

Peter and John heal a lame man



Colour me!



Acts 3:1-10

The time of prayer was about three o'clock in the afternoon, and Peter and John were going into the temple. A man who had been born lame was being carried to the temple door. Each day he was placed beside this door, known as the Beautiful Gate. He sat there and begged from the people who were going in.

The man saw Peter and John entering the temple, and he asked them for money. But they looked straight at him and said, "Look up at us!" The man stared at them and thought he was going to get something. But Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold! But I will give you what I do have. In the name of Jesus Christ from Nazareth, get up and start walking." Peter then took him by the right hand and helped him up.

At once the man's feet and ankles became strong, and he jumped up and started walking. He went with Peter and John into the temple, walking and jumping and praising God. Everyone saw him walking around and praising God. They knew that he was the beggar who had been lying beside the Beautiful Gate, and they were completely surprised. They could not imagine what had happened to the man.

Commentary

After Pentecost everything changed for the disciples. They began telling everyone the story of Jesus and how his death and resurrection had opened up the way to God. Large numbers of people became believers. They spent time in prayer and worship and were busy doing acts of kindness that had a huge impact on Jerusalem. The disciples were gaining in confidence, too, realizing that Jesus wanted them, by his Spirit, to start doing the things that they had seen him do.

On their way to the temple to pray, Peter and John noticed a lame man lying on a mat. Perhaps they remembered the time when another man had been brought to Jesus and lowered through the roof to reach him. Courageously Peter and John followed Jesus' example and, on the authority of his name, told the man to get up and walk. He was healed in just the same way! God's Spirit in the disciples was giving them the power to carry on Jesus' work, just as Jesus had asked them to. Everyone was amazed to see the man jumping for joy, and this led to more opportunities for the disciples to tell people about Jesus and what God had done for the world through him. The good news was on the move.

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Questions

- ▶ Peter and John went to the temple to pray. Why do you think they didn't just pray in their own homes?
- ▶ Why do you think his friends carried the lame man every day to the temple gate to beg?
- ▶ What gave Peter and John the confidence to heal this man?
- ▶ What do you think the crowd thought about what had happened?



Visual aid

Make a home-made stretcher using two old jackets and some broom handles. Thread the handles up the sleeves and stretch out the jackets between them. You might dare to try to carry something (not someone!) on it!



Activity idea

Challenge each other to act out this healing. Lie down on the ground, still and helpless. Then, when you hear Peter's words, imagine that you can feel strength coming back into your feet and ankles. Begin to twitch them and then move the other parts of your legs, and slowly the rest of your body. Get up carefully, realizing the new strength you are feeling, and end up dancing as excitedly as you can.



Prayer idea

The Beautiful Gate was certainly very striking, but someone who was lame, like this man, would not have been allowed to go any further into the temple. Focus on those who are sick at home or in hospital. Ask God to come close to them and give them new hope and joy, like the man in the story.

Key verse

In the name of Jesus Christ from Nazareth, get up and start walking (Acts 3:6).

Old Testament story link

Numbers 21:4-9: Once, in the desert, poisonous snakes had bitten the people of Israel and they were dying. But Moses had a pole set up with a bronze snake on it. Looking at this snake brought healing.



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