

Now who is this man that Peter is referring to that has been changed, that has been transformed? Well, he's the man we'd read about just a few moments ago in verses 1 through 10, the lame man that is healed.

[15:31] And upon the healing of this lame man, there is this large crowd that begins to form around Peter and John like they're some kind of superhero, like they've just come out of a Marvel movie, like who are you and how can you do such a thing?

And Peter and John want to set the record straight. They want to make sure that there's no mistaking whatsoever what just took place. And so look at verse 12. Look at what they say. Verse 12 says, And when Peter saw it, that is the crowd forming, he addressed the people, men of Israel, why do you wonder at this? And why do you stare at us? As though, love this, as though by our own power or piety, we've made him walk.

Oh, faith family, come in close here. Peter and John are saying, listen, listen, this had nothing to do with us. Can we just make that clear? We don't have any power.

This isn't because we're pious men. This isn't because we're some more holier than thou. Make no mistake about it. This man's transformation, this man's change, this man's salvation didn't happen because of our power.

[16:41] It happened because of the power of Jesus. There is power, as the old hymn says, power, power, wonder-working power, and the precious blood of the Lamb.

It's what we just sang about. In faith family, one of the things I'm hoping that the book of Acts will do, kind of like many months ago, if you remember back then, when we did a series on the miracles of Jesus, do you remember that?

Okay. You don't? Everybody forgets my sermon, so I get that. And you remember that in that series, I said, listen, one of the things that you get about studying the miracles of Jesus is there's nothing impossible with God.

There just isn't. And I'm not saying that just to get an amen. I'm saying it because it's true. And what Acts is going to show us this is it's going to renew our confidence in the power of God because there are times, like just about everybody else in the Bible, outside of Jesus, that really doubted.

And even Jesus struggled on the cross. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Think about Abraham. Remember when he's promised a son and he's too old to have a son and Sarah laughs?

[17:52] Do you remember what God says to him? Quote, is anything too difficult for the Lord? Or what about Moses? When God rescues Israel, leads them into the wilderness, and he provides manna from heaven, and they complain.

God promises them meat for a month. And remember, Moses is like, you're going to feed us meat? Do you realize we're 600,000? And you just wonder in those moments, and this isn't in the text, but you just wonder if, you know, because God has to have a sense of humor.

Do you believe that? I believe that. We're created in his image. Now, some of you don't have a sense of humor, but I believe God does. And I just have to believe that God in that moment's like, really? Like, I can create you, but you don't think I can feed you?

You really think, after everything I just did in Egypt, that feeding 600,000 people is going to be a problem for me? And the question that gets asked to Moses is this, is the Lord's power limited? Or in Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they refuse to worship the false God, and they face the fiery furnace. And how are they able to embrace such a danger? Because they believe this, and I quote, our God is able to deliver us from the blazing fire.

[19:05] And you come into the Gospels and think about all the impossible situations that we looked at in the miracle series that you obviously don't remember. A man oppressed by demonic spirits is set free.

A leper is healed. A paralyzed man, lowered down from the ceiling by his friends, gets up and walks. Lazarus, three days in the grave, and he gets up and walks out.

Why? What is the Bible time and time again trying to show us? Listen, come here, come here. With men, it's impossible. But with God, all things are possible.

You really think the God who created everything can't handle your cancer? Can't handle whatever situation you feel you're in that you are helpless.

There is nothing impossible with God. And what Peter and John want you to know is this. Listen, you just saw a miracle. You just saw something incredible, and I want you to know it didn't have anything to do with us.

[20 : 08] There's no power in us, but there is power in the name of Jesus. Look at what the prophet Jeremiah says. Jeremiah 32, 17 says, Oh, Lord, is it?

It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. Faith family, do you believe that?

When you can't find a job, and you aren't getting pregnant, and it feels like it's a dead end, and there's no money coming in, and the culture gets darker, and it feels like there's no way you could possibly forgive that, and it seems like it's never going to end.

