



LESSON 27

Peter and John preach the gospel

ACTS 3:1-26



Jesus restores life.



“Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19–20a).

Supporting Truths

1. Jesus heals through faith in Him.
2. Jesus is the Lord and source of life.
3. Jesus restores the soul by forgiving sin.
4. Jesus restores those who repent.
5. Jesus will return to restore the world.

Objectives

1. Retell the healing of the lame man.
2. List two ways Peter proved this.
3. Explain why sins can be forgiven.
4. Define repentance.
5. Use the lame man’s healing to illustrate the final healing of the whole world.

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Lesson Summary

Acts is about the work Jesus continued to do through the Holy Spirit. Through His Spirit, Jesus used Peter to heal a crippled man. A crowd came to see, and Peter explained that this healing was one more proof that Jesus was alive. In fact, it was proof that Jesus was the source of life. Just as He gave full life to the lame man's body, so He could give full life to sinful souls and a sin-cursed world.

Spotlight on the Gospel

The Jews needed to repent to receive forgiveness. They needed to trust in Jesus' death for sin and in His risen life. This is the message of the gospel for you too: because Jesus died for sin, you can be forgiven. Because God raised Jesus from the dead, you can also be blessed and one day live in a new world with Him forever. But to receive forgiveness and eternal life, you must repent and trust in Jesus, the source of all life.



The Holy Spirit arrives
Acts 2:1–47



**Peter and John preach
the gospel**
Acts 3:1–26



**Ananias and Sapphira
lie to the Holy Spirit**
Acts 4:32–5:11

Lesson Commentary

Jesus restores life.

Jesus had promised to give His disciples the Holy Spirit so that they could be His witnesses (Acts 1). A few days later, the Spirit rushed upon them with great power, causing 3,000 to believe in one day (Acts 2). After that, the Holy Spirit continued to do great miracles through the apostles (2:43). One of those miracles was the healing of the lame man. Through this healing the Holy Spirit continued to show the truth about Jesus: He is the Lord of life, able to heal broken bodies, sinful souls, and a ruined world.

Illustration: Jesus restored physical life (3:1–10)

The scene begins with a stark contrast (3:2). On the one hand, the massive Beautiful Gate towers majestically, with its Corinthian brass gleaming in the sun. On the other hand, a beggar lies crumpled at its base, almost as invisible as the two legs shriveled up beneath him. Yet both gate and cripple have one thing in common: the Jews used both to try to get their way with God in prayer. They came through the gate to pray in the temple, where they thought God was more likely to grant requests. And they gave money to the cripple to try to earn credit with God and give their prayers an advantage. So there the cripple sat, dependent on half-hearted kindness.

But Peter and John did not treat this cripple like others did. They responded with compassion, faith, and action. First, they showed compassion by looking at him intently (3:4). Often people look away from those in need so that they will not feel guilty for not helping. But Peter and John gave the cripple their full attention. Second, Peter acted in *faith*. Peter had nothing of his own to give, but he had trust and confidence in the power of Jesus as well as devotion to Jesus. He wanted to see Jesus honored above all, so he clearly identified Jesus by name (3:6). Third, Peter put compassion and faith into practical action. Following Jesus' example (John 13:1–13), he willingly served this cripple by lending a hand (Acts 3:7).

The result was a true miracle. First, it was immediate. Muscles which had never been used grew instantly, and the skinny, curled legs thickened and straightened (3:7). Second, it was complete. For the first time in his life, the cripple stood. Amazed at what was happening, he went on to walk and even jump with joy (3:8). Third, it was a sign that glorified God through Jesus, for the cripple got the message (3:9). Fourth, it was obvious. The people knew this man was genuinely crippled from birth (3:10), and even the disciples' enemies could not deny that it was a miracle (4:16). This is exactly what Jesus had said would happen (John 14:12). The Holy Spirit was doing miracles to prove the apostles' authority to establish the church and the Scriptures (Eph 2:20; Heb 2:3–4).

THINK ABOUT IT

A genuine miracle is immediate, complete, God honoring, and obvious.



