Conquering Complacency Through Christ

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Text:
Acts 3:1 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.

Who is in the text?
• Peter
• John
• The lame man
• The people who carried the lame man
• And the people coming to the temple

Background:
This man has been lame from birth and he is now over 40 years old (Acts 4:22). He is dependant on people. In his time there were no institutions to take care of the sick for long periods of time. He is no longer a child and no longer under the care of his parents. He is in a position to where he has to fend for himself. He tries to find a place that many people would go to, so he can ask for money. The temple gate seems like a great place because at least there, he can play on the emotions of the religious folk. They are coming to church, so they might be inclined to give him some money. Also, it was the custom of the Jews to pray three times a day. This way, he got to see three groups of people, in hopes to get some money.

His friends carry him everyday to the East Gate of the temple, called beautiful. He relies on them to carry him there and he relies on the people to have pity on him and give him money.

This is what we know. What we do not know is if he, at some point, had hope. We do not know if he, at some point, imagined himself walking. We do not know if he, at some point, imagined himself playing outside with the other boys. If he could picture himself running through the fields. If he dreamed of some day walking into his mother’s arms. We don’t know if this crippled man was once a vibrant and energetic and hopeful young child. What we do know is that he has resigned his life to be one of a mundane routine. This man is crippled in his feet, but he is also crippled in his heart. He is crippled by complacency. He is complacent with his life. He is complacent with his daily ritual. He is complacent with asking for money, although money will never enable him to walk. He has given up hope and allowed his dreams to die. Who can blame him? It has been over 40 years, and he is still in the same condition.
Close your eyes for a minute. Think of a big, beautiful gate made of bronze. The door is standing tall. The bronze is shiny and bright. Many people are passing through it to and from church. They are dressed nice and smell good. They are talking about how good church was and how God blessed the prayer service. While they are walking in and out of the temple, with it’s beautiful gate, there is a lowly man. He has not shaved in many days. His hair is scruffy and out of place. His clothes are dirty from dragging around on the ground. His hands are filthy from being used to maneuver his way around. Can you see him? He calls out to you and he asks you for some money, but is that what he really needs? This man needs more than just a few dollars, he needs a breakthrough.

So what does this mean to us? How can we identify with this man? Everyone in here can walk. Everyone in here is clean. Everyone in here smells good. Everyone in here is well dressed. Yes, but man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart.

God wants to deal with the cripple and lame in LMA today. God wants to reach those that are crippled by complacency. God wants to meet you afresh. God wants to give you a fresh anointing. God wants those of us who are tired of this routine, tired of going to church, tired of singing songs, tired coming to bible study, if you need a fresh touch from God, this message is for YOU!

**Body:**

1. **His Condition:** (v.)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

**Crippled:** He has been this way for over 40 years (Acts 4:22). The number 40 is scripture is representative of testing or trial:

- The Israelites wandered for 40 years
- Moses was on the mount for 40 days
- Jesus was tempted for 40 days
- This man was crippled for 40 years

He could not walk on his own.

**Application:** Bishop Holcomb likens walking to two steps. (explain)

- Many of us are crippled like this man. We cannot walk on our own.
- We are Born-Again, we are anointed by the Holy Spirit, we are Covered by the Blood of Jesus, but we are still looking for someone to teach us to walk
- This man was crippled and so are many of us

**Carried:** He could not take himself where he wanted to go. He was totally dependant on someone else to take him from place to place. He was carried by his friends.

**Application:**

- Many of us are carried like this man.
- We are carried by the Pastor, who has to take us from place to place. The only time we hear the Word is in church. The only bible study we receive is on Thursday nights. We are being carried by the Pastor and carried by the ministry. We are here to be a blessing and not a burden to LMA. We are here to help the Pastor carry the torch and not just have the Pastor carry us.
- We are carried by our spouses. We come to church to satisfy them. We come to worship to get them off of our backs. We are being carried by them, but it is
time for us to carry ourselves. It is time for a personal and intimate relationship with Christ.

- I could go on… the Bottom-line is that we should not be dependant on others in this Christian walk. This is a relationship between us and God and the only somebody we should totally depend on is HIM!

**Complacent:** Routine -- laid daily at the gate called beautiful to ask for money

- Came to the same place
- To ask for the same thing
- Always got the same results

**Application:**

- Many of us are complacent like this man.
- Nothing new and exciting is happening in our relationship with Christ and we have accepted it to be this way.
- Our Christian life has become dull and boring, but our desire for anything else is gone.
- We are crippled by complacency and it is time for our Breakthrough!

**2. His Breakthrough:** (v.3) Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. (v.4) And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. (v.5) And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

**He started off with his same routine.** Peter and John came up and he asked them for some money. Nothing new and nothing exciting about that.

**Application:**

- Maybe you are here this morning because this is where you are supposed to be. It is Sunday morning and you have been taught that on Sunday morning’s, you go to church. Not that you came expecting anything, but you just came because that has been part of your routine.

**He Heard:** (v.4) And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. He asked them for some money and that is all he expected. Either they give me money or not, I am sure he thought within himself. But these people did something different. They told him to look on them. They gave him instructions.

**Application:**

- Is God speaking to you today? What is He saying? What instructions is He giving you?
- The man in the text, HEARD them. Are you HEARING what God is saying to you.
- He that hath an ear, let him hear!

**He Heeded:** (v.5) And he gave heed unto them. It is one thing to listen to instruction, but it is quite another to follow the instructions that you heard. This man was performing a spiritual walk before he performed his physical walk. He received, and then responded to what he received.

**Application:**

- You have heard God speak to your heart thus far. What are you going to DO about it?
- Hearing in one thing, but heeding to what you hear is another.
• Are you going to DO something about what God is saying to you?

He Anticipated: (v.5) And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. I am convinced that this is when His Breakthrough came. He expected to receive SOMETHING. He asked them for some money, but when he looked at them, he expected to receive SOMETHING!

Application:
• What did you come to church for this morning?
• What have you asked God for this morning?
• If God does not give you what you ask for, will you be upset?
• Instead of focusing totally on what you asked for, focus on His will for your life.
• If God had given him what he had asked for, he would still be crippled. The man got his breakthrough because his attitude was changed. He expected to receive something!
• What do you expect to receive TODAY?
• Did you come with an EXPECTING TO RECEIVE SOMETHING ATTITUDE?
• Look at your neighbor and say, “Neighbor, I have Great Expectations!”
• Now look up at God and say, “Lord, whatever you have for me, I receive it! I want it! I need it! And now I praise you for it!”

He Received: (v.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. (v.7) And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. His attitude was not limited to what he asked for -- money. Once he changed his attitude, he received his breakthrough. God reached down, through Peter, and lifted him up. Immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

Application:
• Once you change you attitude and determine to receive everything God has for you, God will bless you.
• He can reach down this morning and help us up!
• We don’t have to wait to next week. We don’t have to wait to next month.
• The man did not go through physical therapy. EXPLAIN my mother.
• God healed him immediately. Right Now!
• Someone say, “I Receive My Breakthrough -- RIGHT NOW!” Deliverance, cometh to me -- NOW!”

He Praised God: (v.8) And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

Conclusion: You can identify with the man in the text. You are tired of doing the same things and getting the same results. You want a fresh anointing in your life. You want a fresh touch form God. You need a breakthrough. COME!