

Jesus Finds His Church

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6

Peter Preaches Jesus

Read Your Bible

Read – Acts 3:12-26

Write your initials in the blank after you have read this passage. _____

Bible Vocabulary

refreshing (ri fre' shiŋ): times of revival, convicting power of God's Spirit

restitution (res' tə tü' shən): the act of restoring to a former state or condition

wot (wät): know

Complete the exercises.

1. Find six additional titles or names Peter used for Jesus in this passage.

A. _____

D. _____

B. _____

E. _____

C. _____

F. _____

2. Where did Peter say Jesus would be until the times of the restitution of all things?

3. Peter declared his hearers guilty of these four things:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

ANALYZE THE BIBLE READING

Have you ever heard of people flocking to see a famous person—a president or a movie star? Something similar can take place in church life when large groups of people gather for special meetings to hear an interesting speaker. In such situations, there is always the danger that the man will receive glory rather than God. In today's

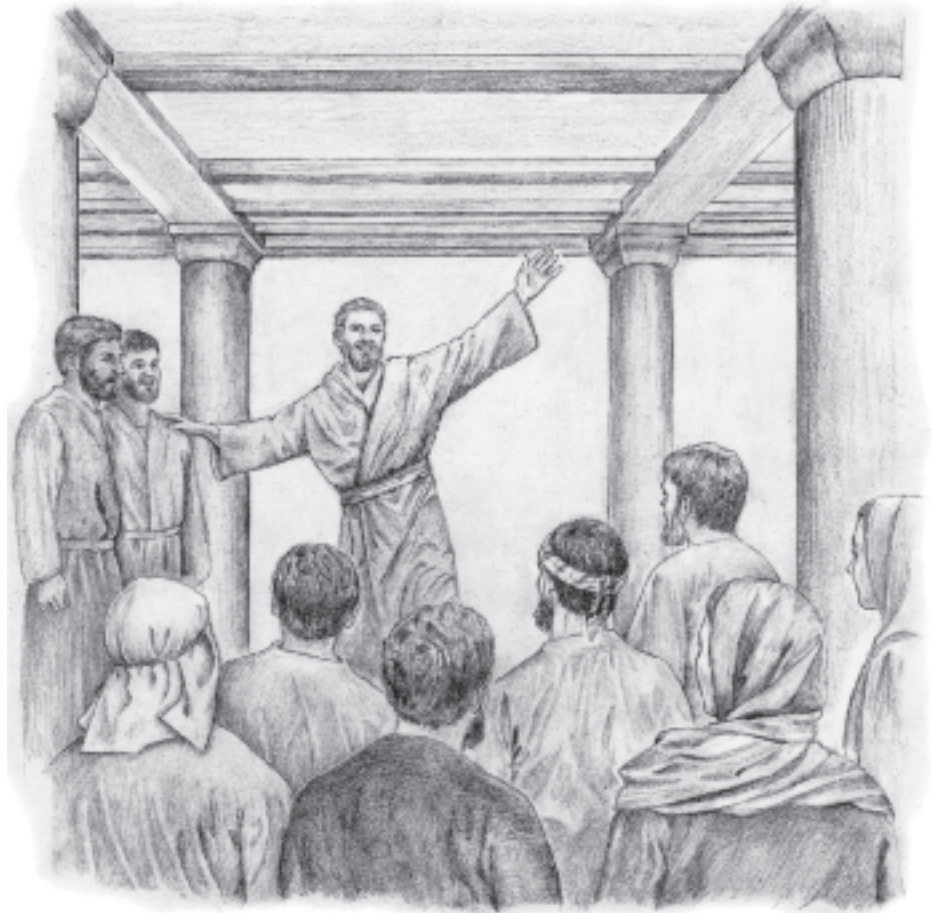
lesson, a crowd of people were astonished at the miracle of the lame man being healed. They looked at Peter and John as if they were supernatural beings. Some thought they must be especially good, holy men. Peter recognized immediately that if he and John took the credit for this miracle, they would harm the cause of Christ.

Lesson 6

Peter began to earnestly preach Jesus Christ to those who were gathered. He declared that God was glorifying the name of Jesus, the very One they had slain in their spiritual ignorance. Peter understood that his Jewish listeners knew the Old Testament Scriptures well. He told them three times that all the Old Testament prophets had spoken of Jesus.

As in his first Gospel message, Peter testified of the resurrection of Jesus. He and the other apostles had seen Jesus alive after His death. Peter powerfully established the connection between the lame man's healing and Jesus as the source of healing power. Faith in the name of Jesus had made this man receive strength in his useless limbs, and now he was walking and leaping right before their eyes. They could see the evidence. Peter declared plainly, "Jesus is alive and He is God's Son."