Should we expect miraculous healing today? Not usually. Today's so-called faith healers do not heal immediately, completely, or obviously, and they do so for their own gain and glory, not for God. Also, when the apostles finished their special mission, the purpose for miracles ended. Still, even without the gift of healing, God can heal as He pleases, whether supernaturally or naturally (1 Tim 5:23). Even when He does not heal, we need not fret. Jesus kindly uses our deformities and diseases to loosen our grip on this world so that we do not miss out on the next. In fact, that is the point of this story: Jesus' power to restore the lame man is proof of His power to restore us to perfect life in a perfect world (Isa 35:6; Rev 21:4; 22:2).

Explanation: Jesus is the source of life (3:11–16)

As the crowd marveled, Peter preached a two-part sermon. In the first half of his sermon, Peter explained what the healing meant. The healing was not by his own power or religiousness, so it must have come from someone else (Acts 3:12)—from Jesus, the source of life. But could a crucified man really be

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the source of life? The kind of people who were crucified were sinners; how could a sinner be the source of life? Besides, how could a dead person be the source of life?

The resurrection answers both of these questions. First, the resurrection proved that Jesus was not a sinful person. Pilate said three times that Jesus was innocent (Luke 23:4, 14, 22), but that did not stop the Jews from betraying Him (Acts 3:13b). But when God raised Jesus from the dead, it proved that God honored Him. Jesus died not as a criminal but as God's faithful servant (3:13a; Isa 42:1). Instead of being a sinful criminal, He was in fact ***holy*** (*set apart for God for a special mission*) and ***righteous*** (*innocent*) (Acts 3:14). Second, the resurrection showed that Jesus was no longer dead. Eyewitnesses had seen Him alive (3:15; 1 Cor 15:3–8), and His resurrection proved that He is in fact the ***“Author”*** of life (Acts 3:15;

John 10:18), the source of life (John 1:4; 5:26; 14:6) and the ***Lord in charge*** of life. Now Jesus had proved His life-giving power once again by healing a life-long cripple (Acts 3:16).

But this promise is only for sinners who respond. Just as the crippled man's body was made new through faith in Jesus (Acts 3:16), so a sinner's soul is made new through faith. But since ***faith*** is ***clinging to Jesus***, it always comes with ***repentance***, ***a change of heart***, no longer rebelling and instead ***turning back to Jesus***. If they would do that, their sins would be ***forgiven, completely wiped away*** (Acts 3:19; Isa 43:25). This was Peter's first reason to repent: to live a forgiven life.

Second, Peter urged them to repent so that they could live in a new world. Since Jesus is the Lord of life, He will one day return and bring new life to earth (Acts 3:19–21; Matt 19:28). The prophets had eagerly looked forward to this day, when the Messiah would personally reign over a world full of peace and life (Isa 9:6–7; 11:6–10; 35:1–10; Zech 14:8–21). But that day will not come until the people of Israel return as a whole to their God (Matt 23:39). Until then, God is patient, giving Gentiles much time to repent (Rom 11:25; 2 Pet 3:9). But the greatest blessing ever to be known on earth will only come when the Jews repent (Rom 11:12, 15).

Third, Peter urged them to repent so that they could receive God's promised blessing. From Moses on, all the prophets had talked about the time when the Messiah would come, a time of great blessing (Acts 3:22–26). This blessing now reaches to all nations, but it was offered first to the Jews, since they were and always will be God's covenant people (3:25–26; Rom 1:16). But if anyone, Jew or Gentile, refuses to pay attention to the Messiah, they will be thrown out of the blessing (Acts 3:23). Peter finished his sermon by urging once again: repent to receive the blessing from the living Messiah.



THINK ABOUT IT

Jesus is the author of both physical and spiritual life (John 1:4).

Application: Turn to Jesus for eternal life (3:17–26)

Imagine the shock! Many of the Jews listening now realized that they had caused the death of their very own source of life, none other than God Himself (Ps 36:9)! Was there any hope for them? Yes. First, they could have hope because they had acted in ignorance (Acts 3:17; Num 15:27–31). Since they had not understood who Jesus really was, they had not knowingly rejected the Lord of life (Heb 6:4–6; 10:26–29). Second, they could have hope because God did something amazing. He used their ignorant sin to provide a perfect sacrifice for sin (Acts 3:18; Isa 53). Because the source of life died, it is possible for sinners to live.

