

The Book of Acts, Teacher's Guide

Lesson 6: The Lame Man Healed and Peter's Second Sermon

Acts 3:1–26

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

Acts 3 shows the apostolic pattern in motion: a miracle that confirms the message, an immediate turning of attention from the messengers to Christ, and a clear call to repentance and salvation. What is doctrinally at stake is the purpose of the miraculous (to glorify Jesus and confirm the gospel, not to exalt the apostles), the identity of Jesus as the Holy and Righteous One, the Author of life, raised from the dead, and the plan of salvation in Peter's call to repent and turn so that sins may be blotted out (v. 19).

The heaviest doctrinal weight falls on Jesus as the prophet like Moses whom every soul must hear and obey, the fulfillment of all the prophets and of the covenant with Abraham, and therefore the only Savior. Teach the exclusivity of salvation in Christ and the authority of His word, guarding against any notion that the miraculous was meant to exalt the apostles or to support present-day sign-working.

Yet aim at the heart. Here is a man who had nothing and received everything, a beggar who became a dancer, and apostles who refused the spotlight. Help students learn to give what they have, to deflect glory to Christ, to face their own sin honestly, and to turn fully to the Lord who blots out sins and sends times of refreshing.

Question 1

Student Question:

Peter healed the lame man not by his own power but in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, and later explained that it was faith in Jesus' name that made the man strong (vv. 6, 16). What does it mean that the healing was done in the name of Jesus, and what does this teach about where true power and authority lie?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Peter is emphatic about the source of the healing. He does not say I healed you; he says, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And when explaining it later, he insists it was the name of Jesus, and faith in that name, that made the man strong. The power was entirely Christ's.

In Scripture, a name represents the person and their authority. To act in the name of Jesus is to act by His authority and power, as His representative, not on one's own. Peter and John were merely the instruments; Jesus was the healer.

This is a recurring theme in Acts and a vital lesson. The apostles never present themselves as the source of power. There is salvation in no one else, Peter will soon declare, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12). The name of Jesus is everything.

Help students see that all true spiritual power and authority belong to Christ. Whatever good we do, we do as His servants and in His name. This protects us from pride and points everyone, including ourselves, to the One who alone can save and make whole.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The name of Jesus as representing His authority and power
- Christ, not the apostles, as the source of the miracle
- Faith in the name of Jesus as the means of the healing (v. 16)
- Salvation found in no other name (Acts 4:12)
- All true spiritual power belonging to Christ, not His servants

Discussion Prompts

- What does it mean to do something in the name of Jesus?
- Why does Peter so carefully credit the name of Jesus rather than himself?
- How does acting in Christ's name rather than our own shape the way we serve?

Question 2

Student Question:

Peter had no money to give, but he gave the beggar what he did have, the healing power of Christ (v. 6). What has God given you, gifts, faith, time, His word, that you could offer to others, especially when you cannot give them what they first ask for?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The beggar asked for silver and gold; Peter gave him something he never imagined. There is a beautiful lesson here about giving what we actually have rather than lamenting what we lack.

We often feel we have little to offer. We are not wealthy, eloquent, or impressive. But every Christian has been given something of immense value: the knowledge of Christ, the truth of the gospel, the gift of prayer, the capacity to love and serve. What I do have I give you can be the motto of every believer.

Invite students to consider what they have been given. Sometimes the greatest gift is not what a person asks for but what they truly need, a listening ear, an honest word about Christ, prayer, practical help, time, presence. Like Peter, we can offer what God has put in our hands.

Encourage one concrete act. Whom do you know who needs not just a coin but a deeper gift, your friendship, your faith, your prayers, the good news of Jesus? Give what you have, in the name of Christ.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Every believer entrusted with gifts to offer others
- Giving what we have rather than lamenting what we lack
- Offering people what they truly need, not only what they ask
- Service and witness flowing from the grace we have received

Discussion Prompts

- What has God given you that you could offer to someone in need?
- When have you been able to give someone something better than what they asked for?
- Who in your life needs the deeper gift only Christ's people can give?

Question 3

Student Question:

When the amazed crowd stared at the apostles, Peter asked why they looked at him and John as though by their own power they had done this, and pointed instead to the God who glorified His servant Jesus (vv. 12-13). What does Peter's response teach us about humility and about who should receive the glory for any good we do?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The temptation in that moment must have been real. A crowd is gathering, amazed, ready to honor Peter and John. And Peter immediately deflects: why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? He refuses the glory and redirects it to God and to Jesus.

