

READ: Acts 3:1-26

“We live in a world full of people in need of hope. We can ignore them, or we can meet them where they are. I think that meeting people where they are is the better way to go. And that means going —as sent people—into real relationships with real people in the real world.”--Ed Stetzer, SENT

ACTION: Take time to learn about one person. What excites them? Scares them? What do they value? What are they passionate about? etc...

SHARE: What did you learn about this person? How did it cause you to view them differently? View other people differently? What was scary about asking someone about themselves? Exciting? How could you encourage them?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**I. the HEALING** :: Read Acts 3:1-10

“...usually we begin by seeking far less than God wants to give us. All the man wanted was money (v.3), but he got physical healing (v.8) and probably salvation (8, 16). Even so, a person ordinarily goes to God just for help with a problem or strength in time of need or forgiveness for a particular sin — but when we come to the real God he ends up making far greater changes in our lives than we ever envisioned.”

--Evangelism: Studies in the book of Acts, Redeemer Presbyterian Church (New York)

1. What did the lame man ask for, receive and how did he respond? In what ways do you just go to God with problems? How could the “name” of Jesus make ‘far greater changes in your life than you could ever envision’ if you went to him fully (quote above)?¹

2. What is the significance of Peter and John “going up to the temple” (1)? Of their response and interaction with the lame man (4-8)? (see also opening quote of the study).

3. What background do you come from that God may be calling you to enter into? What is challenging about stopping (3), paying attention to (4), speaking truth to (6), physically helping (7), walking with (8) someone?

II. the HEALER :: Read Acts 3:11-18

“The name of Jesus makes people grow up, become whole people, rinsed out and renewed, standing on their own two feet literally, morally, spiritually and personally. That’s what we find in verse 16, where Luke uses an unusual word to mean ‘complete wholeness’. That’s what is on offer through the gospel message which announces the powerful name of Jesus. Believing in him and in the power of his name is the way to wholeness, in the twenty-first century just as in the first.”--Tom Wright, Acts for Everyone

1. What did the people think caused the man to walk (12)? What does Peter point them to (16)? How is trying to bring healing by your own power (religion) different than trusting in Jesus (gospel) (think action, motives, results, etc....)?



¹ For further application, see Luke 12:22-34

2. In what ways do you seek to appear “healthy” or whole by your own power (self-sufficiency etc.)? In what ways is Christ not enough for you (what else do you “need” to have purpose, meaning, happiness etc.)

3. How should the Gospel bring astonishment and worship: that although we denied the only Holy and Righteous One (14) we are made Holy and Righteous; that we killed the Author of Life (15) yet he gives us Life; that Christ suffered (18) to end our suffering?

III. the HOPE :: Read Acts 3:19-26

“They must repent...and turn to God (19a). Then three successive blessings would take place:

first...that your sins may be wiped out (19b)...it means to wash off, erase, obliterate.

second...that times of refreshing may come from the Lord (19c)...can mean rest, relief, respite, and refreshment. It seems here to be the positive counterpart to forgiveness, for God does not wipe away our sins without adding his refreshment for our spirits.

third...that he may send the Christ who has been appointed for you--even Jesus (20)...it is when nature will be liberated from its bondage to pain and decay and God will make a new heaven and earth.

--John Stott, The Message of Acts (BST)

1. What happens when you repent (19-21, 26; quote above)? What part of that is hard for you?

2. What was the process of repentance when you became a Christian (if you have, if not--what keeps you from repenting)? What does the process of repentance look like for you on a day to day basis?

3. What is the significance of the entire Bible pointing to this idea Jesus bringing restoration of all things (20-26)? How have you received restoration and blessings by turning to Jesus from wickedness (26)?

CONNECTING QUESTIONS

1. Dwell on what it would be like to be the lame man: Do you understand that is you spiritually outside of Jesus? What can you learn from this interaction?

2. Where are you failing to believe and find joy in Jesus through repentance and faith: full forgiveness, refreshment in the Spirit and hope in restoration of all things? Who do you know that needs to know this?

Next weeks action to share:

Invite someone who is just an acquaintance or a new friend to join you for a meal or a drink. This could be a neighbor, co-worker, fellow student, someone from a mom’s group etc. No agenda, just hanging out.