

Lesson 3
THE POWER OF HIS NAME
Acts 3:1- 4:4

Memory Verse: “By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.” (Acts 3:16 NIV)

The emphasis in Acts 3 and 4 is on the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 3:6, 16; 4:7, 10, 12, 17–18, 30). A name, of course, implies much more than identification; it carries with it authority, reputation, and power. When somebody says, “You can use my name!” you sincerely hope the name is worth using. If an order is given in the name of the President of the United States or the Prime Minister of Great Britain, those who receive the order know that they are obligated to obey. If I were to issue orders at the White House or at No. 10 Downing Street (even if I could get in), nobody would pay much attention because my name has no official authority behind it.

But the name of the Lord Jesus has all authority behind it, for He is the Son of God (Matt. 28:18). Because His name is “above every name” (Phil. 2:9–11), He deserves our worship and obedience. The great concern of the first Christians was that the name of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, be glorified, and believers today should have that same concern.

The name of a person represented that person. When Peter healed the man in chapter 3 in the name of Jesus, he was saying that it was Jesus who was ultimately responsible for the healing, not Peter. Peter healed him in the power of and with the authority of Jesus of Nazareth (cf. v. 16).

This incident and the other miracles recorded in Acts have led readers of this book to wonder if God is still working miracles today. He is. God can and does perform miracles whenever and wherever He chooses. Regeneration is one of God’s greatest miracles. Perhaps a better question would be, does God still give the gift of working miracles to believers today as He gave this ability to Peter, Paul, and other first-century apostles?

Significantly, each of the three periods in biblical history when God dramatically manifested this gift to selected servants, was a time when God was giving new revelation through prophets. These three periods are the times of Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, and Jesus and the apostles. However, God has performed miracles throughout history. Each period of miraculous activity was brief, spanning no more than two generations of people. When the miraculous gift was present not even those who had it healed everyone who could have benefited from it (e.g., Mark 6:5-6; Phil. 2:27; 2 Tim. 4:20; et al.).

As we study this section, we should note that the Jewish emphasis is very pronounced. Peter addressed Jewish men (Acts 3:12) and called them “children of the prophets and of the covenant” (Acts 3:25). He referred to the Jewish fathers (Acts 3:13) as well as to the prophets (Acts 3:18, 21–25). The phrase “times of restitution” (Acts 3:21 KJV) is definitely Jewish and refers to the messianic kingdom promised in the prophets or rendered as “until the time comes” (in NIV). The message is still going out “to the Jew first” (Acts 3:26) and is presented in Jewish terms.

This section will reveal in stages something wonderful about Jesus Christ!

Scriptural Reading: Acts 3:11-26; 4:1-4.

Things to learn: 1) Amazement and the Healer. 2) Indictment and Proclamation. 3) Encouragement to Believe.

Questions

Q1. Verses 1 to 10 recorded the amazement of the people in the healing of a lame beggar. What was God’s purpose when He worked through Peter at this stage?

Q2. In the second stage of Peter’s address (verses 11 to 16), how were the people indicted and Jesus proclaimed?

Q3. Review this section (3:17 – 4:4) and see how you can apply the practical truths that should encourage all of us in our witnessing for Christ.