



The Gathering message notes

re|ACTS - Week 5 - October 14, 2012 / Paul Jenkins

THE BIG IDEA: What you _____ is determined by
what _____ you.

The Take-Off

It's so good to have you with us as we continue this journey through Acts.

We've chosen to call this set of teaching "re|ACTS" because it really is about asking what we should do today regarding the things that we see in the early church? If they did something, should we do that same thing? They trusted that Jesus knew more than they did and so they obeyed Him and the world will never be the same.

We're asking what could happen to our world if we respond the same way they did.

If you were with us last week, you had the opportunity to hear from a man who seems to embody the believers that we're reading about in Acts.

It was easy to think of Koshey as having just stepped off these pages and into our church!

2 weeks ago as we looked at Acts 2 and the day of Pentecost we talked about how they weren't getting more of the Holy Spirit as much as the Holy Spirit was getting more of them.

I made this statement: the more we empty ourselves, the more room there is in our lives for God's power

It was so obvious to see that in Koshey's life, and today we'll see it played out in Peter and John's life in Acts 3.

1. Verse 1

Remember that chapter 2 ended by telling us that the church was growing daily

Verse 1 begins the first example of how people were being added everyday

It is interesting to me that the disciples didn't ditch the practice of what they believed

They were going to the temple to pray, and at the time when they would normally go

There is a movement in the faith today that is all about "freedom" and so anything that seems like a requirement gets labeled as "legalistic"

But even after the phenomenal outpouring of the Holy Spirit in chapter 2, these guys are still making sure that the routine things of the faith are part of their routines

Let's not kid ourselves: there is no verse 8 in this chapter without verse 1

2. Verse 2

Here we meet the man who will be a primary player in this story

We know from Acts 4:22 that he was over 40 years old

We know from this verse that he'd been carried to the same place at the same time every day for all those years

Can I just say that this is all some of us know?

We are crippled in areas of our lives and we have made being carried by others around us the normal routine of our lives.

While that may be somewhat expected before we meet Jesus, what we will learn in this story is that it is not what Jesus has in mind for anyone of us here

The world tolerates, but Jesus recreates.

3. Verses 3-5

You've got to get the dynamic of these 3 verses

First, the man asks for money

Second, instead of looking the other way and not making eye-contact (like most of us do), Peter and John looked straight at the man and even spoke to the man

Third, the man gave them his attention

Now, let's get practical here for just a minute: so often we ignore the cries of the hurting around us, and if we do at least acknowledge them, we get bothered and irritated when they expect something from us

Case in point: we planted The Gathering in order to be closer to those who are far from Jesus and are hurting, and so we can't be bothered when those same people take a shot at getting help from us

Hurting people reach out to helping people, and we can never see that as a hindrance to "real faith"

Peter and John didn't blow past this guys because prayer was more important. They took the time for the interruption. Do we?

4. Verse 6

The beauty of this verse is the simplicity of it: Peter clearly says there's something he doesn't have and there's something he does have

- He DOES NOT have silver or gold (It is interesting that he mentions the best, though, as if he'd have given it if he'd had it)
- He DOES have power for healing

Now, I have to confess that I tend to see this verse as very black or white, and I need to explain that
When I went to India this past time, I was struck by 2 things about the believers there: the extreme poverty that they lived in and the extreme power that they lived with

I came away reading this verse very differently: they had nothing BUT power to give, and I think Peter and John were the same

Perhaps we haven't walked with this kind of power because our "silver and gold" get in the way

The story is told that once Thomas Aquinas called on Pope Innocent II while the Pope was counting a large sum of money. "You see, Thomas," said the Pope, "the church can no longer say, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" Thomas replied, "True. Neither can it say 'rise and walk.'"

Does this mean that our only shot at walking in power comes through total poverty? I don't think so.

I think it means we have to ask ourselves if our possessions possess us?

Remember, **what you have is determined by what has you.**

Peter gave what he had, and what he had was the power of Jesus' name.

5. Verses 7-10

Peter didn't just pray. He gave away more than just words.

He helped the man up in order to give the power of God room to operate.

He prayed in faith, so he tested the prayer; so often we pray without faith and never move past that.

I love the progression in verse 8! He walked, then jumped, then praised God.

verse 10 - the people recognized the man and they couldn't deny the change

We are all about being agents of that kind of change in this area

The Landing

We need to wrap this up, but we can't until we know what this means for us on The Other Six days.

How do we really apply a message like this?

First, we've got to examine our hearts. We need to take stock of where we are.

This is a good time to pray Psalm 139:23-24 over yourself and let God search you.

How open are our hands? Really?

Do we apply this message by selling everything and living in poverty? Probably not.

Do we apply it by willingly opening our hands and releasing the death grip that so many of us have on the things we own? Probably.

What you have is determined by what has you.

I want Jesus - by the power of the Holy Spirit in me - to have all of me.

I'm praying that you want that, too.

Let's pray.