

# Things Aren't Always as They Seem July 16, 2006

Acts 3.1-8

*“One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. Now a man crippled 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. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, ‘Look at us!’ So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. Then Peter said, ‘Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.’ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.” Acts 3.1-8*

Power is one of the most sought after prizes in life, but when people get it, often the results are not positive. Power has a tendency to corrupt both the people who have it and the people who feel its effect. Often people use power to abuse, belittle, subdue, conquer, and even destroy others. In the process, they find that they become people that no one likes miserable people corrupted from the inside out. Power has a decidedly negative side. But it can have a positive impact as well.

On the Day of Pentecost, power from Heaven came down. What was the real purpose of that power?

*“But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1.8*

*“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the **power of God** for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” Romans 1.16*

*“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a **spirit of power**, of love and of self-discipline.” 2 Timothy 1.7*

## THE SETTING OF THE EVENT

The events of this section, 3.1-4.22, illustrate the opposition that the church soon encountered from Jewish authorities, and the man in focus, is Peter. There is a cycle of arrest, threat, defense, release and rejoicing that cover a series of different events (5.17-42; 12.1-9).

In our text today, we see the power of God healing a human life. We see people who have been touched by the power of God touching others. It is the story of the lame man who begged by the gate called Beautiful. In this passage, we see a real example of the power of God to heal. This man was healed physically, but the message of this text is not limited to physical healing in any way. This passage deals with human healing on every level. Here, we will find valuable lessons which I pray will motivate us to find opportunities to minister to hurting people.

## A HUMAN TRAGEDY

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## A HEAVENLY TOUCH

*When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, ‘Look at us!’ So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. Then Peter said, ‘Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.’ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong.*

## A HEALING TRANSFORMATION

*He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.” Acts 3.1-8*