**ACTS and US** - Acts 3

*“God’s Power Not Ours”*

What can we learn from Acts that we can apply to our everyday lives?…

* After Pentecost...
* The smoke clears, dust settles...
* But they were still “*Spiritually Radioactive”*

**Nuclear fallout -** the residual **radioactive** material propelled into the upper atmosphere following a **nuclear** blast, so called because it "falls out" of the sky after the explosion and the shock wave have passed. The Apostles were experiencing Pentecost Fallout – It’s what happened after the Holy Spirit fell upon them in Acts 2.

**Acts 2:43** “Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.”

They went on with their lives, but they were different…

**Acts 3:1-26**One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. **2**Now a *man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate* called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. **3**When he saw Peter and John about to enter, *he asked them for money*. **4**Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” **5**So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

**6**Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” **7***Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up*, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. **8***He jumped to his feet and began to walk*. Then he went with them into the temple courts, *walking and jumping, and praising God*. **9**When all the people saw him walking and praising God, **10**they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

**11**While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon’s Colonnade. **12**When Peter saw this, he said to them: “Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?

Peter immediately gives clarity about the miracle they just witnessed. It was not their power that healed the man, but he was healed in the name of *Jesus the Messiah* whom “YOU KILLED”! *[He was again being dangerously bold!]*

**13**The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. **14**You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. **15**You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. **16**By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

**17**“Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders.

Then, just as he did during Pentecost in Acts 2, he begins to exegete the scriptures, interpreting some very well-known prophecies about the coming of the Messiah from the Hebrew Scriptures including; Isaiah, Moses, Samuel and Abraham.

**18**But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer. **19**Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, **20**and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. **21**Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. **22**For Moses said, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. **23**Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from their people.’[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%203&version=NIV#fen-NIV-27020a)]

**24**“Indeed, beginning with Samuel, all the prophets who have spoken have foretold these days. **25**And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, ‘Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.’ **26**When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.”

3 Important Points:

1. They continued going to temple as they usually would. They were still Jews, Messianic Jews but they identified with their Jewish traditions, so of course they would go to the Temple to pray at the appointed time. Only now, they were Jews who received the Messiah and were filled with the Holy Spirit. They did not became sectarian or seclude themselves. They went to the place where the people were.
2. They recognized that they were “On Mission”. In other words, they were doing exactly what Jesus said they should do in Acts 1:8, “Receive power, then…be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth” (this was Jerusalem).

The two went out together just like they did when were being trained by Jesus in Mark 6. Jesus sent them out two-by-two along with the other apostles, without any money, but told them to go and heal people.

1. They *only* offered what they had, not anything more, not anything less, and that was *more than enough*!
   1. They didn’t have money so could not rely on their own resources.
   2. They did not try to bring in an expert. *(Dr. Luke wasn’t around yet),* but they did not try to bring him help, NOR did they try to bring him to the house where the others were, and the power had manifested.
   3. They completely engaged him, and gave him what they had; their time, their attention and the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

***“They did the best they could, with what they had,***

***who they had…***

***and God did the rest.“***

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**“Do the best you can with what you have,**

**and who you have, and God will do the rest.”**

**“ D T B Y C W W Y H A W Y H A G W D T R “**

They went out completely unequipped without anything other than the Power of the Holy Spirit.

* If they had money, they might have given it and not seen the miracle.
* If they were trained physicians or physical therapists, they may have relied on their own education and knowledge to help the man, and perhaps would not have seen the miracle.
* If they viewed themselves as gifted, powerful godly miracle workers, they may not have seen the miracle take place and would have not been able to tell those who were rushing at them, in amazement at this man’s healing ;

“why stare at us as though we had made this man walk by our own power or godliness?  (Acts 3:12)

This healing, at the hands of Peter and John, clearly shows us what God can do through any of us if we are willing to allow Jesus to work through us to bring healing, deliverance and help to those who need it most. *(if you notice, they didn’t even pray for the man, they just lifted him up. – No formula, no special words or actions)*

God is eager to show us all that He can do through us if we completely rely on His strength, power and abilities and not our own.

Paul, one of the most powerful of all the apostles writes;

**Philippians 4:13 – "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"**

This is a recurring theme throughout the Bible.

God repeatedly uses unlikely people, in unlikely circumstances to do great things.

**Moses:**

God tells him to go to Pharaoh and tell him that God says “Let my People go”.

Moses was afraid and “ what if he won’t listen to me or believe me?” I am slow in speech and not very eloquent.” (Exodus 4)

So the Lord gave him a staff in his hand, and Aaron by his side and said “go”.

