

Where is the Power of God?

Acts 3:1-10

Peter and John are on their way to the house of God to pray. As they approach the temple they find a man that has been lame from birth. Everyday someone would leave him there so that he could beg to survive. When Peter and John come close he asks for money. Contrary to what many would do, the disciples don't ignore the man, but take time to talk to him. Peter asks him to look at them and says: I **don't have any silver or gold for you** (meaning "I don't have what you want") **But I'll give you what I have** (meaning I'll give you what you aren't looking for). **In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!**

It is then that a miracle happens and the man not only stood up but started to walk. **He jumped up, stood on his feet, and began to walk!** What an amazing story, isn't it! But is it possible for this to happen today, in our midst? What is that this narrative teaches us about what is necessary for God to be manifested in this same way? First:

1. GOD'S POWER IS WHERE GOD IS

This is simple and obvious, isn't? Chapter 4 verse 22 reveals that the man was more than 40 years old, so he was sitting at the entrance of the temple for many years; he was so close to the place where God's "presence" was but he remained handicapped. He was so close to God and yet so far from God's healing. The best thing that the religious people could do for him was on one side to give him some coins and on the other, to reject him.

What a picture for us today. People can be very close to God, close to His blessings, close to His people and nevertheless not receive what God has to give them!

1. In this case the man wasn't allowed to enter the temple because he had a physical disability and the religious saw people like this as impure and, as such, they couldn't enter the house of God.

Many times people do not seek God because of us. Maybe it's because we judge them or because of our prejudices. Maybe our testimony keeps them away from God, or it might be because we just don't invite them to come.

2. On the other hand, the man wouldn't receive the cure because he was asking for money and not to be healed. He just wanted enough to live another day instead of looking for a permanent solution. **It's possible that we might not receive all that God has in store for us because we are just looking for temporary solutions, bandages, or because we only seek God for "silver and gold" instead of seeking Him for whom He is.**

When this miracle happened, God was no longer living in the temple because when Jesus cried out on the cross: "It is finished," God stopped living in man made temples and began to live in the hearts of his disciples. He now was living in the heart of John and Peter and the power of God was manifested through them. Now God lives in us and He will flow through us. If you want to see the power of God, let Christ live in you and through you.

1 Corinthians 6:19 **Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God?** If the Holy Spirit is in us, then all of God is in us, including His power. That's why Peter was used by God to perform a miracle. The man was healed because the power of God flows where He is and He was in the hearts of Peter and John. When you invite Christ into your heart, the Holy Spirit comes to live in you. Think about it, God is in you! Imagine what God can do through you if you only submit to Him! Secondly:

2. GOD'S POWER IS WHERE THERE'S EXPECTATION

The word expectation means hoping to get a certain thing or hoping for something to happen. In verse 5 Peter asked: **Look at us!** **The lame man looked at them eagerly, expecting some money.** The man had expected to receive a handout and although the words that followed were: **"I don't have any silver or gold for you"**, the man was still waiting to receive something. If he had focused on what they did not have instead of what they had, he would have missed the

miracle. But he received because he hoped to get something. And although it wasn't exactly what he wanted, it was better than what he was expecting.

Many blessings are missed because we only hear: "I do not have what you want" and we don't wait to receive what is there to receive. We forget that what we want isn't always what we need. How many of you know that God can give us more than what we can think of or expect?

In John 11 Jesus wept when He heard that his friend Lazarus was dead. He went to his tomb and commanded for the stone to be removed despite the protests of his sister Martha, saying that **he had been dead for four days. The smell would be terrible. 40 Jesus responded, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believe?"** If we believe we can achieve more than we can expect, even if it seems humanly impossible. That's why Paul says in Ephesians 3.20 that: **God is able through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.**

I grew up in Aveiro, Portugal, and I remember as a child, to see a boy sitting in a wheelchair begging in front of one of the most popular bakeries in the city. Five years ago I visited the city and unbelievably, 40 years later, I saw the same person in front of the bakery, sitting in a better chair, still begging. That made me think of the people that have had the same problem as him, or even worse, but that didn't keep them from going after their dreams. They didn't allow handicaps to limit their lives. There are people that just accept their unfortunate reality and all that they hope for is a handout here or there. They no longer have expectations, they stop wanting more. Do not be that person. It is important to know that God can give us more than we can ask or imagine.