Do you truly believe there is power, power, wonder-working power in the name of Jesus? That is what Peter and John is testifying here.

They want to be crystal clear in Acts 3. There is power in the name of Jesus. This is no thaw. This is spring. Winter has been destroyed, and it is Jesus' doing.

[21 : 16] But Luke doesn't just want you to know that there's power in the name of Jesus. He wants to show you what that transformation looks like. So we notice next here, not just the power of Jesus to transform, but Luke shows us the people that Jesus transforms.

In other words, it's one thing. I love this, okay? Because if you've zoned out, come back here for just a minute. It's one thing to say there's power in the name of Jesus, but listen, you can't just make that statement without backing it up.

Amen? I mean, where's the data? Where's the proof? You say that Jesus can do anything. Well, give me some evidence. Give me some examples of that, and Luke gives us at least four examples of this transforming power of Jesus here in Acts 3.

Here's the first, Acts 3, verse 1. Now, Peter and John were going up to the temple, the hour of prayer, the ninth hour, again, that's three o'clock, and a man lame from birth was being carried whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the beautiful gate to ask alms of those entering to the temple.

So here's the first evidence of transformation that I see here in the text, and it's this. Notice on the screen, the disciples are transformed from selfish to servants.

[22 : 34] The disciples are transformed from selfish to servants. And you may say, I don't, like, I read those two verses, and I don't see that anywhere. Like, you're making that up, Pastor.

Right? I, there's no, like, it doesn't say that. Yeah, but, but I think there's strong evidence to believe that. And here's why. Just follow with me for just a moment.

Here's where I get this. Peter and John are going where? To the temple. They're going to the temple at three in the afternoon. And they, Jews did this three times a day.

They went at nine, at noon, and at three. Peter and John are Gentiles or Jews? They're Jews. So they've done this a lot. This is not the first time that they've gone to the temple at all.

So, the text also tells us that this lame man was placed at the gate daily. Every day, this man was placed at this gate.

[23 : 37] And we're going to find out in chapter four that this man is 40 years old, and he's been lame from birth. In other words, this man has been placed at this gate many, many times.

Here's the point. Peter and John have walked past this man multiple times before, and it appears it's the first time they've ever stopped to help.

Now, to give more evidence as to why I think that's the case, and I'm not just pulling that out. I don't want to pull anything out that I don't have scripture to back up. The other scripture I would use to support this is that the gospels clearly show a pattern in the disciples of being only concerned about themselves and not other people.

Anybody struggle with that? The disciples struggle with this a lot. Luke chapter nine. This is right after the transfiguration. Do you remember what the disciples were arguing about? Right after this incredible experience of the Mount of Transfiguration, they're arguing about who's going to be the greatest in the kingdom.

And right after the Lord's Supper in Luke chapter 22, once again, they're arguing about who's going to be the greatest in the kingdom. In Matthew chapter 20, this is crazy. In Matthew chapter 20, Jesus teaches a parable about entitlement.

[24 : 56] Do you remember he tells about the landowner that hires people at different times during the day, and then he pays the people at the end the same as the people at the beginning, and they're all like, what? And he's like, yeah, I know, grace.

I can do what I want. Nobody deserved to be hired in the first place. I was gracious to hire anybody. So if I choose to show grace to those that I hired at the last hour, I can do that because it's my land. I'm free to give my grace to whoever I want because the kingdom is about the grace of God, not how long you've worked.

Oh, somebody ought to say amen to that. Come on. And right after that, right after that story of God's grace about the kingdom, two disciples, James and John, have their mother, have their mother ask Jesus if they can be on the right and left-hand side in the kingdom.

Like, they're calling shotgun before they're even in the kingdom. Like, I'm not making this up. That's Luke 9 and Luke 22 and Matthew 20.

[26 : 08] The point is, there is a pattern in the gospels among the disciples where they put themselves before service. They're far more concerned about how they look and what seat they're going to get and who's better than who than they are the people that Jesus has called them to minister to.