This is the consistent posture of the faithful servant. Later, when Cornelius falls at Peter's feet, Peter lifts him up and says, stand up; I too am a man (Acts 10:26). When the crowds at Lystra try to worship Paul and Barnabas, they tear their clothes in distress (Acts 14:14-15). The apostles never grasped at glory.

True humility does not merely decline praise awkwardly; it actively redirects attention to God. Peter uses the moment not to bask but to preach Christ. The glory belongs to the One whose power and grace accomplished the work.

Help students see how counter-cultural this is. We live in an age of self-promotion. The servant of Christ does good not to be seen and admired but so that others may glorify the Father (Matthew 5:16). The instinct to deflect glory to God is a mark of a heart rightly oriented.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Humility that redirects glory from self to God (vv. 12-13)
- The apostles' consistent refusal of personal glory (Acts 10:26; 14:14-15)
- Good works done so that God is glorified (Matthew 5:16)
- Christ, not His servants, as the proper object of praise

Discussion Prompts

- How did Peter turn a moment of personal honor into an opportunity to glorify Christ?
- What is the difference between awkwardly declining praise and truly redirecting glory to God?
- How can you keep pointing people to Christ rather than yourself?

Question 4

Student Question:

It would have been easy for Peter to enjoy the crowd's admiration, but he refused it (vv. 12-16). Where in your life are you tempted to seek credit, recognition, or the spotlight? What would it look like to do your good works quietly, for God's glory rather than your own?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The hunger for recognition runs deep in all of us. We want to be noticed, appreciated, and admired. Peter's example exposes this hunger and offers a better way.

Invite honest reflection. Where do I crave credit? Do I serve in order to be seen? Do I drop hints about my own goodness? Do I feel resentful when my contributions go unnoticed? Jesus warned against doing righteous deeds to be seen by others (Matthew 6:1).

There is great freedom in being content to do good quietly. When our identity is secure in Christ, we no longer need the applause of others. We can serve in hidden ways, give in secret, and let God receive the glory and the reward.

Encourage one specific practice. Perhaps it is to do an act of service this week that no one will know about, to resist the urge to publicize a good deed, or to genuinely rejoice when someone else gets the credit. These small disciplines reorient the heart toward God's glory.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The temptation to seek recognition and the spotlight
- Doing righteous deeds for God rather than to be seen (Matthew 6:1)
- Freedom from the need for human applause through security in Christ
- Hidden service as a discipline that reorients the heart

Discussion Prompts

- Where are you most tempted to seek credit or recognition?
- How does the craving for the spotlight affect the way you serve?
- What is one good work you could do this week that no one will know about?

Question 5

Student Question:

Peter told the crowd they had denied the Holy and Righteous One, killed the Author of life, and that God raised Him from the dead (vv. 13-15). How does Peter describe the identity of Jesus in these verses, and what is the significance of each title he uses?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Peter piles up titles for Jesus that reveal His true identity and the horror of what was done to Him. He is the Holy and Righteous One, a title of moral perfection and divine dignity. The crowd had asked for a murderer, Barabbas, to be released instead of Him, trading the Righteous One for a guilty man.

He is the Author of life, the source and origin of life itself. The terrible irony is that they killed the very One from whom all life comes. The Author of life submitted to death at the hands of His creatures.

And then the turning point: whom God raised from the dead, to which we are witnesses. The grave could not hold the Author of life. The resurrection vindicates every claim, reverses the verdict of the cross, and proves that Jesus is exactly who these titles say He is.

Help students grasp the weight of these names. Jesus is not merely a good teacher or a tragic martyr. He is the Holy One, the Righteous One, the Author of life, the risen Lord. To know who He is changes everything about how we must respond to Him.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Jesus as the Holy and Righteous One (v. 14)
- Jesus as the Author of life, the source of all life (v. 15)
- The grievous injustice of the cross, trading the Righteous One for a murderer
- The resurrection as God's vindication of Jesus' identity
- The apostles as witnesses of the risen Christ (v. 15)

Discussion Prompts

- What does each title, Holy and Righteous One, Author of life, reveal about Jesus?
- Why is the contrast between Jesus and Barabbas significant?
- How does knowing who Jesus is change the way you must respond to Him?

