

April 15, 2009

THE POWER AFTER THE RESURRECTION

ACTS 3: 1 - 16

¹ Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth *hour*. ² And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; ³ Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. ⁴ And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. ⁵ And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. ⁶ Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. ⁷ And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. ⁸ And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. ⁹ And all the people saw him walking and praising God: ¹⁰ And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. ¹¹ And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

¹² And when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *him*[†] go. ¹⁴ But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; ¹⁵ And killed the Prince^a of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And his name through faith in his name hath

† A Greek word occurs that is not directly translated in the *King James Version*.
Greek Strongs: 1565

a Prince: or, Author

made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

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PARTNERSHIP: Peter and John had each of them a brother among the twelve, with whom they were coupled when they were sent out; yet now they seem to be knit together more closely than either of them to his brother, for the bond of friendship is sometimes stronger than that of relation: *there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother*. Peter and John seem to have had a peculiar intimacy after Christ's resurrection more than before, Jn. 20:2. The reason of which (if I may have liberty to conjecture) might be this, that John, a disciple made up of love, was more compassionate to Peter upon his fall and repentance, and more tender of him in his *bitter weeping* for his sin, than any other of the apostles were, and more solicitous to restore him in the *spirit of meekness*, which made him very dear to Peter ever after; and it was good evidence of Peter's acceptance with God, upon his repentance, that Christ's favourite was made his bosom friend.²

NOTE: BRIEF DISCUSSION ON WHY MEN DON'T COME TO CHURCH

(Peter & John) For St. Luke tells us that the sons of Zebedee were "partners with Simon," and helped him to take the miraculous draught of fishes (Luke 5:10). We find the two sons of Zebedee associated with Peter in the inner circle of the Lord's apostles, at the Transfiguration, at the raising of Jairus's daughter, and at the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane (see also Mark 13:3). But the yet closer friendship of **Peter and John** first appears in their going together to the palace of Caiaphas on the night of the betrayal (John 18:15), and then in the memorable visit to the holy sepulchre on the morning of the Resurrection (John 20:2–4), and yet again in John 21:7, 20, 21.³

1 *The Holy Bible : King James Version*. electronic ed. of the 1769 edition of the 1611 Authorized Version. Bellingham WA : Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1995, S. Ac 3:1-16

2 Henry, Matthew: *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible : Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*. Peabody : Hendrickson, 1996, c1991, S. Ac 3:1

3 Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Hrsg.): *The Pulpit Commentary: Acts of the Apostles Vol. I*. Bellingham, WA : Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2004, S. 92

The Prince of life; a remarkable title here given to our Lord, to bring out the contrast between him whom they preferred and him whom they rejected. Barabbas was a murderer, one who took away human life for his own base ends; the other was the Prince and Author of life, who was come into the world, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. This title, taken in connection with the preceding declaration, "God hath glorified his Servant Jesus," seems almost to be a reminiscence of our Saviour's prayer, "Father, ... glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee; as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (John 17:1, 2). Jesus himself in very many places dwells upon his own great prerogative of giving life: "I am come that they might have life, and ... have it more abundantly" (John 10:10); "I am that Bread of life;" "I am the living Bread ... if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever;" "I give ... my flesh for the life of the world;" "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life;" "They that hear shall live;" "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;" "The Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should ... have eternal life;" "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The word - *ρχηγός* applied to Christ is found also in ch. 5:31, and in Heb. 2:10; 12:2, rendered the "*Author or Captain* of their salvation," "of our faith." ⁴

We have here the method of the cure.

1. His **expectations were raised**. Peter, instead of turning his eyes from him, as many do from objects of charity, turned his eyes to him, nay, he *fastened his eyes upon him*, that his eye might affect his heart with compassion towards him, v. 4. John did so too, for they were both guided by one and the same Spirit, and concurred in this miracle; they said, *Look on us*. Our eye must be ever towards the Lord (the eye of our mind), and, in token of this, the eye of the body may properly be fixed on those whom he employs as the ministers of his grace. This man needed not to be bidden twice to look on the apostles; for he justly thought this gave him cause to expect that he should *receive something from them*, and therefore he *gave heed to them*, v. 5. Note, We must come to God both to attend on his word and to apply ourselves to him in prayer, with hearts fixed and expectations raised. We must look up to heaven and expect to receive benefit by that

⁴ Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Hrsg.): *The Pulpit Commentary: Acts of the Apostles Vol. I.* Bellingham, WA : Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2004, S. 94

which God speaks thence, and an answer of peace to the prayers sent up thither. *I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.*

2. His **expectation of an alms was disappointed**. *Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none, and therefore none to give thee;"* yet he intimated that if he had had any he would have given him an alms, not brass, but silver or gold. Note, (1.) It is not often that Christ's friends and favourites have abundance of the wealth of this world. The apostles were very poor, had but just enough for themselves, and no overplus. Peter and John had abundance of money laid at their feet, but this was appropriated to the maintenance of the poor of the church, and they would not convert any of it to their own use, nor dispose of it otherwise than according to the intention of the donors. Public trusts ought to be strictly and faithfully observed. (2.) Many who are well inclined to works of charity are yet not in a capacity of doing any thing considerable, while others, who have wherewithal to do much, have not a heart to do any thing.

3. His **expectations, notwithstanding, were quite outdone**. Peter had not money to give him; but, (1.) He had that which was better, such an interest in heaven, such a power from heaven, as to be able to cure his disease. Note, Those who are poor in the world may yet be rich, very rich, in spiritual gifts, graces, and comforts; certainly there is that which we are capable of possessing which is infinitely better than silver and gold; the merchandise and gain of it are better, Job 28:12, etc.; Prov. 3:14, etc. (2.) He gave him that which was better—the cure of his disease, which he would gladly have given a great deal of silver and gold for, if he had had it, and the cure could have been so obtained. This would enable him to work for his living, so that he would not need to beg any more; nay, he would *have to give to those that needed*, and it is *more blessed to give than to receive*. A miraculous cure would be a greater instance of God's favour, and would put a greater honour upon him, than thousands of gold and silver could. observe, When Peter had no silver and gold to give, yet (says he) *such as I have I give thee*. Note, Those may be, and ought to be, otherwise charitable and helpful to the poor, who have not wherewithal to give in charity; those who have not silver and gold have their limbs and senses, and with these may be serviceable to the blind, and lame, and sick, and if they be not, as there is occasion, neither would they give to them if they had silver and gold. *As every one hath received the gift, so let him minister it*. Let us now see how the cure was wrought. [1.] Christ *sent his word, and healed him* (Ps. 107:20); for healing grace is given by the word of Christ; this is the vehicle of the healing virtue derived from Christ. Christ spoke cures by himself; the apostles spoke them in his name. Peter bids a lame

man *rise up and walk*, which would have been a banter upon him if he had not premised *in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth*: "I say it by warrant from him, and it shall be done by power from him, and all the glory and praise of it shall be ascribed to him."

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