**Lesson 4**

**Acts 3:1- 4:4, A Cure and St. Peter’s Second Speech**

*In last week’s lesson Peter makes a speech to the pilgrims visiting Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. Peter uses both prophecy and the witness of Jesus’ death, resurrection and ascension to prove that Jesus truly was the Messiah. 3000 people were baptized as a result. The Spirit-filled community grows.*

1. **When did you feel closest to God this week? *Or* was there a particular verse or message in Acts 3 that inspired you?**
2. **Reflection- Persons with illness or physical defects were excluded from entrance to the Temple and were also excluded from many activities within the life of the community. With this in mind, what is the spiritual and/or symbolic meaning of a healing here? See Acts 3:2-8.**

**Acts 3:2-8** And a man crippled from birth was carried and placed at the gate of the temple called “the Beautiful Gate” every day to beg for alms from the people who entered the temple. **3**When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked for alms. **4**But Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.” **5**He paid attention to them, expecting to receive something from them. **6**Peter said, “I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, [rise and] walk.” **7**Then Peter took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles grew strong. **8**He leaped up, stood, and walked around, and went into the temple with them, walking and jumping and praising God.

1. **How does Isaiah 35:4-6 help to bring meaning to the actions of the lame man in Acts 3:8? What does this say about the saving power of God and our response to it?**

**Isaiah 35:4-6** Say to the fearful of heart, Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God, he comes with vindication;
With divine recompense he comes to save you.
**5**Then the eyes of the blind shall see, and the ears of the deaf be opened;
**6**Then the *lame shall leap like a stag, and the mute tongue sing for joy*.

1. **The Holy Spirit has filled Peter. In what ways can you see the gifts of the Spirit reflected in Peter in this lesson? Or, how has Peter changed since Pentecost? Reflect on entire chapter and Mat 14:29-33, Mat 16:21-23, and Luke 22:54-60.**

**Matthew 14:29-33** Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. **30**But when he saw how [strong] the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” **31**Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” **32**After they got into the boat, the wind died down. **33**[[k](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+14#fen-NABRE-27950k)]Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, “Truly, you are the Son of God.”

**Matthew 16:21-23** Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised. **22**Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, “God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you.” **23**He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do.”

**Luke 22:54-60 54**After arresting him they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest; Peter was following at a distance. **55**They lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and Peter sat down with them. **56**When a maid saw him seated in the light, she looked intently at him and said, “This man too was with him.” **57**But he denied it saying, “Woman, I do not know him.” **58**A short while later someone else saw him and said, “You too are one of them”; but Peter answered, “My friend, I am not.” **59**About an hour later, still another insisted, “Assuredly, this man too was with him, for he also is a Galilean.” **60**But Peter said, “My friend, I do not know what you are talking about.” Just as he was saying this, the cock crowed.

1. **Who is responsible for the healing in this chapter? See Acts 3:12-16.**

**Acts 3:12-16.12**When Peter saw this, he addressed the people, “You Israelites, why are you amazed at this, and why do you look so intently at us as if we had made him walk by our own power or piety? **13**The God of Abraham, [the God] of Isaac, and [the God] of Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has glorified his servant Jesus whom you handed over and denied in Pilate’s presence, when he had decided to release him.**14**You denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. **15**The author of life you put to death, but God raised him from the dead; of this we are witnesses. **16**And by faith in his name, this man, whom you see and know, his name has made strong, and the faith that comes through it has given him this perfect health, in the presence of all of you.

1. **Reflection. How important was faith in the healing of the lame man? Consider the faith of both the healer and the man to be healed. See verse 16 above.**
2. **If we are unable to help support the poor with our money, what does this chapter suggest we do for the poor? See Acts 3:4-6 above.**
3. **Check your Bible for footnotes that help to explain Acts 3:17-21. What is meant by “times of refreshment” and “times of universal restoration”?**

**Acts 3:17-21 17**Now I know, brothers, that you acted out of ignorance, just as your leaders did; **18**but God has thus brought to fulfillment what he had announced beforehand through the mouth of all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. **19**Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away, **20**and that the Lord may grant you ***times of refreshment*** and send you the Messiah already appointed for you, Jesus, **21**whom heaven must receive until the ***times of universal restoration*** of which God spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old.

1. **Why does Peter say that the *Chosen People* are particularly blessed? See Acts 3:24-26.**

**Acts 3:24-26 24**Moreover, all the prophets who spoke, from Samuel and those afterwards, also announced these days. **25**You are the children of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your ancestors when he said to Abraham, ‘In your offspring all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’ **26**For you first, God raised up his servant and sent him to bless you by turning each of you from your evil ways.”

1. **Reflect on the importance of repenting in this chapter. Why is repentance important prior to receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit or to living a Spirit-filled life?**
2. **The Sadducees did not believe in life after death or in the resurrection of the body.**

**Read Acts 4:1-4. Why were Peter and John arrested?**

**Acts 4:1-4 1**While they were still speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees[[l](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+3-4#fen-NABRE-31343l)] confronted them, **2**disturbed that they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. **3**They laid hands on them and put them in custody until the next day, since it was already evening. **4**But many of those who heard the word came to believe and [the] number of men grew to [about] five thousand.