

Eternity Daily Bible Study - No. 357
Series: The Primal Church - Acts Chapters 1-8
Verses: Acts 3:4-8
Topic: Strength From God
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Acts 3:4-8 MKJV And fastening his eyes on him, Peter with John said, Look on us! (5) And he paid heed to them, expecting to receive something from them. (6) But Peter said, Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk! (7) And taking him by the right hand, he lifted him up. And immediately his feet and ankle-bones received strength. (8) And leaping up, he stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God.

Yesterday we looked at command prayer as part of the way God heals people through the power of the name of Jesus. Today we will look at the process of receiving strength from God.

1. The beggar wanted money but God gave strength and the means of production. God most often gives the power to make wealth not wealth itself. (Deuteronomy 8:18)
2. Peter gave the beggar what he had – healing in the name of Jesus. God calls us to give “what is in our hand” – whether it be spiritual or temporal goods. (1 John 3:16-18)
3. Peter acted “in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth” not in his own name or the name of an organization or denomination.
4. Peter took the beggar by the right hand, and gave some initial “lift” and God did the rest. There was a connection between the beggar and God’s servants.
5. There was an expectation of receiving good (verse 5) mingled with faith in Jesus name (verses 12-14 same chapter).
6. The strength became immediately available and resulted in great joy and praise to God.

The strong and the weak both are part of the body of Christ, and the strong are expected to help the weak. Christianity is built on giving and receiving – and we are each strong (and weak) in different places. A poor man may heal a rich man, a teacher may instruct a mechanic in the Scriptures, the mechanic may fix the teacher’s car in return. We are thus all in the process of lovingly making each other stronger.

Strength from God generally arrives via another believer acting in the name of Jesus. I hope that Eternity Daily Bible Study brings strength to your lives. Your encouragements bring strength to my life – and so on and so forth.

In each of these exchanges there should be an expectant “receiver” and an

empowered “giver”. No-one should be always giving or always receiving, but in each interaction we are one or the other. Missionaries give to the people they serve, they also receive from their supporters. Sometimes we are Peter & John, sometimes we are the lame man.

Tomorrow I will catch a bus to a board meeting in San Diego, my expectation is to be part of a community that strengthens each other in the Lord. I go to strengthen my brethren and in turn to be strengthened by them. What a change this is from the secular mentality of going to win or going to compete!

Christian community is at its best when we each give from our strengths and receive into our weaknesses.

Now what if we all share a common weakness e.g. we are all poor or all sick? This is where we need to cry out to God as a community for help and then to seek His strength in that situation. God can give people access to the means to get wealth, or bring healing (or a healer). We need to together go to prayer and seek strength from God in the name of Jesus.

Help tends to arrive via some sort of human connection. If we isolate ourselves from the body of Christ, then we cut ourselves off from the help that God can send our way. We make it that much harder to receive strength from God. If you want strength from God being at the Gate Beautiful of the Temple is a good place to start!

We tend to look for financial help first of all. That is natural and that is what the lame man expected. But God often assists us in non-financial ways. Peter and John had no silver or gold. They were not bankrolling the poor – they were empowering them! You may need money but God may give you a job or a good idea that could make money instead.

I have been praying for enough money for my own server. Instead I went to the local library and right there on the New Books shelf was a book on how to build your own server at a budget price. Reading the book has helped me to understand what I want and to find ways of getting it at about a third of the cost. This is the sort of help that God most often gives.

If you are feeling desperate like the lame men ask God to send you a servant of His who can meet your needs and lift you up and make you strong so that you can go into the Temple “walking and leaping and praising God”.

Blessings,

John Edmiston

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