

**Stone Mountain Village Church
Acts 3**

“And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles” (Acts 2:43).

“And day by day, attending the temple together...” (Acts 2:46).

Acts 3 is a living picture of this last portion of Acts 2.

- Wonders and signs
- Attending the temple together

The power and authority of Jesus’ name was tested, and it proved to be powerful and authoritative.

- The man who had been lame for 40 years was taken by the right hand, raised up, and his feet and ankles were made strong.
- His response: He walked and leapt and praised God!
- Can you imagine what joy overtook his soul?
- Here was a broken man made whole. Here was a beggar who could now work to earn a living. Dignity had been restored to him.
- This type of incident seems like it was taken right from the gospels.
 - o Do you remember when Jesus raised the paralytic and told him to rise, take up his mat, and go home?
 - o Do you remember what that incident demonstrated?
 - o Do you recall how people responded?

What we are witnessing here is that the story of Jesus is continuing through the acts of the apostles. The story of the church is the story of Jesus, continued.

How did the people respond who saw this man who was once lame and begging for alms at the temple gate, but who now was walking and leaping and praising God?

- They recognized him and were filled with wonder and amazement at what happened to him.
- They recognized that an amazing miracle had just taken place, and they marveled at it.
- They were utterly astounded (v. 11).

How did the priests and captains of the temple and the Sadducees respond?

- We will have to wait to see when Daniel teaches next week.
- But I’ll give you a hint: This incident parallels the one where Jesus heals the paralytic man. There are responses of wonder and amazement at the clear demonstration of the power of God, and there are responses of offense, annoyance, and unbelief by others.

- These same two responses are present in our own day when the power of God is displayed: Wonder and belief or offense and unbelief. Perhaps there is a middle ground between the two, but eventually it will result in one or the other.

How did Peter respond?

- 1) He clarifies who made this man strong.
- 2) He rebukes the people in the temple for delivering Jesus over and denying Him in the presence of Pilate, for asking for a murderer to be granted to them instead of the Holy and Righteous One, and for killing the Author of Life, whom God raised from the dead.
- 3) He explains how this man was made strong and given perfect health: By faith in Jesus' name - the faith that is through Jesus.
 - In this moment Jesus is glorified. He is elevated to the highest degree. Peter makes it clear that it is not by his or John's power or piety that this man has become well, but through the power of Jesus Christ, the Author of Life, the Holy and Righteous One, God. And this divine power is accessed through faith in Jesus' name - a faith that believes and trusts and has confidence that only Jesus can make this lame man walk.
 - In this moment the people have to reckon with who Jesus is. Is he the blasphemer whom they spurned and denied and handed over to be crucified, or is He in fact the One whom He claimed to be: The Son of God and the Messiah?
 - The very ones who performed this incredible act of power are claiming that they have done this only through Jesus' power. The ones who have instant credibility in the eyes of the people because of the miraculous work they have done deny any credit that would be given to them, and instead bear witness to the reality that Jesus Christ of Nazareth is still the One whom He claimed to be before He was rejected and crucified and resurrected. He is still the One who has the power to make the broken whole.
 - Just as real as this man is in front of them, who had been born lame and remained that way for 40 years, and who now is walking and leaping, is Jesus who sits enthroned at the right hand of God in a glorified human body, resurrected from the dead. If you accept the first reality, you must accept the second one, too, for the power of the resurrected Jesus is the only reason for the perfect health that this man now has.
 - In this moment the name of Jesus is given all credibility, and it is magnified higher than the stars.
 - Again, the people are left to respond in wonder and belief, or contempt and unbelief.
- 4) Peter confirms the fulfillment of prophecy in Jesus.

- 5) He calls them to repentance.
- 6) He reminds them of what the prophets have said.
 - These same Scriptures that Peter refers to must have been the ones Jesus referred to when He helped His disciples understand all that the Scriptures said about Him after His resurrection (Luke 24: 25-27; 44-45).
- 7) He reminds them of their identity, that they are sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with their fathers.
 - Jesus fulfills the Abrahamic covenant! **He** is the blessing to all the families of the earth. **He** is the blessing to them!
 - God has sent His servant, Jesus, to you first to bless you by turning you from wickedness and to faith in Jesus Christ, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, who will one day restore all things, just as God has spoken through His prophets.

Take Aways

- 1) Jesus is the Author of Life.
 - a. Colossians 1:13-20
 - b. John 1: 1-18
 - c. Romans 11:36
- 2) The name of Jesus has power and life.
 - a. John 20:30
- 3) Jesus is who He claimed to be: The Son of God and Messiah.
- 4) Jesus fulfilled OT prophecies and the Abrahamic Covenant.
- 5) The blessing of the gospel is available to **all** who repent and place their trust in Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God.

The story of Jesus is continuing through us, the church, His Spirit-filled people, right here in SMV.

Paul writes in Colossians that the mystery of the gospel is “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (1:27).

We bring the presence of Christ to our neighbors.

We are to bear witness to what Jesus has done and trust in His power to make broken people whole.

Jesus is our example. We are to walk as Jesus walked; to love as Jesus loved; to cry as Jesus cried; to rejoice as Jesus rejoiced; to suffer as Jesus suffered; to obey as Jesus obeyed.

His life is in us. Therefore, we can live in this way. And we must, because our neighbors need to encounter Jesus, and it is our duty and privilege to share Him with them by sharing our very lives and selves. Amen.