And what strikes me in Acts 3 is that Peter treats a lame man the exact same way Jesus would have treated him.

That something's been transformed in Peter. Isn't that good news? For those of you that have had the courtyard moment where you felt like you totally blew it and abandoned your faith in terms of how it felt, you just totally blew your opportunity, and God's still working on Peter.

He's still transforming this man. Amen? Here's the question for you. I'm not leaving you out of this. Who has God put in your path that you've been ignoring?

Who's the person you've been walking past over and over and over again and have not stopped to serve?

[27 : 27] It's the person you walk past every day, work with every day, sit next to at church every week. Maybe they're in your family. Maybe they live in your neighborhood. But this will preach.

This will convict me as well as you look at it on the screen. Hey, sometimes in our hurry to worship service, we walk past opportunities of service. We're a jerk to the barista at Starbucks on our way to sing about Jesus.

Like, that's what's happening here. Rather than being so consumed with getting to the temple on time, they see this man and they minister to his needs.

Jesus has the power to turn us from selfish people to servants of God. Here's the second transformation I see. Pick it up in verse 3. Is seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive all of them.

So now this is the lame man. And Peter directs his gaze at him, as did John, and said, Look at us. He fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. And Peter said, I don't have any silver or gold, but what I do have, I give to you.

[28 : 36] And it's this. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. And leaping up, he stood, just visualize that.

Leaping up, he began to stand and began to walk and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. The second transformation is this. The lame man is transformed from hopeless to joyful.

Hopeless to joyful. Again, this man's been lame from birth. I've already mentioned in chapter 4, we find out he's 40 years old. That means 40 years, he's never been able to walk or play or run.

Listen, you know this. If you have been stuck in a situation for 40 years, you have become convinced that's how it's always going to be.

Amen? 40 years. This has been his life. I have no doubt he is convinced that this is the only way it is ever going to be. If you are in a financial situation, that hasn't changed in 40 years, if you've had a sickness that hasn't changed in 40 years, if you've lived in the same place for 40 years, it's very easy to think this is all there's ever going to be.

[29 : 49] And so helpless is this man, he has to be placed at the temple each day. He can't walk. That means he can't work. He can't work. That means he can't earn money. He can't earn money.

That means he can't feed himself. So if somebody doesn't give him charity, alms, he's hopeless. He can't survive. And Peter and John say, look at us.

And I imagine this man begins to get excited, like, okay, hey, maybe today's going to be a day where I'm actually going to be given some money and get through another day. And then the

disappointment of, we don't have any silver or gold.

And I wonder if he thinks, yeah, I've been told that before. Like every day, I get told, I'm sorry, I don't have anything. And then they turn to him and say, but what we do have, we give to you.

And here's what it is. In the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus, get up and walk. And this man not only gets up, he starts jumping and dancing.

[30 : 50] He cannot contain himself. Like he is overwhelmed with joy. He didn't care about the rules of behavior because his hopeless situation has been changed by Jesus.

Amen? Like he is dancing in the streets and I'm sure the Baptists are like, you're not supposed to dance. He's like, I don't care. And I ain't Baptist, right? So he is just overjoyed that his life has been transformed by Jesus.

What was certain to be hopeless has now been changed. What he was certain would always be this way has now been transformed by Jesus Christ.

I'm telling you folks, that's who we're dealing with when we're dealing with Jesus. That's what's going down when Jesus is around. He is transforming lives.

Amen? And it's a beautiful picture if you stop and think about it, think about our salvation. Just look at this on the screen quickly. You think about, here's a man that's in sin from birth or we're in sin from birth.

[31 : 56] He was lame from birth. We're unable to change our situation. There was nothing he could do about his situation. We seek something that will give us help or some kind of temporary relief just like he did.

And then Jesus came along and turned us on our head and changed our life and saved us and gave us the joy of salvation.

salvation. And I hope you haven't stopped dancing. I hope you haven't stopped dancing.

Oh, I don't mean physically dancing. That would look awkward for some of you, right? Never mind. Don't go down that mental road.