Peter clarified the choice that lay before his audience. They could repent and be converted, and then they would be forgiven of their sins and receive the blessing promised to Abraham, which is through Abraham's descendant, Jesus Christ. But Peter warned that if they chose to refuse to hear Jesus, they would lose their place in God's family. Peter urged his audience to realize that



salvation was the work of God. They could repent if God would send times of refreshing. This meant that while man needs to decide how he will respond to the Gospel, God must draw people to Himself. Man must repent of his sins, but God must call and convict.

The phrase "times of refreshing" also speaks of Jesus' second coming. Notice Peter says that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ. There is certainly a sense in which we receive spiritual refreshing from God now, but when Christ returns, He will restore all things, as Peter declares in verse 21.

UNDERSTANDING THE LESSON

Circle the letter of the answer.

4. When Peter saw the people crowding around, gazing at John and him, ____ .
- A. he was afraid they would be arrested
 - B. he was afraid the people would stone them
 - C. he thought they would truly believe he was an apostle
 - D. he recognized the danger of receiving glory that belonged to God



5. Which of the following are true?
- A. Moses said God would raise a prophet up like himself.
 - B. Peter referred to all the prophets three times in his message.
 - C. Peter called the Jews "children of the prophets."
 - D. All of the above.

Complete the exercises.

6. List two wrong ideas the onlookers had about Peter and John's ability to heal.
- A. _____
 - B. _____
7. What is God's work in saving people?
- A. He glorifies the name of Jesus.
 - B. He calls and convicts them.
 - C. He heals them physically.
 - D. He makes people repent.
8. A. Those who were under conviction, Peter gave two things to do: _____ and _____ .
- B. What would be the result of these actions?
- _____
9. What would happen to those who rejected the prophet's message?
- _____

Circle T if the statement is true or F if it is false.

- 10. **T** **F** When Christ returns there will be times of refreshing as He restores all things.
- 11. **T** **F** The healed lame man was a powerful evidence that Jesus is alive.
- 12. **T** **F** People gathered to see Peter because they had heard he was a powerful speaker.
- 13. **T** **F** When the Jews repented and were converted they could receive the blessing promised to Abraham.

THE BIBLE FOR TODAY

△ 14. Why did Peter refer so often to the prophets as he spoke to this Jewish audience?

△ 15. Why is it a serious mistake for a man to receive the glory that belongs to God?

BIBLE MEMORY

Write the memory verse, including the reference.

16.

REVIEW

17. For what two reasons did Peter and John heal the lame man?

A.

B.

18. What did the following people do as a result of the lame man's healing?

A. The lame man

 .

B. The people who recognized the lame man

 .

C. Peter and John

 .

19. What authority did Peter use to heal the lame man?

Read – Acts 4:1-12

Write your initials in the blank after you have read this passage. _____

Bible Vocabulary

impotent (im' pə tənt): feeble, powerless in some way

Answer the question.

1. How many men believed at this time? _____

Write True or False.

2. _____ John and Alexander were the only relatives of the high priest who opposed the apostles.
3. _____ The rulers wanted Peter and John to explain by what power they were able to speak in tongues.
4. _____ Peter said the rulers were guilty of having slain Jesus.

ANALYZE THE BIBLE READING

The people who had gathered to hear Peter preach were not the only ones who noticed what was taking place. The Jewish rulers who had called for Jesus' death were now enraged that His disciples claimed He was alive and active. These rulers heard that Jesus had risen from the dead and healed a lame man. The healed man was standing before the crowds, living proof of the life and power of Jesus Christ.

The Sadducees were especially indignant, for they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. To declare that Jesus was alive was to directly oppose what they taught. Furthermore, if Jesus had been raised by the power of God, this meant

they were guilty of a terrible crime against God.

Since by this time it was evening, the rulers decided to seize the apostles and put them in prison overnight. The next morning Peter and John faced the full assembly of Jewish leaders—the Sanhedrin, the Jewish law-making body. The Sanhedrin was the group that had delivered Jesus to the Romans to have Him crucified.

As Peter faced the Sanhedrin, we see again the amazing change the filling of the Holy Spirit had caused in his life. When Jesus was arrested, Peter had denied Him. Now he boldly stood up for Jesus. He openly declared the lame man had been healed in Jesus' name—the living Christ was the

only reason this man was now healed!

He went on to charge the Jewish elders with rejecting Jesus and unjustly killing Him. Peter was not trying to get even with or bully the Jewish rulers. This truth about Christ is a matter of life or death. Jesus was the only One to whom they could turn for salvation. Peter stated a great truth: “There is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

The truth of the resurrection of Jesus was new even to Peter. Peter had known for about three years that Jesus was a righteous man who lived in the power of God. He had even declared Jesus to be the Son of God. Since Pentecost, however, Peter and the other Christians realized that Jesus had died to save people from their sins. They were more convinced than ever that Jesus was both Lord and Christ. This knowledge both thrilled them and gave them an urgent message. It thrilled them to know Jesus had not lived and died in vain. He had carried out God’s will and provided for salvation for all people.

