



ACTS

Session 4 : Acts 3:1-26

..... OPENING

Select one of the questions below to open discussion.

- What is one way that you were encouraged, challenged or convicted by the sermon on Sunday?
- Francis of Assisi is mistakenly claimed to have said, “Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.” What do you think the quote means? Is it possible to preach the gospel without words? Why or why not? Why is it paramount that our words and our actions align? Why does living out our faith in front of a family member, friend or coworker often need to come before our sharing the gospel with that person?

..... DISCUSSION

Read Acts 3:1-10

1. The man at the gate was lame from birth and asked for financial assistance. What he received was something far better.
 - Why do you think Luke includes the detail that the man was lame from birth?

- How does this miracle relate to the miracles Jesus did in the gospels? Why is it significant that the Apostles are doing the same sorts of miracles that Jesus did?
 - How would you respond to someone who used this story as a reason not to give to the poor and needy?
2. The result of the miracle was that the man as well as many others praised God and were filled with amazement.
 - How can we make sure that when God works in us or through us that the praise and honor is given to Him and does not draw attention to us?
 - How might an obsession with the miraculous actually be harmful to a Christian's growth, or to church a community?
 - How would a complete ignoring of God's ability to work miracles be harmful to a Christian's growth, or to a church community?

Read Acts 3:11-26

3. Peter's sermon in chapter 3 is a bold and powerful moment for a person who just a few pages earlier in the Bible publicly denied even knowing Jesus.
 - What explains the radical shift in Peter's boldness from the end of Luke's gospel to the beginning of the book of Acts?
 - How have you seen God radically transform your own life or tendencies?
4. The Jews largely missed the Messiah because they became more committed to their religious forms and rituals, to their own understanding and expectations, rather than to God himself.
 - How can Christians fall into a similar trap of being committed to a Christian activity or association, rather than a commitment to Jesus?
 - What are some of the ways that we place expectations on God that are unhealthy for our relationship with Him?
 - How can we learn to be attentive and sensitive to what God is doing in our lives, our communities and the world? What does this sensitivity to God's leading look like in your life?
5. Peter's sermon includes the idea that God is actually working out Israel's temporary rejection of the Messiah into a good thing so that the whole world can be blessed.
 - Where have you seen God work good out of a seemingly terrible and disastrous situation?
 - How can we remind ourselves of God's ability to work good out of evil so that we are not discouraged or fall into despair when disaster strikes?
6. Peter's sermon also indicates a hope for Israel's turning to God and His Messiah Jesus in the future. Romans 11 offers a similar picture of a future turning of Jews to faith in Jesus.

- How does this still future hope for Israel remind us that God keeps the promises He made in the Old Testament?
- How does God's faithfulness and goodness in keeping His Old Testament promises give us confidence as Christians today?
- 2 Corinthians 1:20 reminds that all of God's promises are yes in Jesus? How can anchor all our hope in Jesus, and not be caught looking to other things for hope and fulfillment?

.....CLOSING.....

- Take prayer requests and pray together as a group?
- Share where you are facing fear or discouragement. Ask your group to pray for you to have confidence in the person and work of Jesus above anything else.
- Think of someone whom you have seen God work in their life. Reach out this week and personally and privately encourage them.
- Look up promises God makes in Scripture and post them in a place where you will be daily reminded of them.