKJV Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to those who love Him?

Both Scripture and Church history tell us that miracles tend to happen more frequently when there is revival and God is pouring out His grace on a city. First grace is poured out, then faith is given, then miracles occur. Miracles are clearly limited when there is unbelief pervading the community (Mark 6:1-6).

There is no system for producing miracles other than “faith in His name”. From first to last the New Testament makes faith the requirement – and then says that such faith is indeed a gift from God through Jesus (Ephesians 2:8,9; Acts 3:16).

There are two aspects to this, the receiving of the faith and the acting out of God’s will in faith. This is seen in an aspect of the life of Elisha:

2 Kings 13:14-19 MKJV And Elisha had fallen sick with his illness in which he died. And Jehoash the king of Israel came down to him and wept over his face. And he said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen of it! (15) And Elisha said to him, Take bow and arrows. And he took bow and arrows to himself. (16) And he said to the king of Israel, Put your hand on the bow. And he placed his hand. And Elisha put his hands on the king's hands. (17) And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened. And Elisha said, Shoot! And he shot. And he said, The arrow of Jehovah's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria. For you shall strike the Syrians in Aphek until it is finished. (18) And he said, Take the arrows. And he took *them*. And he said to the king of Israel, Strike on the ground. And he struck three times and stopped. (19) And the man of God was angry with him, and said, You should have stricken five or six times, then you would have stricken Syria until it was finished. But now you shall strike Syria three times.

The grace was there, the prophetic moment had come, but Jehoash failed to exploit it. So there is a synergy between God pouring out His grace – and our operating in it for His glory.

I remember a time in my hometown when it became very easy to win converts (for about 6 months) and I led 50 people to Christ in 7 weeks through personal evangelism. But most Christians did nothing. The grace for salvation was there and the city could have been won for Jesus, but people failed to take advantage of God’s season.

When grace is present it is important to “exploit” it fully – whether it be grace for healing or grace for salvation or grace for positive social change. At such moments we should ask for extra faith and get moving! (And remember to use your command prayers!).

How do we know when such a moment of grace has arrived? Sometimes we can sense it in our spirit, but often we can observe it. We can see changes taking place, or people being healed, or sinners repenting and we know that it is “for a season” and that we must act now – it could be a day, a fortnight or a month, it is seldom for more than 2 years.

We need to sensitively respond to the grace of God by exercising active faith in His name.

Blessings,

John Edmiston

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