At the same time, this glorious truth gave them an urgent sense of responsibility. They knew now that Jesus Christ was man’s only hope for salvation. Keeping the Old Testament Law could not make a person right with God. Every man

and woman would need to make a decision either to become disciples of Jesus, or else to reject Jesus’ claim on their lives. Most of the rulers Peter faced that day were determined not to yield to Jesus. They were proud. They clung to their positions of influence and financial advantage. They hated the truth concerning Jesus so much that Peter’s and John’s lives were in danger.

Remember, Satan is behind all opposition to Jesus—he hates Jesus. He and his demons work hard to keep people from hearing about Jesus and turning to Him for salvation. When Satan finds people who are not yielded to Jesus, he may try to use them against the cause of Christ. However, we should see all people as candidates for salvation. They may rage at us; but if the truth of Jesus dawns in their hearts someday, they could become our brothers or sisters in Christ. This was the case with Saul, who later became the Apostle Paul. Saul delivered Christians to be killed, but after he turned to Jesus he became a mighty evangelist and preached in Jesus’ name throughout the Roman Empire.

Satan stirred the Jewish leaders to oppose Christ and to silence His apostles. Peter, however, was filled with the Spirit of God, and he continued to proclaim salvation through Jesus Christ.

UNDERSTANDING THE LESSON

Circle the letter of the answer.

5. For what two reasons were the Sadducees so opposed to the apostles?
 - A. They were afraid they would be in trouble with the Romans for unjustly killing Christ.
 - B. Peter had renounced the Jewish religion.
 - C. If Jesus’ resurrection had really happened, they were guilty of a terrible crime against God.
 - D. Peter was a better preacher than any of them.
 - E. The apostles’ preaching of Jesus’ resurrection went against their beliefs.

6. Peter kept Jesus central in his speech to the Sanhedrin by ____ .
 - A. claiming he had prayed to Him that night
 - B. telling the elders that the prophets had spoken three times about Jesus
 - C. declaring that Jesus had appeared alive for forty days after His resurrection
 - D. declaring that the lame man had been healed in Jesus' name
7. The main reason the apostles encountered opposition to their new faith was that ____ .
 - A. the Sanhedrin was afraid its offerings were going to diminish
 - B. Satan was working in the rulers' hearts because he hates Jesus
 - C. the apostles had disrupted a scheduled prayer meeting
 - D. their preaching about Jesus was leading people away from the Jewish faith

Answer the questions.

8. Who filled Peter with boldness? _____
9. Who raised Jesus from the dead? _____
10. Who was living proof of Christ's power? _____
11. Who is man's only hope for salvation? _____

THE BIBLE FOR TODAY

- △ 12. Peter confronted the leaders with the truth about Jesus. He could have spoken with much less offensive words. Why do you think Peter charged these rulers so bluntly with their sin?

-  13. Read Acts 4:13. What will best prepare us to speak for Jesus?

FOR MORE UNDERSTANDING

- ① In Acts 4:11, Peter quoted a prophecy from Psalm 118:22 that says, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner."

Circle the letter of the answer.

14. *Think!* What did Peter mean by quoting this verse?
 - A. The Sanhedrin should beware of opposing Peter because Jesus had commissioned him to be a church leader.
 - B. The Jewish rulers had rejected Jesus as a stone unfit to use, but God had placed Him as a cornerstone upon which the church would be built.
 - C. The stone that was rolled away from Jesus' tomb at His resurrection represented a foundation stone in God's kingdom.

BIBLE MEMORY

Complete the memory verse.

15. "_____ is there _____ in any _____ : for there is
_____ other _____ under _____ given among
_____, whereby _____ must be _____." Acts _____ : _____

REVIEW

Complete the exercises.

16. What would have happened if Peter and John had accepted the glory for healing the lame man?

17. To what did Peter often refer during his message because his audience knew the Old Testament Scriptures well? _____
18. What did the Jews need to do to be forgiven? _____

Circle *T* if the statement is true or *F* if it is false. Correct any false statements.

19. **T** **F** The onlookers thought Peter and John's ability to heal the lame man came from *evil* powers.
20. **T** **F** *Those who rejected the prophets' message* would no longer be part of God's family.
21. **T** **F** Those who *are convicted* must choose to repent and be converted.
22. **T** **F** God's work in saving mankind is to *force sinners to repent*.