

Acts of The Apostles (#3)
The Power of The Name of Jesus Christ
Acts 3:1-26
Sermon by Pastor Sylvia Chan

In Acts chapter 2 we saw that on the day of Pentecost, the disciples of the Lord Jesus received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and immediately they started preaching the gospel to the people in Jerusalem. Three thousand people repented and were baptized that day. The disciples sold their properties and shared their possessions with one another; they had meals together every day. The Lord was adding more and more people to their number day by day. Today we continue to study Acts chapter 3.

A lame man was healed by the power of the name Jesus Christ

^{ESV} **Acts 3:1-10** Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. ² And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple. ³ Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. ⁴ And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." ⁵ And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶ But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" ⁷ And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. ⁸ And leaping up he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. ⁹ And all the people saw him walking and praising God, ¹⁰ and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. (Acts 3:1-10, ESV)

This passage describes the healing of a lame man. Apostles Peter and John went up to the Temple at the ninth hour (3:00 P.M.), which was the hour of prayer. A man who had been lame from birth was lying at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. When he saw Peter and John, he asked them for alms. Peter told the man to look at him, and said to the man, “I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!” Peter raised him up; immediately the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and entered the Temple area walking and praising God. The people recognized him as the one who used to beg at the Beautiful Gate, and they were all filled with wonder and amazement.

Please take notice that Peter commanded this man to walk specifically in the name of Jesus Christ. The name of Jesus Christ carries power, and it was by this power that this man was healed!

Peter’s second sermon

1. Peter pointed out the sins of people — They had denied the Lord Jesus

^{ESV} **Acts 3:11-15** While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon’s. ¹² And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: “Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. ¹⁴ But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, ¹⁵ and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.” (Acts 3:11-15, ESV)

After the lame man had been healed in the name of the Lord Jesus, the people were astonished and ran together to Peter and John and the healed man. Peter made use of the opportunity to preach to them. Peter said that God had

glorified His servant Jesus (v.13), yet the people had denied him (v.14). In what sense did the people deny Jesus?

What happened was that when the Lord Jesus was standing on trial before the governor Pilate, the governor didn't find any wrongdoing by Jesus and wanted to release him. And it was at the Passover feast that the governor was accustomed to releasing any one prisoner whom the people wanted.

^{ESV} **Matthew 27:15-17** Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. ¹⁶ And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. ¹⁷ So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" (Mat 27:15-17, ESV)

But the chief priests and the elders had persuaded the people to ask for Barabbas to be released and the Lord Jesus to be crucified.

^{ESV} **Matthew 27:20-26** Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. ²¹ The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." ²² Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" ²³ And he said, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" ²⁴ So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." ²⁵ And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" ²⁶ Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified. (Mat 27:20-26, ESV)

The above two passages show that while the governor Pilate allowed the people to choose between the Lord Jesus and the notorious criminal Barabbas, they chose to have the Lord Jesus crucified. They had thereby denied him.

2. The people had killed the Author of life

In Acts 3:15 Peter says, “and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.” In what sense is the Lord Jesus the Author of life?

The original Greek word for “author” is “ἀρχηγός” (archegos); it means originator, one who begins or originates, one who is first in a series. So “author of life” means the originator of life.

But in what sense is the Lord Jesus the originator of life? The Lord was not the first man on earth, it was Adam who was the first man on earth.

The word “life” here doesn’t refer to the physical life, but the spiritual life. The Lord Jesus is the originator of the new spiritual life; those who follow the Lord will be given the new spiritual life, and will become a new type of human being. But the people at that time had killed the originator of this new spiritual life. In the future we will study deeper into this spiritual life and this new type of human being.

3. It was by faith in the name of Jesus that this lame man was healed

^{ESV} **Acts 3:16** And his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all. (Act 3:16, ESV)

After pointing out the sins of people, Peter told them that it was by faith in the name of Jesus that his lame man was healed.

4. Peter called people to repent

^{ESV} **Acts 3:17-19** “And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸ But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. ¹⁹ Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out (Act 3:17-19, ESV)

After pointing out the sin of people and the power of the name of Jesus, Peter called them to repent, for they had acted in ignorance. They did not know that the Lord Jesus was the originator of the new life. If they were willing to repent, their sins would be forgiven.

5. The restoration of all things

^{ESV} **Acts 3:20-26** that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. ²² Moses said, “The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. ²³ And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.” ²⁴ And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days. ²⁵ You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, “And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” ²⁶ God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.” (Acts 3:20-26, ESV)

Here Peter is talking about the restoration of all things in the future.

- Verse 20 says “that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus.” It is the Lord who will send Christ Jesus to us, therefore “the Lord” doesn’t refer to Jesus but to Yahweh God who will send Jesus Christ to us. The Lord Jesus had ascended to heaven, he is sitting right now at the right

hand of Yahweh God; therefore “the times of refreshing” in v.20 here refers to the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

- The original Greek word for “restoring” in verse 21 is “ἀποκατάστασις” (*apokatastasis*); it is not just any kind of restoring, but to restore everything to perfection. When the Lord Jesus comes again, all things will be restored to perfection.
- The prophets since ancient times from Moses and Samuel onward had been talking about the restoration of all things. At the restoration anyone who does not listen to that prophet, in this case namely the Lord Jesus, will be destroyed (v.23). It means that everyone who participates at the restoration of all things will obey the Lord Jesus. He is truly the Lord of all the people.

Conclusion

Now let's sum up everything in this chapter. Peter and John had healed a man lame from birth, and the people were astonished. The two apostles made use of the opportunity to preach to the people:

- It was by faith in the Lord Jesus that this man was healed
- The Lord Jesus is the author of life, the one whom the people had denied.
- Peter called people to repent so that the restoration of all things will come.