

Midtown Messenger

Volume 2

September 15, 2019

Issue 37

THE LAME MAN AT LYSTRA

By: Ronnie Scherffius

From the book of Acts chapters thirteen and fourteen we find the record of Paul and Barnabas on the first of Paul's missionary journeys. From Antioch of Syria the men travelled to the island of Cyprus preaching throughout the island from Salamis to Paphos converting among others Sergius Paulus the deputy of the country (Acts 13:1-12). From Cyprus Paul's company travelled to Pamphylia and then to Pisidia spending time in Pisidian Antioch and Iconium (14:14-15:4). Because of threats to their lives Paul and Barnabas departed from Iconium and came into certain cities of Lycaonia, namely Lystra and Derbe (Acts 14:5-6). It was at Lystra that Paul encountered a lame man whose faith and the miraculous work performed on him provides for us a striking lesson concerning the power of God's Word. Let's consider Luke's record and note three fundamental principles of the Word of God we can draw from the text.

“And there [at Lystra - RLS] they preached the gospel. And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked” (Acts 14:7-10).

Note first that **the word of God produces faith**. Luke notes that Paul perceived the lame man “had faith to be healed” (9). This was not a special faith given through some miraculous means but a faith in the resurrected Christ

preached by Paul at Lystra as he had in Antioch and Iconium (cf. Acts 13:16-39). Either through conversation or through the miraculous gift of discerning of spirits (cf. 1 Cor. 12:10; Acts 5:1-3), Paul realized this man's faith was such that he would attribute the miracle to Jesus unlike the heathen of Lystra (14:11-13) or even the unbelieving Jews (Mt. 12:24). Such a faith in Jesus Christ comes only from God's word (Rom. 10:17). Though the time of miraculous works has ceased the power of God's Word to produce a saving faith in sinful man continues (cf. John 20:30-31; Acts 26:16-18).

Secondly, we discover from this miracle that **the word of God gives strength**. Consider Luke's emphasis on the lame man's condition: “And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked” (Acts 14:8). In twenty-three words Luke notes three times the man's infirm state: “impotent,” “cripple,” and “never walked.” Additionally, Luke twice emphasizes the length of the man's condition: “from his mother's womb” and “never.” What was it that gave this man's lifeless limbs the strength to leap up and walk? No doubt it was the power of God working through his chosen vessel. What is the vessel through which man is strengthened today? Truly it is the written word of God! To the elders of the church at Ephesus Paul said, “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32). Paul admonished Timothy, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for

correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Just as the power of God gave physical strength to the lame man at Lystra hundreds of years ago, the inspired written word of God has the power to give spiritual strength.

Finally, from the record of the lame man at Lystra we learn that **the word of God provides coordination**. Noting again the reaction of the lame man we learn a lesson we can apply to God's written word: "And he leaped and walked" (Acts 14:10). This man had been "crippled" from birth and "never had" walked! We know from personal experiences that when a person has a surgery such as a knee or hip replacement they must have physical therapy to build strength and regain proper movement and coordination. This man not only received strength to walk **but** the ability to put one foot in front of another even though he "never had walked." As God gave that man the coordination to walk on legs once crippled, He gives us the coordination to walk upright spiritually. Jeremiah declared, "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). David wrote: "Order my steps in thy word" (Ps. 119:133), and "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not" (Ps. 17:5). Speaking of the time when the gospel would be declared Isaiah prophesied: "he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths" (Isa. 2:3).

In the historical records of Scripture, we can learn many valuable lessons. From the record of the lame man at Lystra we are reminded it is God's Word that produces a saving faith; provides the strength to help us walk the Christian life; gives us the coordination to plant our feet in the ways of God. May we ever strive to walk in the upright paths of righteousness.

Something More than Christians?

Sometimes people will ask, "What are you, religiously?" One who follows the Bible may simply answer, "I am a Christian." But this may not satisfy the one asking the question; he may insist on greater specificity: "I mean, what church are you a member of?" The Bible believer will simply say, "I am a member of the church about which you may read in your Bible, the church Jesus bought with His blood."

