**A MIRACLE AND A MESSAGE**

**Acts 3:1-26**

**THE BIG IDEA: God works in and through our lives to bring glory to the name of Jesus and to draw people to Himself.**

**GOD OFTEN GIVES US WHAT WE NEED WHICH IS FAR GREATER THAN WHAT WE WANT**

* *“When he saw Peter and John about to enter the temple, he asked for money. 4 Peter, along with John, looked straight at him and said, ‘Look at us.’ 5 So he turned to them, expecting to get something from them. 6 But Peter said, ‘I don’t have silver or gold, but what I do have, I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!’”* (Acts 3:3-6)
* **We often have expectations of temporal blessings when the Lord desires to bless in ways that exceed our focus and faith.**
* *“Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ.”* (Ephesians 1:3)
* **The things of this earth will pass away but the Lord and His salvation is everlasting!**

**IT IS JESUS ALONE WHO SHOULD RECEIVE THE CREDIT AND PRAISE FOR HIS WONDEROUS WORKS**

* *“All the people saw him walking and praising God.”* (Acts 3:9)
* **In an age of personalities and high profile preachers we must guard against giving the praise to men that belongs to Christ.**
* *“When Peter saw this, he addressed the people: ‘Fellow Israelites, why are you amazed at this? Why do you stare at us, as though we had made him walk by our own power or godliness? 13 The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and denied before Pilate, though he had decided to release him. 14 You denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer released to you. 15 You killed the source of life, whom God raised from the dead; we are witnesses of this. 16 By faith in his name, his name has made this man strong, whom you see and know. So the faith that comes through Jesus has given him this perfect health in front of all of you.’”* (Acts 3:12-16)
* **Equally important as not giving praise to men that belongs to Christ, is not accepting praise that belongs to Christ as well.**
* *“For we never used flattering speech, as you know, or had greedy motives—God is our witness— 6 and we didn’t seek glory from people, either from you or from others.”* (1 Thessalonians 2:5-6)

**SHARING THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL WITH OTHERS INVLOVES CALLING ON THEM TO REPENT OF THEIR SINS**

* *“Therefore repent and turn back, so that your sins may be wiped out, 20 that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send Jesus, who has been appointed for you as the Messiah.”* (Acts 3:19-20)
* *“God raised up his servant and sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your evil ways.’”* (Acts 3:26)
* **One of the most loving things we can do for people is to tell them the truth that all of us, including them, are sinful and the need to repent so that they can receive forgiveness through Christ.**
* *“From then on Jesus began to preach, ‘Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near.’”* (Matthew 4:17)
* **Understanding the Good News of the Gospel requires an understanding of the bad news of our sinfulness.**
* *“For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.”* (2 Corinthians 5:21)
* **The early Church did not shy away from speaking difficult truths to an opposing culture because God’s Kingdom agenda was more important than being accepted by a world that is passing away.**

**CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION**

**ICE-BREAKER:** What is the funniest thing you have ever prayed for?

**START THINKING:**

* What do we learn about God/Jesus in Acts 3?
* What are some main themes/ideas in Acts 3?
* Why didn’t the Apostles give the lame man any money?

**DIGGING DEEPER:**

* What did you learn about how God answers prayers?
* What are you doing/will you do to care for the broken?
* What resonates with you about this miracle and the events after?
* How do you guard yourself from putting too much focus on those who carry the message of Christ, instead of Christ Himself?
* Who in your life needs to hear the truth of the Gospel? How has this message/text affected and/or inspired you to reach them?

**FOCUS**

* What is your big takeaway from this message?
* Who are you inviting to Church next Sunday?