I mean the joy in your heart that you're saved. Like when you come in this place or you're driving down the road or you have the conversation and it hits you once again that he has saved your soul.

[33 : 02] Do you leap for joy? Like do you just inside leap in the midst of all your sorrow or difficulty or stressful week?

Does your heart just leap and dance for joy? Let me ask you this question and we'll move on.

What's the situation that you're in right now that seems hopeless?

It's been that way for a while and you've convinced yourself it's never going to change. And you think to yourself, if I could just get a little bit of money or if I could just have a little longer vacation or if this economy would just turn around, everything would be fine.

Let me tell you what the good news of the gospel is. Jesus isn't here to give you a quick fix. He's here to give you everlasting life. I should say that again. He isn't here to give you a quick fix.

He's here to give you everlasting life. And he can bring and will bring joy in your circumstances even if he doesn't change your circumstances.

[34 : 01] As the old hymn, I've been on hymns for whatever reason. I heard about his healing, his cleansing power revealing, how he made the lame to walk again and cause the blind to see.

And then I cried, dear Jesus, come and heal my broken spirit. And somehow Jesus came and brought to me the victory. This is our story, Faith Family.

He has transformed us. And as the mission goes forward to the ends of the earth and to the nations, this is what will happen. Lives will be transformed.

Number three, we see the crowd is transformed from condemned to blessed. They're transformed from condemned to blessed. After this man is healed, as I mentioned earlier, the crowd wants to see more.

They gather around and Peter's like, oh, let's see. Looks like a great opportunity for a sermon. And he goes right into preaching the gospel, which we're going to look at more next week.

[35 : 01] But take a look at verse 12. When Peter saw it, again, everybody gathering, he addressed the people, men of Israel, why do you wonder at this? Why do you stare at us as though by our power or piety we've made him walk?

Listen, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate. Well, this just got awkward.

Keep reading. when he decided to release him, but you denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and you killed the author of life, whom God raised from the dead.

To this, we are witnesses. Like, that kind of ruins the party. Here's a man that just was lame from birth, and he's been dancing through the streets, and everybody's excited and gathered around Peter, and they want to see another magic show, do another trick, and Peter says, I got a better idea.

I'm going to preach a sermon. You killed the Holy One, and I know it to be true because I'm a witness of it. He preaches the fact that they are condemned, that it was, as we sing about their sin and our sin, that held him there, that we are responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus because he died for our sins, and so Peter speaks of their condemnation.

[36 : 27] Listen, you had Jesus handed over to be killed, and Pilate wanted to release him, but you wanted to release a murderer, and in doing so, you killed the author of life, and he preaches their condemnation, and after preaching their condemnation, he turns and begins to speak of the blessing that they can experience.

Pick it up in verse 25. Again, we'll look more at this next week. Acts 3.25. You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your father, saying to Abraham, and in your offering shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

God, having raised up his servants, sent him to you first to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness. In other words, what essentially Peter is preaching, and this is what I want to take more time on next week, because we need to understand not only sermons, but we need to understand how the apostles use the Old Testament because many of us do not use the Old Testament rightly.

That is, we don't use it the way the apostles use it, and here's what Peter's saying. Are you listening? The blessing that God promised Abraham is the blessing of salvation found in Jesus. You are condemned because of your sin, but you can be transformed to blessed in the offspring of Abraham, namely Jesus Christ.

[38 : 03] And there is no greater transformation than that, namely that salvation comes to us, that we go from condemned in our sin to blessed before God because of the salvation in Jesus Christ.

So let me ask you this, faith family, and I'm serious, put this on the screen. Have you turned from your sin and put your faith in Jesus for salvation?

Have you? Have you come to the point to realize that Jesus was crucified because of our rebellion and that we stand in a place of condemnation?

But if you put your faith in Jesus, the offspring of Abraham, that Peter is preaching about him here, therefore those who are in Christ, there's what?

