

# Marks

## of Discipleship

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading  
Giving Time, Talents & Resources ■ Spiritual  
Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the Church

March 5, 2023

### Day 1: Acts 3:1-2

***One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer--at three in the afternoon. Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts.***

The Disciples in the very early church at Jerusalem would go each day to the Temple Mount for prayer. They took that opportunity to preach and teach. When we come together to pray we witness to our faith. We may not be talking to a crowd but we can encourage other Christians. In the first century seeing a beggar was an every day happening. Today we do not see many beggars but we do see a number of homeless persons. We can use our skills and abilities to ways to help those who are homeless.

**Question:** Have you ever seen a beggar and have you ever given money to one?

**Challenge:** This week try stopping for a time of prayer in the mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

**Scripture:** Matthew 8:1-22

### Day 2: Acts 3:3-6

***When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."***

The man begging would not have made direct eye contact with a passerby but just "looked" at them. To make direct eye contact is a gesture of confidence and a beggar is supposed to be subservient. Peter and John insist that the man look at them because they refuse to treat him as a thing. They insist that he make a move toward healing as they are about to heal him. Peter and John demonstrate a primary Christian belief - that no matter how low our fortunes go we are still made in the image of God and worthy of respect.

**Question:** When has someone asked you for something that you could not give them?

**Challenge:** If you did not have money, nor the ability to heal, what could you give the lame beggar?

**Scripture:** Psalm 42

### Day 3: Acts 3:7-8

***Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.***

Today the healed beggar would need about three months of therapy before he could dance. When God heals us we are able to dance right away. This is a sign of God's grace. The love of God is so strong that individuals who have experienced it can praise right away. When we come to God confessing our sin and invite Christ into our heart we find relief right away.

**Question:** What is your preferred way to praise God: Song- Dance- Praying -Service - Quiet - What?

**Challenge:** Think of a time you were sick and then better. Did you dance and sing and praise God? Why or why not?

**Scripture:** Psalm 96:10-13

### Day 4: Acts 3:9-10

***When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.***

The people that saw the beggar dancing about were surprised and amazed but they were not suspicious. In the first century people did not believe because the things they saw did not fit into their world view. Today we refuse to believe for the same reason. In the first century the leaders did not want to believe because it would threaten their position in the society. Today we do not believe because it does not make sense or cannot be proved.

**Question:** What is the last thing you saw that filled you with wonder?

**Challenge:** How would you react if you saw someone healed? Why?

**Scripture:** Luke 17:11-19

### Day 5: Acts 3:12

***When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?"***

The way we can tell if someone is doing healing is if they do not take credit for the act, but give the credit to God. In fact this applies to everyday life. To give credit to God for "my" accomplishments is nothing more than giving credit where credit is due. I am a steward of what God has given to me. My responsibility is to use the gifts wisely and in God's name. If I take credit for any good deed or action then my works are not effective in the long run. When I do a good deed in God's name then I acknowledge my part in the good deed. I am humble because I know that God will do a complete good work and I just play a part.

**Question:** What was the last surprise you had?

**Challenge:** Look back over the last few good deeds you have done - were they in God's name? If not, develop a habit of thanking God for the good deed and giving God credit in your prayers.

**Scripture:** Matthew 25:14-30

### Day 6: Acts 3:15-16

***You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see***

The key term in this verse is "complete healing." Only God can completely heal and only if the person is willing to be healed. God (for some reason) will not force healing on a person, but invites the individual to be healed. The name of God was used once year on the Day of Atonement to ask for forgiveness of sins. The High Priest would go once a year into the Holy of Holy's and use the name of God to have the sins of the people forgiven. Peter is saying that the name of Jesus has the same power.

**Question:** How would you feel if someone told you that you killed the author of life?

**Challenge:** Think over the last few weeks and see if there is anything you did for which you need forgiveness. Ask God and if necessary ask the person you have wronged.

**Scripture:** Genesis 50:15-21