



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

The Early Church Series, Lesson 53

Lesson Title: The Power Church

Take Home Point: Jesus has the power to change us.

Warm-Up:

"Jane Doe, COME ON DOWN!" Remember that phrase? It's from the long-running television game show *The Price Is Right*. During that show, ordinary people in the audience were called to "come on down" to try to win big money and prizes. In fact, that's why people would go there – to get a chance to change their lives by winning stuff. Can you imagine an audience member refusing to "go down?" Can you imagine a person saying right into the microphone, "Oh, I don't want anything. I am completely satisfied. I want to keep living exactly the way I am right now. No change for me, thanks." Probably not!

Read: Acts 3:1-26

Observation (What happened?):

In whose name did Peter command the crippled man to be healed?

How did the man respond after he was healed?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What are some of the words used to describe the people's reaction to the healing of the crippled man? Why was this so?

What did the beggar think he needed? Do you think the beggar knew what he really needed?

Insight:

Think about the man who was healed. Being crippled at birth meant he had never been allowed in the temple to present his worship and sacrifices to God. His family or friends would carry him as far as the temple entrance, where he would join a mass of others begging to receive a donation from temple worshipers. He was completely dependent on the mercy (or feelings of guilt) of other humans for his survival. A good day for him likely meant a little larger bit of money than other days. He saw no reason to hope for change. Not only was he humiliated by those who walked by, he probably had no hope of knowing God, for in Jewish thought, he (or his parents) must have sinned greatly for him to be crippled at birth. Given that, consider how thrilled he surely was to be healed! And, of course, the first place he went was into the temple, on his feet jumping and dancing, to praise and thank his God! How his life changed, because Jesus changed it!

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How is God healing you and changing you? How are you responding?

Can you think of people around you who need the change that Jesus gives? How are you presenting his power to them? Pray for God to use you in their lives.