God did tremendous miracles through Moses and his staff, and spoke directly to Pharaoh through Aaron, and Pharaoh let God’s people go.

***“He did the best he could with what he had, who he had…and God did the rest.“***

**Gideon** – A young wheat thresher from Manasseh.

The Israelites were hiding in caves and the Midianites were trying to starve them out be destroying their crops and herds.

An angel of the Lord came to him with a message from the Lord;

**Judges 6:14-15**

**14**The Lord turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?”

**15**“Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.”

He starts with an army of 32,000 against 135,000 Midianites.

**Judges 7:2-4**The Lord said to Gideon, “You have too many warriors with you. If I let all of you fight the Midianites, the Israelites will boast to me that they saved themselves by their own strength. **3**Therefore, tell the people, ‘Whoever is timid or afraid may leave this mountain and go home.’” So 22,000 of them went home, leaving only 10,000 who were willing to fight.

**4**But the Lord told Gideon, “There are still too many! Bring them down to the spring, and I will test them to determine who will go with you and who will not.”

He then reduced the army to 300 men, against an army of 135,000!

When the battle took place, the Lord confused the Midianite army and they turned on each other. Gideon emerged victorious.

Gideon is the quintessential example of a man who leads an army into victory against unbelievable odds, not by his own power, but by the power of God.

***“He did the best he could with what he had, who he had…and God did the rest.“***

**David**

David was also the least of his clan. The youngest of the Sons of Jesse

When Goliath, the giant of the Philistines came out and cursed the God of Israel and challenged them to a fight, David was the only one willing to go up against him.

King Saul objected, thinking that David would easily be slaughtered by the giant.

**1 Samuel 17:33**

**33 “**And Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you *are* a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.”

**1 Samuel 17:37-40**

**“**David said, “The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

And Saul said to David, “Go, and the Lord be with you!”

**38**So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. **39**David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested *them.* And David said to Saul, “I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested *them.*” So David took them off.

**40**Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd’s bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine.

**1 Samuel 17:47-50**

[David said] **47**This is the Lord’s battle, and he will give you to us!”

**48**As Goliath moved closer to attack, David quickly ran out to meet him.**49**Reaching into his shepherd’s bag and taking out a stone, he hurled it with his sling and hit the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank in, and Goliath stumbled and fell face down on the ground.

**50**So David triumphed over the Philistine with only a sling and a stone, for he had no sword.”

David not only didn’t have a sword, he had no armor. Saul offered David the king’s own armor and David rejected it. He was determined to go about this with God’s protection and in God’s strength, Not his own, nor King Saul’s or anyone else’s.

No armor, no sword, no superiority of strength…just the power of God!

***“He did the best he could with what he had, who he had…and God did the rest.“***

Other examples:

Jesus with Loaves & Fish (John 6)

Paralytic on the pallet in Capernaum (Mark 2)

He couldn’t walk to Jesus, his friends couldn’t carry him into the house, so they lowered him through the roof and Jesus healed him.

Paul and Silas released from prison (Acts 16)

***“They did the best they could with what they had, who they had…and God did the rest.“***

CLOSING:

This is how we must approach our challenges. Not by trying to conjure up our own strength and ability, but clearly understand what God is asking you to do, then DO IT regardless of your own level of strength and ability and regardless of your resources.

Accomplishing things that we’re naturally good at, or well-equipped for, is basically just “us doing what we do”.

Accomplishing things that are *beyond our abilities*, and requires God’s intervention *is extraordinary, and brings greater glory to Him.*

Back to Peter and John at the gate, speaking to the lame beggar…

**Acts 3:6-7** Peter said, “I don’t have any silver or gold for you. But I’ll give you what I have. *In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!”*

*[AND HE DID!]*

*God wants to use you and I to do miracles in the lives of others. Perhaps they are amazing physical healings that he wants to do through you. Maybe He just wants to use you to bring them from a place where they are desperate and hopeless like the man at the gate…*

*to filled with joy and strength because of God’s power in their lives IN ANY AREA.*

*There are many people out there that are just as desperate and hopeless as the beggar at the gate, even though they may not necessarily be physically crippled.*

God wants to use you and I to reach out to them, and lift them out of their desperation and hopelessness.

Out of darkness, into the light (1 Peter 2:9),

Out of the pit, onto the rock. (Psalm 40)

You may feel that you can’t do it.

You’re not equipped, you’re not strong enough, you’re not trained enough.

The truth is, You can’t do it. But God can do it through you.

***All you need to do is ….***

***“Do the best you can, with what you have, and who you have…and God will do the rest.“***

**Philippians 4:13 – "[YOU] can do all things through Christ who strengthens [YOU]"**