Question 6

Student Question:

Peter acknowledged that the people had acted in ignorance, yet he still called them to repent (vv. 17-19). How do you respond when you realize you have sinned, even unknowingly? Are you quick to make excuses, or willing to face your sin honestly and turn from it?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Peter is both gracious and uncompromising. He grants that they acted in ignorance, as did their rulers, yet he does not let ignorance become an excuse that removes responsibility. He still calls them to repent. Ignorance may lessen guilt, but it does not erase the need to turn.

This speaks to how we handle our own sin. We are skilled at excuse-making: I did not know, I did not mean to, everyone does it, it is not that bad. These defenses keep us from the repentance that leads to forgiveness.

The healthier response is the one Peter calls for: to face our sin honestly, even sin we committed in ignorance or weakness, and to turn from it. Honesty about sin is not morbid; it is the path to having our sins blotted out.

Invite students to consider their own patterns. When God's Word or His Spirit shows me a fault, do I defend and minimize, or do I own it and repent? The willingness to say I was wrong, even when we did not fully realize it, is a mark of a soft and teachable heart.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Ignorance lessening but not removing the need to repent (vv. 17-19)
- The danger of excuse-making over honest confession
- Repentance as the path to having sins blotted out
- A teachable heart willing to own its faults

Discussion Prompts

- How do you typically respond when you realize you have sinned?
- What excuses do you tend to reach for instead of repenting?
- Why does facing sin honestly open the door to forgiveness?

Question 7

Student Question:

Peter commanded the crowd, repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out (v. 19). What do repenting and turning involve, and how does this command help us understand what God requires of those who would be forgiven?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Peter's call is clear and active: repent, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out. Forgiveness is not received by a vague mental assent but through repentance and turning, a real change of heart and direction.

Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of life. It is godly sorrow over sin that results in turning away from it (2 Corinthians 7:10). To turn again, or turn back, means to reorient one's whole life toward God, away from the sin and rebellion that characterized the old way.

Notice the purpose clause again, just as in Acts 2:38: that your sins may be blotted out. Repentance and turning are connected to the forgiveness of sins. This is consistent with the whole pattern of conversion in Acts, where believing, repenting, confessing, and being baptized are the response God calls for. Peter is preaching the same gospel he preached at Pentecost; the call to turn would lead, as it did then, to baptism into Christ (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

Help students see that this refutes any idea that forgiveness comes by faith alone apart from repentance and obedience. God genuinely calls people to turn. And the promise is glorious: sins blotted out, wiped away as though they had never been, and times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Repentance as a change of mind leading to a change of life
- Turning again as the reorientation of the whole life toward God
- Repentance and turning connected to the blotting out of sins (v. 19)
- Consistency with the conversion pattern of Acts (Acts 2:38; 22:16)
- The refutation of forgiveness by faith alone apart from repentance

Discussion Prompts

- What is the difference between merely feeling sorry and truly repenting?
- What does it mean to turn again, or turn back, to God?
- How does Peter's call here connect to the rest of the conversion pattern in Acts?

Question 8

Student Question:

Repentance is not just feeling sorry but turning away from sin and toward God (v. 19). Is there a specific area of sin in your life that God is calling you to turn away from right now? What would genuine repentance look like in that area?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This question presses the doctrine of repentance into personal reality. It is one thing to define repentance and another to actually turn from a specific sin we are clinging to.

Invite students to let the Spirit search them. Is there a habit, an attitude, a relationship, a pattern of behavior that God has been pressing on their conscience? Genuine repentance begins with naming it honestly rather than keeping it vague.

Then help them see what turning would actually involve. Repentance is not merely resolving to feel worse; it is concrete change, removing the temptation, making restitution where needed, seeking accountability, replacing the sinful pattern with obedience. Turning is directional; it moves the whole life away from the sin and toward God.

