

To the Ends of the Earth: Session 6
The Miracle and the Message
Acts 3:1-26

Questions

1. Why were Peter and John going to the temple?

Peter and John were going to the temple to pray.

The Jewish day began at 6 am and ended at 6 pm. For devout Jews, there were three special times for prayer—morning, noon and evening. They agreed that prayer was effective wherever it was offered, but they felt that it was doubly precious when offered in the Temple courts. It is very interesting that the apostles kept up the customs in which they had been trained. It was the hour of prayer, and Peter and John were going into the Temple to observe it. A new faith had come to them, but they did not use that as an excuse to break the old law. They were aware that the new faith and the old discipline could walk hand in hand.

2. Who was laying at the temple gate?

A lame man from birth

3. What did the lame man ask for? What did Peter and John give the lame man?

The lame man asked for alms. Peter and John gave the lame man healing.

4. In who's name did Peter perform the miracle?

In the name of Jesus.

5. Give some examples of how God performs miracles today.

6. According to verses 8 and 9, how did the lame man respond when being healed?
How did the crowd respond to the healing of the lame man?

The lame man jumped around and went into the temple praising God. Everyone recognized the man as being lame. The crowd was filled with wonder and amazement.

7. Peter used this miracle as an opportunity to preach Christ. I want us to focus on the titles that Peter used in his sermon for Jesus.

8. What title does Peter use to describe Jesus in verse 13? What is the meaning of the title?

Servant.

First, Jesus was the innocent 'servant'. The word 'servant' in verse 13 could equally be translated 'child', but 'servant' was a regular meaning of the word. In the Greek translation of Genesis 24, Abraham sends his servant to find a wife for Isaac, and the word used for 'servant' is the same as the word here, even though the servant in question wasn't Abraham's own child and certainly wasn't young. So the meaning 'servant' is probably uppermost. As we shall see more fully in due course, the idea of an 'innocent servant' should send our minds back to Isaiah 53, one of the all-time central passages in early Christian understanding of who Jesus was and why he died.

9. What titles does Peter use in verse 14 to describe Jesus? What are the meaning of the titles in verse 14?

The Holy One: Holy means to be separated to do God's will. The title is also a Messianic title used by David in Psalm 16.

The Righteous One: Jesus was innocent of the crimes that he was accused of by the Jews.

10. What title does Peter use in verse 15 to describe Jesus? What is the meaning of the title?

*The Prince of Life: That is why, third, Jesus is also 'the prince of life'. The word 'prince' here can also mean 'the one who initiates something': he is not so much the ruler over 'life', as the sovereign one who brings **life**, who initiates new life, who pioneers the way through death, decay and corruption and out the other side into a kind of 'life' that nobody had imagined before. And the point is that Jesus was already doing this during his public career. Wherever he went, he brought new life, the life which indicated that God was now in charge. This makes it all the more ridiculous, paradoxical even, that his own people rejected him and sent him to his death: they killed the prince of life! But, of course, God raised him up — the **resurrection** continues to be at the heart of the proclamation of the church and the explanation of why new life is now happening — so that his work of bringing new life continues unchecked. -- Wright*

11. What does Peter call on the crowd to do in verse 19?

Repent

12. How does Peter describe forgiveness in verse 19?

Blotted out — Erased