

ACTS, Week 9

Miracles you saw and now He has been raised and so you marvel.

John and Peter are now on a mission, a mission to change hearts and seek to convert those who willingly cheered to send Jesus to the cross. How many will repent of their sin? How difficult a task to suddenly abandon everything you had always done to live righteously to God and accept this covenant, Mathew 26:28, Luke 22:20. This is also known as the dispensation of Grace. The seven dispensations are, Dispensation of Innocence, Dispensation of Conscience, Dispensation of Human Government, the Dispensation of Promise, the Dispensation of Law, Dispensation of Grace, and the dispensation of the Millennial Kingdom?

Let's go back for a moment and recall all that has taken place in a short time frame.

- 1) Jesus is arrested and crucified.
- 2) The disciples are afraid and hide in a wait, filled with uncertainty.
- 3) Mary Magdelene runs to tell the disciples she has seen Jesus
- 4) Peter and John ran to the tomb, in John 20:2 we see Mary running in fright because they have taken Jesus' body.
- 5) John and Peter and the other disciples ran to the tomb, Luke 24:12.
- 6) The disciples go to Galilee and as they were told.
- 7) They wait with fear. The timeline of appearances. There appears to be no established number of days for which the disciples were waiting. Notes and thoughts range from ten days to fifty days, but then we need to focus on the appearances as opposed to the coming of the Holy Spirit. What we are looking at here are the appearances.

I have attached a study I believe to be a well thought-out record of events that took place after the crucifixion. My point in this is how fast the church began to grow. William McDonal in your Believers Bible Commentary, page 1567 addresses the issue of worship as the early church is getting started and how the new believers continued to go to the temple and worship as they had always done. It is interesting to me that in such a short time the church began to grow faster than any event we can find throughout history. John Stot writes in His Message of Acts, how "the Good ship Christ-Church was ready to catch the wind of the Spirit and set sail on a voyage of spiritual conquest." Page 70.

If we go back and look at the time and struggle God waited for His people to get things right we are looking at years, yet here in a short time the Christian Church is rapidly growing. These people, men and women, were bold and steadfast in their understanding of the power and strength of the gospel message. Where are we today in our conviction to stand up, believe and share the gospel?

The first miracle of Peter and John.

3:1 Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. 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 from those who entered the temple; 3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. 4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." 5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive

something from them. **6** Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: 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** So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God. **9** And all the people saw him walking and praising God. **10** Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

James Montgomery Boice slows down the entrance into the first miracle by focusing on how John and Peter meeting the Lame man saying, “Look at us,” apparently the man would not look others face to face, now the man upon hearing this looked up expecting a good offering from the two, but then Peter says, “Gold and Silver I do not have,” but what the man was about to receive all the money in the world could not have meant more. “But what I do have I give to you.”

Lame from birth, having never walked on his own, the man is able to walk, run and jump on legs never used before. I have had numerous discussions about the miracles we are beginning to see and how reason would contradict the miracle. How could legs that have never been used all at once be made to not only walk but to leap and all the while praising God. God does not perform miracles half way, we do not find here that the man was told to go to the gym and exercise so you can rebuild your muscles to be able to use your new legs. God’s miracles are complete.

I had an interview about our growth and ministry work at Twin Cities Church as we would go through the ministry classes. My interviewer was a nice older man who had worked in logistics most of his life. As the discussion continued he asked who I worked for and I mentioned my work for the Post Office and duck clubs. Interested in the duck clubs he asked, “who for”? I told him one of my customers is the Steven Bechtel of Bechtel Construction, he had worked for them also in procurement and logistics and was asked to run down from England to Africa and take care of a shipping problem. It was a very interesting conversation until he got to the part of moving millions of people across the deserts of the middle east. He believed because of the immense amount of planning and shipping abilities as he had experienced there was no way all those the bible addresses could have moved and lived as they did. He was now questioning the honesty of the Scripture. I reminded him of Mathew 19:26, “**Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.** though he had just now realized his error. He shook his head as

The question everyone must ask of themselves is how do you view these miracles? Do you need to analyze each of them through our own experiences? Is this not the very thing we call miracles? That which miraculously happens.

So the lame man gets up and walks into the temple and those who know him realize the miracle before them. “**10 Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.**” All his life the man had to depend on others to move him around. He had friends that would carry him each day to the gate. Here we find the gate called the beautiful gate but if you search the gates of the temple you will not find that name listed. It is believed that it is referencing the gate of the gentiles that led to the gate of the women. It was decorated very lavishly in comparison to all the other gates. Not much is said beyond this.

Filled with wonder and amusement. I am often taken back by the reaction of people in regard to believing all that God can do. The point is made when Thomas insists on seeing Jesus’ hands and putting his finger in Jesus’ side. Jesus said to him, “**Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**” John 20:29.

Which are you? Do you have faith enough to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of faith? The fear here in what Jesus just said happens in the last days when evil will mimic those signs and wonders. How will you be able to discern who is performing the signs and wonders? Blessed are those who believe and have not seen. The faith we are given is our assurance in knowing the truth. If you are in doubt about the end times events Jesus gives to us the exact manner in which the events will take place and not one of them addresses God doing such things as the end unfolds. First Jesus will come in the clouds, Mathew 24:30, Mark 13:26. There is no mention of the wonders God will do when Jesus returns. Jesus taught us what to look for and the flashiness and mysterious wonders are not of God, for they do nothing to glorify God in what they do.

Those who marvel at the healing of the lame man once wanted Jesus put to death of a thief and a murderer, now they begin to believe. If you are one who needs to see miracles look no farther than what God has done in your own life, then be pleased because you are His. When people begin to look for the sensational they often fall into the trap of questioning faith itself.