The problem is that often we approach God with little or no expectations. We live the church routine (singing, listening to the word and at 5.30pm we go out to live our lives). It is very important to come to church to seek God, expecting to hear from Him and to see His power manifest. Don't live a Christian life without expectations and don't be a Christian who only expects handouts from God. Matthew 7:11 says that: **If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.**

The missionary William Carey's life motto was: **"Expect great things from God and attempt great things for God"**. And he achieved this. Let us follow his example. Let us come to God with expectation, knowing that **it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.** Hebrews 11.6

This man expected to receive something and he got much more than what he expected. Why? Because the power of God is manifest where there's expectation. Thirdly:

3. GOD'S POWER IS WHERE CHRIST'S AUTHORITY IS ACKNOWLEDGED

The story shows that Peter and John didn't pray for the man, they just limited themselves to recognize the authority that's found in the name of Jesus and used it, and the man was healed.

We need to know that there is authority in the name of Jesus. The authority to heal and restore, to set people free and to extend God's kingdom. Mat 28:18-20 **Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."** All authority belongs to Jesus and it's available to us. We see this on several occasions when he gave his disciples authority to complete tasks that He wanted to undertake:

- Luke 9.1-2 says that: **One day Jesus called together his twelve disciples and gave them power and authority to cast out all demons and to heal all diseases. Then he sent them out to tell everyone about the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick**

- In Luke 10.1 Jesus Sends Out His Disciples and gives them authority

- In Mark 16:15-18 **And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in tongues. They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed."** God gives authority to all who believe! Do you trust every day in Jesus as your Savior and Lord? Are you a disciple? Do you believe in Him? Then the Scripture says that **"These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe"**! You are included. All authority belongs to Jesus and He gave us authority to fulfill His purposes on earth.

God's power is manifested where Christ's authority is acknowledged. His authority is available for the church to fulfill the mission that has left us to accomplish. Fourthly:

4. GOD'S POWER IS WHERE GOD RECEIVES GLORY

8-9 **He jumped up, stood on his feet, and began to walk! Then, walking, leaping, and praising God, he went into the Temple with them. All the people saw him walking and heard him praising God.** In Acts 3 the power of God is manifested, the man is healed and God is glorified. Peter used the authority of Jesus' name to give glory to God. That is very important.

Illustration - God opposed Saul but lifted up David because while Saul began to seek glory for himself, David always gave the glory to God.

Jeremiah 13.15-16 **Listen and pay attention! Do not be arrogant, for the Lord has spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God before it is too late.** Someone said that God would give us much more if He could trust that we wouldn't steal the glory that belongs only to Him.

Conclusion - The text says that: **One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon...** The miracle did not happen on a special day, but it was when the two disciples were on their way to seek God. When we do what God expects of us, when we seek Him, we never know what can happen on the road. Today could be the day that you did not expect God to do something extraordinary.

The man not only stood up, but he started walking. God's miracles not only make us stand but also do what we couldn't do before.

The man rejoiced with the miracle and he went to the temple to thank God. His miracles in our lives should always take us closer to Him and to His house. Many forget this and soon lose what they have received.

There are people around you who need something that you know you can't provide. But the truth is that you have something they need and perhaps they are not looking for it, you have Christ. You can say: **"What you ask me I do not have, but what I have I give you. Christ is looking for you, He can and wants to help you. Let Him reach you."**

Perhaps, like this man, you've been asking for years but for the wrong thing because what you really want is humanly speaking impossible. But today you've been reminded that nothing is impossible for God. Look for it today!

You must know people that need to hear this message. Take time this week to share with them what you've heard today.

1. GOD'S POWER IS WHERE GOD IS
2. GOD'S POWER IS WHERE THERE'S EXPECTATION
3. GOD'S POWER IS WHERE CHRIST'S AUTHORITY IS ACKNOWLEDGED
4. GOD'S POWER IS WHERE GOD RECEIVES GLORY