



Study Guide: Acts – Chapter 3

Study Guide: Acts – Chapter 3

This study guide provides an educational overview of Acts Chapter 3 using a verse-by-verse structure, theological context, and application-oriented insights grounded in Scripture.

Introduction

Acts chapter 3 marks a pivotal moment in the early church's witness following Pentecost. This chapter highlights the power of the Holy Spirit working through the apostles, especially Peter, to perform a miraculous healing that draws attention to the message of Jesus. It contributes to the book's flow by demonstrating how the gospel begins to impact the public sphere, challenging religious authorities and inviting repentance. Readers should watch for the interplay between miracle and message, as well as the boldness with which Peter proclaims Jesus as the source of healing and salvation.

Context

Acts 3 follows the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in chapter 2, where Peter preaches at Pentecost and about three thousand are added to the church. The immediate literary context is the early days of the Jerusalem church, characterized by communal living, prayer, and signs accompanying the apostles' ministry. Historically, the setting is Jerusalem during the time of the temple worship, and the narrative focuses on Peter and John as key figures. The chapter unfolds at the temple gate called Beautiful, a significant location for public interaction and worship. The covenantal frame includes the fulfillment of Old Testament promises about the Messiah and the restoration of Israel, themes Peter emphasizes in his sermon.

Outline

The chapter can be divided into three main movements. First, the healing of the lame man at the temple gate (verses 1–10) serves as a tangible demonstration of the apostles' authority and the power of Jesus. Second, Peter's public address (verses 11–26) explains the miracle's significance, calls the people to repentance, and connects Jesus' life, death, and resurrection to Old Testament prophecy. Finally, the chapter closes with a call to recognize Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promises and an invitation to turn back so that



times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

Verse-by-Verse Study

Verses 1-3: Peter and John go to the temple at the hour of prayer, encountering a man lame from birth who is placed daily at the Beautiful Gate to beg. Peter's attention to the man sets the stage for a miraculous intervention.

Verses 4-6: Peter commands the man to look at him and then declares, "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." This highlights the apostles' reliance not on material wealth but on the authority of Jesus' name.

Verses 7-10: The man is instantly healed, walking, leaping, and praising God. The crowd is amazed, recognizing the man as the same lame beggar, which draws a large audience and sets up Peter's opportunity to preach.

Verses 11-12: The people gather, astonished, and Peter addresses them, clarifying that the healing was not by their own power but through faith in Jesus' name.

Verses 13-16: Peter identifies Jesus as the "Holy and Righteous One" whom God glorified, and whom they had denied and killed. He emphasizes that faith in Jesus' name has made the man strong, underscoring the centrality of Jesus' resurrection power.

Verses 17-21: Peter calls the people to repentance, reminding them that their ignorance led to Jesus' death but now they must turn to God so that times of refreshing may come. He connects this to the restoration foretold by the prophets and the coming of the Messiah.

Verses 22-26: Peter concludes by citing Moses' prophecy about a prophet like him whom the people must listen to. He reminds them that God raised up Jesus as the fulfillment of this promise, linking Jesus to the patriarchs and the covenant promises made to Abraham.

Key Themes

A primary theme is the power of Jesus' name to heal and restore, which is demonstrated through the miracle and emphasized in Peter's message. Another theme is repentance and turning back to God as a necessary response to the gospel. The chapter also highlights the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in Jesus, underscoring continuity



between the covenants. Additionally, the role of faith—not human ability or wealth—in accessing God’s power is central. Finally, the chapter reveals the early church’s boldness in public witness despite opposition.

Cross-References

Peter’s reference to Moses’ prophecy in verse 22 connects to Deuteronomy 18:15–19, where God promises to raise a prophet like Moses. This clarifies Jesus’ unique role as God’s ultimate prophet. The healing miracle echoes Jesus’ own healing ministry found in the Gospels, such as in Luke 5:17–26, showing continuity in divine power. The call to repentance and times of refreshing recalls Joel 2:28–32, which Peter quoted in Acts 2, linking the Spirit’s work with restoration. The emphasis on faith in Jesus’ name parallels John 14:13–14, where Jesus promises that believers will do greater works in His name. Lastly, the connection to Abraham’s covenant (Acts 3:25) ties back to Genesis 12:1–3, highlighting God’s plan to bless all nations through Christ.

Application

Modern disciples can learn from Peter’s example to rely on the power of Jesus’ name rather than material resources or personal ability. The chapter challenges believers to be attentive to opportunities for ministry in everyday settings, just as Peter and John encountered the lame man at the temple gate. It also calls for a posture of repentance—turning from ignorance or rejection of Christ toward faith and obedience. The boldness displayed in public proclamation encourages believers to witness courageously despite opposition. Finally, recognizing Jesus as the fulfillment of God’s promises invites believers to deepen their trust in Scripture and God’s redemptive plan.

Summary

Acts chapter 3 presents a powerful narrative of healing and proclamation that advances the early church’s mission. Through the miraculous healing of a lame man, Peter demonstrates the authority of Jesus’ name and calls the people to repentance and faith. The chapter weaves together themes of divine power, covenant fulfillment, and bold witness, situating the gospel within God’s unfolding redemptive plan. This passage challenges believers to recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah and to respond with faith, repentance, and courageous proclamation in their own lives.