

A Study In Acts

Lesson 4: Acts Chapters 3-4:4

Peter and John

Act 3:1 KJV

(1) Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth hour.

Clearly, these two disciples were intimate companions. They were often together. They are thought, by some, to have been together in the high priest's palace at the trial of Christ.

Joh 18:15 KJV

(15) And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and *so did* another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

They also ran together to Christ's tomb.

Joh 20:2-3 KJV

(2) Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

(3) Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

The ninth hour is three o'clock in the afternoon. This was one of the Jew's three customary times of prayer.

Daniel 6:10

(10) Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforesaid.

According to the Psalms, these times were evening, morning, and noon:

Psalms 55:17

(17) Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

This seems to answer the three times that are taken notice of by Luke in Acts: that in the morning was at the third hour, as in Acts 2:15 or nine o'clock in the morning; that at noon was at the sixth hour, as in Acts 10:9; and that in the evening at the ninth hour, as here, or three o'clock in the afternoon.

Not that these were times of divine appointment. Old Jewish documents say, "there is no number of prayers from the law, and there is no repetition of this or that prayer from the law, and there is no fixed time for prayer from the law."

The Healing of the Lame Man

Act 3:2-8 KJV

(2) And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

(3) Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

(4) And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

- (5) And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.
- (6) Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.
- (7) And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.
- (8) And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

That this man was born lame, rather than by some disease or injury later in life, is important because it makes the fact the walks later an obvious miracle. That he was carried is important because it meant that many people knew he was lame. This is why it causes such a stir when people see him walking.

Historical Note: The “gate called beautiful” is most likely the Shushan gate. This was the eastern gate of the outmost wall, and was so called, because a mural of Shushan, the capitol city of Persia, was portrayed upon it, which made it look very beautiful. The reason commonly given by the Jewish commentators why this was done, is this; when the Jews returned from captivity, the king of Persia commanded that they should make a figure of the palace of Shushan upon one of the gates of the temple, that they might fear the king, and not rebel against him

Obviously, this man is begging money from people as they go to the temple to pray. Peter and John together, see this man, and command him to look at them. He does this, thinking he’s bout to get some money. Peter lets him know that he will not be receiving any money, instead he heals him in the name of Jesus. He doesn’t just fix the problem that caused the lameness, Peter gives him the strength and ability to leap up, stand, and walk with them into the temple. You can imagine how atrophied his muscles and bones in his legs must have been.

Reponse to The Healing

[Act 3:9-11 KJV](#)

- (9) And all the people saw him walking and praising God:
- (10) And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.
- (11) And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

Solomon’s porch is the exit of the temple to the east. Jesus visited this spot in John 10:23. When all the people in the temple saw this man that they knew to be lame from birth, and saw three times a day outside the gate asking for alms, they were amazed and gathered around him, Peter, and John. Now Peter, having the attention of a large crowd, did as any good evangelist would, he began to preach.

Peter’s Second Sermon

Peter Starts From the End

[Act 3:12-16 KJV](#)

- (12) And when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?
- (13) The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *him* go.
- (14) But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;
- (15) And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.
- (16) And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

This time, he reminds them right off about their hand in the Jesus's death, including their choice of Barrabus over Jesus. Then he did his apostolic duty of witnessing the resurrection of Jesus.

Peter then says that it is Jesus power, through faith in His power, that cured the man. Again, the first thing emphasized is belief in Jesus and who He is.

Prophecy

Act 3:17-18 KJV

- (17) And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers.
- (18) But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

Now, Peter begins to comfort them. He tells them that he realizes it is through their own ignorance of Christ that they did this horrible things. He reminds them that God, through the prophets, had warned them it would happen. He then tells them that those prophecies have been fulfilled by Jesus Christ.

Invitation Given

Act 3:19-21 KJV

- (19) Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;
- (20) And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:
- (21) Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Now that these people had seen for themselves, and been shown that Jesus was in fact responsible, he again offered the invitation: repent, be converted for the remission of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is that you will belong to Jesus and be received in Heaven when He returns as has been prophesied since the world began.

So, why “converted” instead of “baptized”? Do the two things mean the same thing?

The first place to turn in answering this question, is Matthew Chapter 19.:

Matthew 18:3

- (3) And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Now let's turn to John Chapter 3.

Joh 3:1-5 KJV

- (1) There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:
- (2) The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.
- (3) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
- (4) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?
- (5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Clearly, being “converted” and being “born again” are equated by Matthew 18:3 and John 3:3. They mean exactly the same thing. In John 3:4, Nicodemus asks the question “What does it mean to be ‘born again’”? Jesus answers in verse 5 by saying “born of water and of the Spirit”. Therefore, being converted means: being born of water and of spirit.

This spiritual birth consists of two elements: “born of water and of the Spirit.” There are not two births required, but *one birth of two* elements. We are begotten by the Spirit through the seed which is the word of God (1 Peter 1: 23; James 1: 18), and delivered through the waters of baptism into “newness of life” (Romans 6: 3-4). We are baptized *into* Christ and “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature” (2 Corinthians 5: 17). A new creature comes into existence, of course, at birth.

Therefore, Peter again is emphasizing the same process here as he did in Acts Chapter 2: Believe, repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins. This recipe never changes.

Peter Concludes

Act 3:22-26 KJV

- (22) For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.
- (23) And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.
- (24) Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.
- (25) Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.
- (26) Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

Here, Peter reminds them that Moses himself said that God would raise up a prophet from their people and that the people would listen to, and believe, the things he said, just as they believed Moses. He then reminds them that all the other prophets spoke of the same thing. He concludes by saying again, that Jesus fulfills these prophecies.

Here Come The Cops

Peter and John Arrested

Act 4:1-4 KJV

- (1) And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,
- (2) Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.
- (3) And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.
- (4) Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

Clearly John was preaching also, though his Words are not recorded for us by Luke. We can assume he offered a similar message since he was treated equally with Peter in the aftermath.

The priests, the captain of the guard of the temple, and the sect of Jews called the Sadducees show up and are not happy at what is being preached. The Sadducees especially, since they taught that there is no resurrection. They arrest Peter and John and place them in guarded custody. They are kept until the meeting of the Sanhedrin council the next because it was already getting into the evening time.

None the less, five thousand more believers are added to the church, putting us at least 8120 members of the Church in a very short amount of time.

Next Episode: Law and Order