



THE CITADEL

~ A publication for the faithful who fear God; for those who stand guard in prayer; those at the watch station ~ Nehemiah 7:1-3

“Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. 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 from those who entered the temple; who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, “Look at us.” So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God. Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.”

Acts 3:1-10 NKJV

Feelings of empathy for the lame man sitting outside the temple begging are natural. But, what the natural eye cannot see the well-trained spiritual eye can; the underlying spirits in operation - the lame and the beggar.

To be lame is to be physically crippled or disabled; impaired through defect or injury; weak. One’s physical condition can often affect one’s spiritual condition. The physically crippled can also be spiritually crippled, spiritually disabled, spiritually impaired, and spiritually weak.

The scripture in Acts 3:1-2 tells us that the man is laid at the gate of the temple daily to ask alms. Daily he sits outside the temple begging for money from those going into the temple. The Beautiful gate served as the front door to the temple. This would be an ideal place for a beggar to position himself for begging. Those who would ignore the beggar’s pleas might feel condemned or guilty for refusing to help. Or, those who were leaving the temple may be more inclined to give to the beggar.

However, the inside of the temple – not the outside – would be the ideal position to be in because the temple is the house of prayer. Instead, the lame man is laid outside the temple because of his lack of faith in God to answer his request from inside the temple.

To pray is to commune or ask of God. The spiritual lame and beggar asks of man instead of asking of God. The lame and beggar spirit – often times subconsciously - relies on man rather than relying on God. The lame and beggar spirit expects the people of God to give, give, give to him/her and calls it favor. **“Give and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom.”** Luke 6:38 NKJV. When what we do is not only expect what people will do for us, but expect what God will do for us because we’ve given to the kingdom of God. That’s favor!

Scripture tells us that the spiritual lame is unfit to offer sacrifices in the temple because of his lack of faith:

“But if there is a defect in it, if it is lame or blind or has any serious defect, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God.” Deuteronomy 15:21 NKJV

To offer one's best sacrifice to the Lord is a leap of faith because one has to have the faith to believe that God will bless it. The spiritual lame is inadequate and unsatisfactory because of his lack of faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Hebrews 11:6. It is the lack of faith in God to meet one's needs that causes the spirit of the lame and beggar to operate.

Impaired faith can cause spiritual weakness. The lame man was spiritually weak because he had never exercised his faith. Jesus says in Luke 17:6, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you." A mustard seed is a very small seed. But, small faith does not produce small results in the Kingdom of our God!

When Peter and John were about to go into the temple, the lame man asked them for money. Peter and John's faith was exercised and with their well-trained spiritual eyes, they were able to see beyond the lame man's physical handicap; they were able to see his spiritual handicap – the operation of the lame and beggar spirits.

Peter told the lame man to look at them. Peter wanted to take the man's attention off of himself. The spiritual lame and beggar spirits are self-centered and can only see their circumstances; what they are going through, their needs, their physical, crippled, unsatisfactory conditions.

The lame man focused his attention on Peter and John expecting to receive something from them. The lame and beggar spirits were still in operation because it was still expecting to receive from man. The lame man did not know that he was going to receive from God that day. Peter told the lame man, he did not have any money – no silver and no gold – but what he had he would give him.

Peter gave the lame man the living Word: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Peter spoke deliverance, resurrection, and faith into the lame man's life.

Deliverance from the lame and beggar spirit came when Peter spoke in the name of Jesus.

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth..."
Philippians 2:10 NKJV

Using the phrase, "in the name of Jesus," is not a magical formula used to get a guarantee to an answer to prayer. Peter and John did not lay hands on the lame man and pray in the name of Jesus for God to heal him. Rather, as believers with the power of God to perform signs and wonders, they spoke the living Word of God.

"And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."
Mark 16:17-18 NKJV

Peter and John did not represent themselves in what they did; they represented Christ in what he had already done for the lame man. He was resurrected from death to life when Peter told him to rise up. Not only was he physically resurrected, but he was spiritually resurrected.

"Entering into this fullness is not something you figure out or achieve. It's not a matter of being circumcised or keeping a long list of laws. No, you're already in—insiders—not through some secretive initiation rite but rather

through what Christ has already gone through for you, destroying the power of sin. If it's an initiation ritual you're after, you've already been through it by submitting to baptism. Going under the water was a burial of your old life; coming up out of it was a resurrection, God raising you from the dead as he did Christ. When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive—right along with Christ!”

Colossians 2:11-12 Message

The lame man's faith was activated when Peter told him to not only rise up but to walk. Prior to his encounter with Peter and John, he lacked the faith to do any of the things Peter was speaking to him to do. The lame man heard the Word of God spoken by Peter and his faith was resurrected and activated. “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Romans 10:17

Peter took him by the right hand and lifted him up. The right hand is expressive of power (Psalm 110:1 NKJV). The power of God was transferred to his physical body as Peter took him by the right hand – the hand of power – lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

The lame man received more than he could have asked or think; he received what he did not expect – deliverance, resurrection, faith, healing, and strength. Leaping up, the lame man stood and walked with Peter and John into the temple; walking, leaping, and praising God. The lame man is now in a position to offer the sacrifices of praise inside the temple. Amen.

It's your time to rise up! Your faith is being activated with “Now faith” (Hebrews 11:1). The faith you need right now to leap up and praise God. Praise your way from the outside of His presence to being in His presence. The right hand of power is being extended to you; power belongs to God. Cast your cares on God, for He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7). “...**Have faith in God.**” Mark 11:22 RISE UP!

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