THINK ABOUT IT

If you know the joy of living by faith in Jesus, then be like Peter and go tell others.



Lesson Outline

Jesus restores life.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



1. Physical healing: Jesus healed a crippled body (3:1–16).
2. Spiritual healing: Jesus heals sinful souls (3:17–19).
3. Total healing: Jesus will heal all creation (3:20–26).

AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE



1. Illustration: Jesus restored physical life (3:1–10).
 - A man was lame from birth (3:1–2).
 - Peter told him to walk in Jesus' name (3:3–7).
 - The man was fully healed and full of joy (3:8–10).
2. Explanation: Jesus is the source of life (3:11–16).
 - The resurrection proved that Jesus is the source of life (3:11–15).
 - The healing proved that Jesus is the source of life (3:16).
3. Application: Turn to Jesus for eternal life (3:17–26).
 - You can live because Jesus died (3:17–18).
 - Repent to live a forgiven life (3:19).
 - Repent to live in the new world (3:20–21).
 - Repent to live a blessed life (3:22–26).



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Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **What was wrong with the man begging at the temple?**
He was lame. He was crippled. He could not walk.
2. **What did Peter and John give the man?**
A healed body.
3. **Who really healed the man?**
Jesus.
4. **How can Jesus heal you?**
He can heal my soul by forgiving my sins. He can heal my life by making me live forever with Him in a new world.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **How did Peter and John act toward the crippled man?**
They paid attention to him, introduced him to Jesus, and practically served Him.
2. **In whose name did Peter heal the cripple?**
In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.
3. **When Peter explained what happened, what did he call Jesus?**
The Author of life.
4. **What two facts showed that Jesus was the source of life?**
He rose from the dead, and He restored life to the crippled man's legs.
5. **How did God use the Jews' sin to do something good?**
They caused Jesus to die, but God used that to provide the perfect sacrifice for sin.
6. **What do you need to do so that Jesus' death can forgive your sins?**
Believe and repent by turning to Jesus and trusting in Him.
7. **When will Jesus return and restore life on earth?**
When the people of Israel repent.
8. **What is life like when we live by faith in Jesus?**
It is a life of blessing—we are full of joy no matter what troubles come in this life.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



HANDICAPPED

The man in today's story was handicapped from birth: he was unable to walk. Invite someone with a physical handicap to visit your class and talk about their disability with the children. You may also bring in a handicapped sign (or walk to one in your church as a class) if there is no one able to come. Do the children know anyone their age with a disability? In today's lesson, we are going to meet a lame man (unable to use his legs) that Peter healed in the name of Jesus.

AUTHOR OF LIFE

Jesus is the Author (source) of life. Bring in a favorite children's book and read it to the children. Point out the name of the author, and talk about what an author is: the one who writes the book; the creator of the story. In today's lesson, we're going to learn that Jesus is the Author of life!



WALKING AND LEAPING AND PRAISING GOD

Bring crutches or a wheelchair to class. When describing the lame man, pretend to be lame, using the crutches or wheelchair to beg for alms (Acts 3:2). After the part about Peter healing the lame man, throw down your crutches or jump out of your wheelchair and walk, leap, and shout praises to God (3:8). Explain that you are totally healed. Before you could not walk, but now you can jump!

SINS BLOTTED OUT

You may illustrate forgiveness of sins with a dark washable marker and baby wipes. Put a small dot on the children's fingers, and tell them that that represents sin. But Jesus is able to remove our sin. Using the baby wipe, wash away the spots. Explain that this is a picture of what God does to our sin when we believe in the name of Jesus and repent of our sins.



DANCING LAME MAN

See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheet, copy paper, crayons, scissor, brads.

Directions: Photocopy the craft page on card stock. Color the image. Unite the two parts of the body and the copy paper with a brad. Write at the top of the page, "I can walk!"

