

Bold & Beautiful

Introduction

- Continuing series
- Last week: Devoted, Church Basics
- This week: “Bold & Beautiful” - not the soap opera, but the Disciples, are bold and beautiful in this passage

Tension: We read these miraculous healing stories in the Bible and we wonder is that real? Does that really happen today? Can I be healed? Can I pray for someone’s healing and they be healed? The answer is a resounding yes, but we have to be willing participants, we must submit to the Holy Spirit and believe that it is possible

Acts 3:1-2

- ‘Beautiful’ = ‘blooming’ - ironic
 - Man’s life anything but beautiful / blooming
 - Put there EVERY DAY to BEG from people
 - Every day...
 - Most likely not the only one; no shortage of broken people in need all around, and they weren’t just the people lying on the ground, their need was just more obvious
 - My guess: Nobody aspires to be a beggar;
 - Wonder: Who ‘put’ the man there every day? His parents? Parents don’t long for their kids to be beggars; put him there to help make ends meet?
 - Part of them wondering if it’s their fault (sin) he was born lame?
 - Guilt / shame of the parents...just more people broken and in need

Acts 3:3-5

- This wasn’t the only guy sitting at the Beautiful Gate begging
 - Holy Spirit picked him out for Peter and John
- “Look at us” - imagine the man avoiding eye contact
 - Peter looks beyond the man’s condition, and sees a human being with hopes, dreams, desires
 - A man with a name; a man made in the image of God [recall when in Athens and see someone begging on the street corner]
 - Gets the man to lift his chin up
 - [Illustration of Kite Book where grandfather teaches his grandson to keep his chin up by teaching him to fly a kite, and extols him to keep his chin up, no matter what, to not lose his dignity]
 - Imagine after begging every day for years, it can lead one to put one’s chin down
 - The guy had to participate in his healing, same goes for deliverance
 - Must want and believe that healing is possible, for unbelievers= doubt your doubt

Acts 3:6

- Authority in the name of Jesus
 - **Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)**
 - CH Spurgeon = “You have a factor here that is absolutely infinite, and what does it matter what other factors may be? ‘I will do the best I can’, says one. Any fool can do that. He that believes in Christ does what he cannot do, attempts the impossible and performs it.”

Acts 3:7-10

- Miraculous healing in the name of Jesus (power in that name)
 - With the authority, comes power, “all authority”

- Instantly
- Power in his name= power to heal, deliver, save
- Purpose of miracles (signs/wonders = ‘mighty works’, A few works back): to make known the love of God SO THAT others may know and believe in Jesus, and in the One who sent Him”
- Before move on, want to stop and point out another miracle in this passage - see it?
 - Peter & John’s willingness to give God their “absolute yes” and let the Spirit direct them at every step; full surrender - their day-to-day; the future, their lives, all beautifully surrendered into God’s hands = miraculous
 - Absolute yes” - term heard walking on the beach this past week as listened to a message on Discipleship from Bill Johnson
 - Could remember the day he gave his to God
 - Day he declared he would do what God would have him do; go where God would have him go; his \$ was at God’s disposal; his energy and effort were at God’s disposal; he committed to live a life that honored God and to be easily steered by the Holy Spirit
 - Do you remember the day you gave God your ‘absolute yes’?
 - Have you given God your ‘absolute yes’? Do you need to reaffirm your ‘yes’?
 - Only really possible after falling in love with Jesus and knowing the Truth about God’s character and faithfulness...you can trust God with your everything
 - In a conversation about faith last week someone said, “I believe in God and Jesus and everything in the Bible, but it just seems like God hasn’t done much lately?” When God was leading the Israelites by day and night and everything that was pretty cool, but what is God doing now?
 - Made me really think...I went on to talk about the Holy Spirit is God on Earth yada, yada, yada...but I think the reason why we’re not seeing “God” doing stuff now is because God’s people and God’s church are not giving God our ‘absolute yes’; we’re scared and stingy; God is waiting for us to get our hands out of our pockets and and start laying hands on people and start giving away what we do have and healing people and delivering people or at least start looking people in the eye and treating people like people and give them the dignity they deserve just for being a child of God
 - Peter and John willing to be Divinely diverted from their task at hand and to give themselves completely to what God wanted them to do
 - They were not scared (or too scared); they were not stingy
 - Their actions are bold, and they are beautiful; they are gentle and generous
 - They meet this man, who had a name, in the midst of his brokenness and need, and they say we don’t have any cash on us, but what we do have, we give to you
 - What they had wasn’t theirs to keep
 - And they weren’t the one’s who gave it ultimately - they were just part of the faith pipeline
 - They had given God their ‘absolute yes’ and did what the God, the Spirit, directed them to do
 - The world is full of broken and needy people with names; what the world needs is more Peters & Johns...

1 of only 2 other times the word ‘Beautiful’ used in NT: Romans 10:15

Acts 3:11-15

- Don’t focus on what ‘man’ did, focus on what God did: “God raised Jesus from the dead”

Acts 3:16

- 2 things at play for healing to come
 - The faith in Jesus, our participation in having faith
 - Believing in him and believing what he did
 - Unbelievers= the ones that were performing the miracle, and then ‘doubting their doubt’
 - Believers= Must believe and not doubt
 - Being prayed for, or praying for someone else
 - James 1:6-8 (NIV)
 - The faith of Jesus, Jesus himself had absolute faith and we are tapping into to that
 - Jesus is the one that works the miracle not us

Acts 3:17-20

- V. 19
 - Repent, sins forgiven, times of refreshing

Possible Opportunities for Response:

- People broken, in need of what only God can do through faith
- People ready to give God their ‘absolute yes’ (or reaffirm) and get their hands out of their pockets...(maybe they are the ones who pray for the first group?)