Encourage hope, not despair. The same verse that calls for turning promises that sins will be blotted out and times of refreshing will come. Repentance is not a punishment to dread but a doorway to freedom and renewal. God does not call us to turn in order to crush us but to restore us.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Repentance applied to specific, named sin
- Turning as concrete change, not mere feeling
- The promise of refreshing and forgiveness that follows repentance
- Repentance as the doorway to freedom, not condemnation

Discussion Prompts

- What specific area is God calling you to turn from right now?
- What would genuine, concrete turning look like in that area?
- How does the promise of sins blotted out give you courage to repent?

Question 9

Student Question:

Peter declared that Jesus is the prophet like Moses whom everyone must hear and obey, the One foretold by all the prophets, through whom the covenant with Abraham is fulfilled and every family of the earth is blessed (vv. 22-26). What does this teach about the authority of Jesus and about salvation being found in Him alone?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is the heaviest doctrinal block of the lesson, gathering up the sweep of Scripture. Peter quotes Moses: the Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers; you shall listen to him in whatever he tells you, and whoever does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people (Deuteronomy 18:15-19). That prophet is Jesus, and the warning is severe: to refuse to hear and obey Him is to cut oneself off from God's people.

Teach the authority this gives to Christ. Jesus is not merely one voice among many; He is the Prophet to whom every soul must listen. At the transfiguration the Father said the same thing: this is my beloved Son; listen to him (Mark 9:7). The words of Jesus, delivered through His apostles in the New Testament, carry the absolute authority of God Himself. We do not get to pick and choose; we must hear and obey Him in everything.

Peter also shows that Jesus is the fulfillment of the whole prophetic witness, all the prophets from Samuel onward proclaimed these days, and the fulfillment of the covenant with Abraham: in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed (v. 25; Genesis 22:18). The entire Old Testament was pointing forward to Christ. He is the offspring through whom blessing comes to all nations.

And this means salvation is found in Him alone. The blessing God promised, Peter says, comes by turning every one of you from your wickedness (v. 26). There is no other prophet to hear, no other covenant to enter, no other name by which to be saved (Acts 4:12). To reject Jesus is to reject the only Savior God has provided. This is the exclusivity of Christ, taught plainly and lovingly: He alone is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6).

Pastorally, this is both a warning and an invitation. The warning is real: those who will not hear the Prophet are cut off. But the invitation is wide and tender: God sent His servant to bless you by turning you from your wickedness. The same Jesus who must be obeyed is the Jesus who longs to save. Help students hear both the seriousness and the sweetness of His exclusive lordship.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Jesus as the prophet like Moses whom all must hear and obey (Deuteronomy 18:15-19)
- The absolute authority of Christ's word, delivered through the apostles
- The Father's command to listen to the Son (Mark 9:7)
- Jesus as the fulfillment of all the prophets and the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 22:18)
- Salvation found in Christ alone, the exclusivity of the gospel (Acts 4:12; John 14:6)
- The severe warning against refusing to hear the Prophet (v. 23)
- God's tender purpose to bless by turning people from wickedness (v. 26)

Discussion Prompts

- What does it mean that Jesus is the Prophet whom everyone must hear and obey?
- How does Peter show that all of Scripture points to Christ?
- How can we lovingly teach that salvation is found in Christ alone?

Question 10

Student Question:

Look back across this whole account, the beggar healed, the glory given to Christ, the call to repent and turn. Name one specific way the Lord is calling you to respond through Acts 3, and what is one step you will take this week.

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This capstone gathers the threads of the lesson into a personal response. Acts 3 is full of invitations: to give what we have, to deflect glory to Christ, to face our sin, to turn fully to the Lord, and to hear and obey the Prophet God has sent.

Invite each person to name one concrete step. Perhaps it is to give a deeper gift to someone in need, to serve quietly without seeking credit, to repent of a specific sin, or to submit more fully to the authority of Christ's word.

Keep the focus on the risen Christ at the center of the passage. Every theme here points to Him, the Author of life who must be heard, obeyed, and trusted. Transformation comes through turning to Him.

Close by reminding students that the same Lord whose name healed a lifelong beggar is at work in them, calling them to repentance, refreshing, and renewed obedience, and ready to bless them as they turn to Him.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Personal response to the risen Christ at the center of the passage
- Repentance and turning as ongoing in the Christian life
- Submission to the authority of Christ's word
- Transformation through turning to the Author of life

Discussion Prompts

- Which truth from Acts 3 most challenged or moved you?
- What specific step will you take this week in response?
- How can this group pray for and encourage you?