Dancing Lame Man
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 2



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AGES 6–8



NAME OF JESUS OPTICAL ILLUSION

These are usually made out of two different colors of wood. The name of Jesus is spelled out between the pieces of wood. Some people see the hidden name immediately while others see only a random array of wooden pieces. Bring one of these to class, and see if the children can spot Jesus' name. Explain that in today's lesson we are going to learn about the power and authority of Jesus' name.

THERE'S POWER IN THE NAME

Have you ever asked a schoolmate to do something and been completely ignored? What if you asked them to do the same thing, but told them that the teacher told you to tell them? Would that make a difference? It would for most children! But as powerful as the name of a teacher may be, it cannot compare with the name of Jesus. In today's lesson, we will find out why.



NAME RECOGNITION

Bring in an autographed piece of memorabilia (or picture of one). Talk about how the value of an autographed item changes depending on who signed it. For example, a baseball signed by a no-name Triple-A player is worth far less than the same baseball signed by the American League MVP. But the name of Jesus surpasses them all. Only His name can heal (Acts 3:16), and only His name can save from sin (4:12).

FUTURE FRIENDS

Show the children pictures of wolves and lambs, leopards and goats, calves and lions, cows and bears, and children and cobras. Ask the children what kind of a relationship these pairs have right now. Then read Isaiah 11:6–10 and ask them what kind of a relationship these animals will have in the future when Jesus establishes His millennial kingdom and restores peace on earth. What a difference!



PUPPET "LAME MAN"

See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, tape, scissors, yarn, brad, 8 oz foam cup.

Directions: copy the craft page on cardstock. Color image, and cut them. Color the cup. Make a hole on the top for the head and two holes on the sides for the arm. Fix the legs with a brad. Tie three pieces of yarn to the craft stick. One is of the head, the other two for the legs. Make a hole in the feet, and tie the yarn.



Puppet "Lame Man"
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 2

AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

BOTTLED AT THE SOURCE

Bring some bottled water to class and take a nice, long refreshing drink in front of the children. Have the children ever tasted bottled water that claims to have been bottled at the “source”? What does this mean (the bottling plant has been built over or near the spring)? Why would it be a selling point (purity and taste preserved because little to no processing)? In today’s lesson, Jesus is called the “source” of life. Physical and spiritual life flow out of Him. However, unlike natural springs of water, which are plentiful, Jesus is the only source of life.

GUESS WHO

Choose a contemporary or historical person and describe their character to the children. See who can identify the name of the person the quickest (you may try this with a few names). The point of the game is to illustrate the importance of a name. Names call to mind much of what we know about a person. And depending on the name, there are various amounts of authority attached to it. But there is one name that stands above the rest: the name of Jesus. We will learn why in today’s lesson.



ILLUSTRATE

THE POWER BELONGS TO JESUS

Invoking the name of Jesus is not simply some special magic formula that we may use to get whatever we want. The power belongs to Jesus. Illustrate this by describing what happened when some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to cast out some demons later in the book of Acts (Acts 19:11–17). They used the name of Jesus, but they did not experience His power!

NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES

That the name of Jesus is exalted above all other names is evident in the fact that every person will eventually recognize Him as Lord. Everyone will bow to Him, and everyone will confess that Jesus is Lord (Phil 2:9–11). We may resist His power while we’re alive on earth, but whether in this life or the next, whether willingly and blessedly or unwillingly and painfully, all will bow to Jesus. This includes angels (Rev 4:2–9), the redeemed in heaven (Rev 4:10–11), believers on earth (Rom 10:9), unbelievers on earth (2 Thess 1:7–9), and demons and unbelievers in hell (1 Pet 3:18–22).



APPLY

ONLY ONE NAME SAVES

After the healing of the crippled man, the Jewish religious leaders demanded to know by what name he had been healed (Acts 4:7). Thus, Peter reported that it was by the power of Jesus’ name that the lame man had been made well (4:8–11). But he did not stop there. He went on to proclaim that only by the name of Jesus may we be saved (4:12). There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name that saves (John 10:7–8; 14:6). There is only one path to God, and it is through faith in Jesus (Matt 7:13–14). And while God may withhold physical healing in this life (2 Cor 12:8–9), He promised to give spiritual life to all who call on Jesus’ name (Acts 2:21; Rom 10:13).