

- WELCOME TO -  
**MAURICE REFORMED CHURCH**

*...following God, loving others...*

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ONE CHAPTER  
EACH WEEK



# ACTS

THE EARLY CHURCH &  
THE HOLY SPIRIT

SPRING & EARLY SUMMER  
2024 AT MRC

**Daily Devotionals**  
WEEK OF: APRIL 28 - MAY 4



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**Sermon Doodles + Illustrations**

# Monday, April 29

## ACTS 3:1-3 | WHAT IS OUR NEED?

As we begin chapter 3, we get a picture of an encounter that Peter and John have as they are attending a prayer meeting at 3 in the afternoon. It was common practice in the Jewish culture to pray and we see that date back centuries, most clearly stated in the book of Daniel. Daniel prayed 3 times a day in captivity. It is thought that the original morning and evening prayer coincided with the sacrifice, but the times of 9 am, noon and 3 pm also coincide with the events on Good Friday. At 9 am Jesus was nailed to the cross, at noon the sky turned black, and at 3 pm Jesus breathed his last breath. Good reasons to pray at those times of the day to remember the death and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. It would also be a great transition into a gospel conversation if someone asked you why you were praying at that time...Maybe it's something we need to start.

At the same time and place there was a man who was a cripple, and his friends and family laid him at the gate to collect money. The Greek word in this passage literally means mercy or pity. The man was laid there for people to have pity and mercy on him. A definition of mercy is to provide relief from suffering. This man was unable to provide for his family in a normal way and so they put him in a place to collect things for his family. The hope is that people will see him and have mercy on him or provide for his needs. Oftentimes this would include money so that his family would be taken care of.

Many of us have our daily needs provided for, but in certain circumstances a need may arise. We may be short of money to meet our payments for the month, food to feed our family, a shoulder to cry on, or someone to listen to us. Whatever the need is, when we see that need and it is met, there is mercy that is shown to us. We don't necessarily deserve our needs to be met, but out of the kindness of their heart, a need is filled. Take time this week in prayer three times a day with a readiness to meet whatever need God places on your heart or you see in the people around you.



# Tuesday, April 30

## ACTS 3:4-10 | WHAT I HAVE I GIVE TO YOU

Have you ever heard the idea that if you give someone a fish you can feed them for a day, but if you teach them to fish you can feed them for a lifetime? Sometimes we think we know our needs or the needs of others, but it is possible that we are not looking at the full picture. Peter and John say that they do not have money, so they could have just walked right by this beggar. They didn't have what he needed and so they may have felt bad, but sometimes that is just how it is. If someone needed to have their car fixed, I would not have the ability or tools to help fix their car. I could feel bad for them, but I would have no way of helping them out.

You may notice that the lack of money did not stop Peter and John from meeting a need for this man. Yes, money would have provided food for today, but a healthy and renewed body would provide a daily income for the rest of his life. So, Peter and John call on the name of Jesus and the power and authority that Jesus has to miraculously heal the man's legs. Scripture says that his legs and ankles were made strong, and he was able to walk. Immediately he follows Peter and John into the temple to praise God. This man could not contain his excitement and so he jumped, which also means to gush out or spring up like water. This man was using his whole healed body to give praise to God and God alone. Those sitting nearby recognized the man who had been begging for years and they were amazed at his healing.

Today you may not have what is needed to meet the physical need of the people you meet, but you do have something to give them. You have hope in Jesus Christ that can be shared through a hug, a listening ear, or a calm conversation. People in physical need don't only need something for the moment, they need to rest in the truth of a loving God who truly meets all their needs in Christ Jesus. So, go this day knowing you have what someone else needs and be ready to give it to them.



# Wednesday, May 1

## [ACTS 3:11-12](#) | THE POWER OF MAN

The man is not only leaping and walking but holding on to Peter and John. The Greek word is based on the word for might or strength and so in his own strength he is holding tightly to these two men. This event is causing a stir which brings the people in the area over to check out what is going on. Each person that came over to Peter, John, and the crippled man were amazed that this man was walking. He had been crippled his whole life and now he is healed. This is not something that people saw every day and it may have reminded them of a man who recently had left them. A man who walked with people and had mercy on them and healed them.

The first thing Peter asks the people who came to look at the healed man was, why are you amazed? Why does something like this shock you when you had a man among you who did these types of miracles all the time? The second question is, why do you stare at us as if we have some miraculous power in our bodies? Peter was clear that it wasn't by their own power or godliness that they were able to heal the person. Sometimes people thank the wrong person when our needs are met. The man who was healed praised God, the people who saw the healed man were ready to praise Peter and John. It was not the power of man that helped in this situation, so we need to make sure we give credit where credit is due. We will dive into that more tomorrow.

When you help people or when you see someone being generous, what do you think? It is so easy to think about how great that person is. We can praise them for their generosity or kindness. It's easy to thank and honor a person, but we need to have a mindset of Peter and John in this situation and ask them, why do you think we had anything to do with this? We are merely the hands, feet, and voice boxes of the Lord. It is Him who did it. May we realize ourselves that it is the power of God and not our own ability that does anything good so that we do not become prideful or conceited.