No condemnation. That's a transformation. To go from condemned to blessed because of faith in Jesus.

[39 : 15] There's one last transformation that I see here, and it's really what I think the whole, what the little story is saying about the big story of Acts, and it's this, creation is transformed from broken to restored.

It's why I started the message with the story of Narnia, because here's what I want us to understand, and it's this, listen. The transformation that Jesus brings is not just behavioral like the disciples.

It's not just physical like the lame man. It's not just spiritual like the crowd that experiences salvation. It's actually universal.

This transformation that Jesus brings is something that is happening in all of creation. Look at what verse 20 says. Chapter 3 and verse 20.

Peter says that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring what?

[40 : 21] All things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. In other words, notice this on the screen.

The healing of the lame man is a picture of the transformation that's gonna happen in all creation. I mean, what does Romans 8 speak about?

That there's a day coming as creation groans and longs for a day of restoration. What Jesus is showing us here in the healing of this lame man, there is a picture of what's to come.

I'm not just changing behavior. That is people who are selfish to servants. I'm not just changing physical situations where I bring healing into somebody's life.

I'm not even just bringing change in spiritual situations of saving people. I'm changing the world. Because if any man be in Christ, if anyone be in Christ, they're a new creation.

[41 : 22] That is you are a part now of the greater work I'm going to do then when I restore everything around you like I did this man.

When I will say to all creation, get up and walk. And it will be restored. And all things will be made new.

And you talk about a before and after photo. I can't even imagine what that day's gonna be like. Amen? Because now you cry.

Then you'll cry no more. Now you're confined to a wheelchair. Then you'll get up and walk. Now you battle and fight with sin.

Then you'll sin no more. Now at times you feel defeated and like a loser, but then you will reign with Christ. Now you feel lonely and abandoned.

[42 : 25] Then you will be in the presence of Almighty God forevermore. This is no fall. This is spring.

And it is Jesus' doing. There is something about transformation that grips us. And tonight I ask you, has the transforming power of Jesus gripped you?

Because the clear message of Acts 3 is that Jesus and Jesus alone has the power to change your life. And we know this because we remember a time when the God of this world held humanity, not in a perpetual winter, but a perpetual slavery.

And darkness covered the land. But one Sunday morning, everything started to change and light started breaking through and chains started to fall off and prisoners were set free because winter had been destroyed.

And it wasn't a thaw. Spring had come. And it was Jesus' doing. And every day since, as the mission moves forward, with it comes the power of resurrection.

[43 : 52] the power to make selfish men servants. The power to make lame men dance. The power to make crowd of sinners righteous before God.

And if you're not careful, faith family, it might take a hold of this church. It might take a hold of your life.

And when it does, there won't be anything that'll be the same. And God's people said, Amen.

Lord, thank you for this beautiful text. Beautiful, beautiful text. And it's beautiful not just because we see a physical miracle of a lame man from birth who's dancing in the streets.

We see what that represents. It's so much bigger. It's a story of the new covenant, of salvation, that because the Spirit has now come, because the new covenant has now entered in, we, though sinful from birth, can experience the transforming power of God in salvation.

[45 : 04] So God, thank you for that. And I do pray that tonight that there'd be dancing in our hearts. That there would just, whatever situation we're in, whatever difficulties we're facing, that the reminder of our salvation would cause us to dance.

Oh, that our hearts would leap for joy. And it's hard to see the already for the not yet. And I know that it's hard at times to hold on, and it's why we need these reminders of the little pictures of transformation we're seeing take place, not only in this congregation, but here in the South Metro, and stories of your work to the ends of the earth.

These are just reminders that there's a bigger work coming, a day of final transformation, when Jesus, you will make everything new.

So tonight, we're going to enter into a time of remembrance in the Lord's Supper, in communion, and be reminded of the sacrifice that was given for our salvation and transformation.

So, Lord, meet us here in these next few moments as we remember and express our gratitude for the work you've done in us. Help us, as that lame man did, dance for joy.

[46 : 37] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.