This answer still may not satisfy the one asking the question. "I mean, What denomination

are you a member of? Are you a Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, or what?" The biblical answer is, "I am not a member of any denomination, because denominationalism is unknown to the New Testament." If the conversation allows, it may be possible to note that the New Testament implicitly condemns denominational divisions (1 Corinthians 1:10-17). The church Jesus established is not a denomination, and that the Bible does not authorize the wearing of such sectarian names as "Baptist," "Lutheran," or the names of other manmade institutions. We have many friends in these churches. We love their souls and would not insult them. And yet, we must lovingly say what the Bible says.

Ironically, our friends who are members of the denominations *do not insist* that one must join any particular denomination in order to be saved. Our brother, F. B. Srygley observed this very point back in the 19th century.

"The man who will not be fenced in by 'doctrinal standards' made by uninspired men is not very highly esteemed by those who herd with denominational flocks and graze in sectarian pastures. Still, I am content to be simply a Christian while I live and go to heaven when I die; and all denominations admit that this can be done without joining the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, or any other party or denomination in religion..."

It is as clear as a sunbeam that a man can be a Christian without belonging to any denomination. . . What I want to do is to get men and women to be Christians without being 'appropriated to one denomination,' or to any denomination. . . There is nothing denominational in Christianity. People must be something more than Christians in order to be a denomination."

Notice that last sentence: "People must be something more than Christians in order to be a denomination." When we stand before God in judgment, we want to stand simply as Christians, and nothing more. One cannot walk by faith and be anything more than a Christian, for the faith once delivered to the saints condemns following manmade doctrine or being anything other than a follower of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:7; cf. Romans 10:17; Jude 3; Matthew 15:9).

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of September 15, 2019

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Jeff Harris
Scripture Reading: Kirk FitzSimmons

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Lupe Escojido
Fruit of the Vine: Clifton Rutherford
Offering: Bryant Siegel
Assist: Isaac Jobes, Manny Flonnory, Fred Scherffius

Sunday Evening: Lupe Escojido, Clifton Rutherford

Prayer

A.M. Closing: Kevin Sheeran
P.M. Closing: Don Lynn

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Anthony Scherffius
Sun. P.M.: Larry Nuckels
Wednesday: Kevin Sheeran

Ushers:

Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devotional: Bryant Siegel

Open/Close Building:

Sound System: Curtis Scherffius

Greeters: Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Prepare Communion: Dolan

The annual Summer Youth Series Awards will be held immediately following Sunday evening services Sept. 22nd. After the awards there will be a congregational fellowship meal. Please bring a potluck dish.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Marva Hill's brother, Marvin Trayler, passed away last week. Please keep the Hill's in your prayers. Steve Randle, who's cousin, John Clay, passed away last week.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 17, 24: Men's and Ladies' Tuesday Bible Class
Sept. 21: GEMS meeting here at the building @ 9am
Sept. 22: Summer Youth Series awards
Nov. 10-13: MidTown's Fall Gospel Meeting with Jason Rollo.

AREA EVENTS

Sept. 16,23: Digging Deeper with Wayne Jones @ Odem church of Christ
Sept. 21: San Pedro C of C Ladies' Day in San Antonio
Oct. 18-20: Recharge Youth conference @ Weber Rd.
Nov. 9: Bible Bowl @ Weber church of Christ

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Debbie Lynn (16); Sabrina Gonzalez (17); Dan Fielder (20)

Happy Anniversary: Bill & Pat Davis (19)

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Dee Gilpatrick
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Mickey Tisue
Clark Withers

SHUT-INS:

Faye Henderson
Sandy Malone

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Minister: Ronnie Scherffius
Secretary: Nina Siegel

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Class: 9:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM
Sunday Evening Worship: 5:00PM
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00PM

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of September 8, 2019

Bible Class.....105
A.M. Worship.....127
P.M. Worship.....89
Wednesday Bible Study.....82

Offering \$3,634

THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT

Each week will focus on reading a portion of the New Testament, each reading will only take 30 minutes:

1 Timothy—Philemon



SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli
New Zealand - James & Emily Cammock
Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore
Southwest School of Bible Studies - Cody Kilgore

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