# Thursday, May 2

## ACTS 3:13-16 | THE POWER OF GOD

Peter starts out by speaking the name of God that the Jewish people would know. Peter starts and says that he is talking about the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Jewish leaders are familiar with God and what He can do. Peter quickly goes on to declare that God glorified Jesus. Jesus was here to do the work of the Father and God honored and glorified Jesus and He now sits at the right hand of the Father.

Peter then makes the story personal as he reminds the crowd that they disowned and delivered Jesus into the hands of Pilate. This is a reminder of that Good Friday morning when they were given the option between Jesus and Barabbas, and they chose to free Barabbas and shout “crucify him” about Jesus. In verse 14 the terms Holy One and Righteous One are terms that they would have known to describe the Messiah. Peter puts the final nail in his speech when he says that the Jews didn’t just deliver Jesus to Pilate, they didn’t just disown him when they shouted crucify, but they killed him because of their actions.

The conversation now changes back to the actions of God, because God didn’t just glorify Jesus, but raised Him from the dead. Peter clarifies that they are witnesses of that resurrection, and it is because of that power and faith that Jesus is the Messiah that this man is healed. By believing that he could be healed in the name of Jesus the crippled man was professing his faith in the risen Savior. According to scriptures, this crippled man is now completely healed. One of the Greek words that this phrase (*completely healed*) comes from means to break, as in break bread. So, the body of Christ given for us provides perfect health for us. Peter is declaring that through the body of Christ given on the tree, true healing comes, which can be physical and spiritual.

Meeting the needs of others should never be in our own power. We first must realize, as we said yesterday, that everything is from God and so any ability or item that we have was given to us by God to be used for God. So anytime we meet a need we should always point people to the one who truly provided and that is God and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Any good deed should be an opportunity to tell others about Jesus.

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**Song:**

“[Magnify](#)” by Mack Brock

**Kid’s Question:**

Do you give God the credit for the things you are able to do? Reminder to point people to God through all you do this week!

**Adult/Youth Question:**

When you are thanked, how do you respond? How could you point people to Jesus instead of to yourself this week?

**Prayer:**

Lord, may you receive the honor and praise you are due. Help us to get out of the way and point people to the true provider!

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# Friday, May 3

## [ACTS 3:17-23](#) | WHO WILL YOU LISTEN TO?

Peter now invites them to decide what they truly believe about Jesus. He can see how during that Holy week the Jewish people didn't fully understand that Jesus was the Messiah. He doesn't want them to stay in that ignorance though. He reminds them of what many prophets said throughout the Jewish history that started with Moses. In Deuteronomy 18:15 and 18:19 we hear the prophecy of Moses that God will raise up a prophet from their own people and that you must listen to everything he tells you, but if you do not listen you will be completely cut off from your people. Here Peter is not just warning of a physical cutoff, but a spiritual cutoff that will last for eternity. Peter once again uses the Old Testament scriptures to show the early church who Jesus was.

Now that Jesus had been raised from the dead, there is no more excuses for their ignorance. Peter told them through his eyewitness's testimony who Jesus was and invites them out of their ignorance into a place of repentance. In coming to repentance, they will receive forgiveness of sins, a time of refreshing in the Holy Spirit, and the truth that Jesus will return again. Through repentance, the necessary transformation will be complete and they would be ready for Jesus to come back again.

I am writing this on the day we celebrated the life of our dear sister in Christ, Val Dykstra. During the worship service that was held, an invitation was made to stop living in ignorance, but to repent of your sins, experience the filling of the Holy Spirit, and be prepared for the second coming of Christ. People came to the altar to repent of their sins, and some came to be filled with the Holy Spirit. May we live each day with the same call and passion of Peter. To invite people out of their ignorance and into freedom from their sins and the filling of the Holy Spirit.



# Saturday, May 4

## [ACTS 3:24-26](#) | ALL PEOPLE WILL BE BLESSED

Peter finishes up with a couple of reminders. First, the prophets told you that the Messiah was coming. The Jewish people knew about the Messiah, but in their ignorance, they missed him the first time. Now with this testimony, some were able to see the truth of Jesus Christ. Second, the Messiah came for everyone. This goes all the way back to Father Abraham and how his seed would bless all nations. This was a prophecy that through Jesus Christ salvation would come for all people. This was no longer just a Jewish faith, but a worldwide faith for everyone who would believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Finally, Peter tells them that Jesus is starting by telling all the Jews. Jesus showed himself to many Jewish people to prove that He was the Messiah. The Greeks were not looking for the Messiah, so it makes sense to start with the Jews. This would be an easy connection based on all the prophecies they were told growing up. Again, Peter reminds them to turn from their wicked ways of ignorance and unbelief and turn to the risen Savior.

This week again we see the power of prayer. Prayer is what led Peter and John to the Temple that day. We see the power of God to heal, which reminds us again of the power of the Holy Spirit in us. Finally, we see the truth of the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. All these things are vital to the early church, and they should be vital for us today in our faith. May you continue to seek God in readiness, live in the power of His Spirit, and speak the good news of Jesus as much as you can!

