

Acts 2_pt2

by Bill Gallatin

The church is God's work, not people's work, and we should respond to God's work rather than trying to do it ourselves.

Duration: 1:11:24

Scripture: Leviticus 4:13, Acts 3:19

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Bill Gallatin discusses the story of Peter and John healing a crippled man at the gate called Beautiful. The man was begging for money, but Peter tells him that he has no silver or gold to give. Instead, Peter offers him something far greater - a touch from Jesus Christ. Through faith, the man is miraculously healed and is able to walk. This story highlights the power of Jesus to transform lives and the importance of exercising faith in Him.

Transcript

This Bible study was recorded at Calvary Chapel of the Finger Lakes and was taught by Pastor Bill Gallatin. This evening's chapter, Bill, covers the balance of Acts, Chapter 2 and begins Acts, Chapter 3. When we had our pastors, we get together, all the outreach pastors from here, we just stay in touch with each other. It seems like the Lord's starting another Calvary Chapel in Henrietta with one of the guys and things are happening.

So what we do is that we, not only do we go with the pastors from here continually once a year to get away and seek the Lord for vision and direction, but now the outreach pastors that used to be with us want to get together once a year. So we go together and we're planning on getting together and seeking the Lord because we just feel like the Lord's given us the whole city of Rochester for all kinds of neat things. Well, we got together this past week to pray and see what the Lord's doing at the Sea Breeze and you've heard, you know, the blessings that God's doing there.

But you remember we had the Harvest Crusade, wasn't it? We broke ground for the East Coast with the Greg Laurie Harvest Crusade and they were so pleased with the results and the demographics of the city like Rochester that they really wanted to come back right away. And so we've been in contact and I've seen Greg a lot, you know, at conferences and get-togethers on the West Coast. He said, well, you know, we still want to come back.

We still want to come back. I said, well, you know, we can either use Frontier Field, but they don't seem to be open to anything and you know how the weather is. And they did come back East a couple times and then the Midwest and they got caught in snowstorms and rainstorms and outdoor stadiums.

They like indoor venues and so they really like the War Memorial, but the War Memorial would not respond back to us. The man who's in charge of it, they wouldn't call us back. We kept calling him and calling him.

Well, it just seems, the Lord's timing is so perfect. They're remodeling it and, you know, increasing the seating capacity, modernizing it. We got back from our meeting this past week and we found out that John Collins of the Harvest Crusade called again and said, hey, what do you think about 1998? We'd like to come back and maybe do a Rochester thing for four or five days and then shoot down and do Philadelphia back to back.

What do you think in October? So I said to Bob Lorenz, Pastor Bob Lorenz is kind of our liaison, I said, well, call War Memorial and just see what happens. And so Bob called War Memorial and finally got a hold of Jeff Calkins and he'd given us the month of October. That was the, we got the first opening.

So we're going to have another Harvest Crusade in October of 98 with Greg Laurie. So keep that in prayer, the War Memorial. So a lot of neat things happening just to spread the gospel and touch a lot of lives for Jesus Christ.

And it kind of fits in with what we're going to be looking at tonight. And you realize that the church is something that God builds and the work of the Lord is the Holy Spirit. It's not people.

It's not us having to do something and then get God to bless it. It's God doing something and we respond to it. And it's so difficult for people to learn that.

It's taking me a long time to understand. I don't think anybody gets the handle on it right away. I think that's why they get so frustrated with Christianity.

They think they have to do things for God, that they have to perform for God. And it's just the other way around. God wants to perform for you.

Do things for the church and through the church to affect the world with his power. And there's such a difference. And we're going to look at that this evening as we finish chapter two and go into chapter three.

So let's ask the Lord to bless his word. Father how we thank you for your word, the revelation of yourself, your love, your truth, your plan of the ages, your personality, the way you do operate through mankind and in this world. Lord, it's such a wonderful revelation of grace and power over sin and encouragement for those who fail, which would include all of us.

We pray tonight, Lord, that you'd enable us to be faithful to you as we share your word, that we not spiritualize or stray from the truth, but share it in such a way that the Holy Spirit could ignite each heart and bring your truth. It would not be doctored up by our personalities or our adjectives. That's Lord spoken in such a way that you could cause it to bear fruit in each heart, to open every ear, to take away any blinders or confusion or doubt, and to free people from condemnation and guilt and discouragement and sin, and to bless in a wonderful way.

And we pray, Father, that you'd be glorified above all. In Jesus' name, Amen. Last week, we got through verse 41.

As we looked at the day of Pentecost, it is typified in the New Testament. The church, or the Gentile bride of Christ, during the Age of Grace, the Gentile period, the times of the Gentiles, that when the bride is complete, the church will be raptured and then God again will be dealing with the nation Israel in a time that is called Jacob's Trouble. We are in the time frame Ezekiel 36 and 37.

We're in that time frame where we're just about on the...we're seeing it on the horizon when the Arab nations or the Islamic states, as Ezekiel prophesied thousands of years ago, the exact nations that are aligning right now with Russia, with the Third World War, or that begin the Tribulation period. And that is when the times of the Gentiles are over and when God Almighty begins the day of His wrath, or the day of the Lord, that He takes over the affairs of man and begins to control things. As Ezekiel states, he puts his books in the jaws of the nations and leads them forth into the Mideast.

And we're watching all the world, the United States being drawn into the Mideast, Europe being drawn into the Mideast, and even though we do not want to, all because of the problems with the Arabs and the Jews, with the oil of the Mideast and the need for it all and the political things that are going on. So we're right there at the doors. But during this age, Jesus Christ is calling out a people through the Holy Spirit.

And it's interesting how beautiful the real church can be and can operate in such a simple way. Now, certainly when God forms His bride or His church, He does not want it to be defiled by sin. Holiness and sin are mutually exclusive.

You can't, we can't go around claiming to be filled with the Holy Spirit and then defile someone by our own actions or defile ourselves or our minds or our children by our habits. So there are things that God will do in the church to purify, but it's the work of the Holy Spirit. The problem with the church today is that it begins to form all kinds of rules and regulations, much like the traditions of the Pharisees that are non-biblical, and the church becomes so legalistic that nobody wants to even go to church.

It's a miserable place. There's no joy at all to be given the gospel of grace and then be placed under the law and given all kinds of rules and regulations. You must do, you must perform, you must be.

God Almighty works those things out, and many of the traditions nullify the word of God, even in the church today. The same mistake being made as it was in the days of the Pharisees when Jesus came. But notice how God begins to bless immediately the church.

Verse 42, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine or the apostles' teachings. And fellowship. The first thing we see when the Spirit of God is moving, people love to fellowship.

People love to get together. People desire to go to church, not because they have to, to be saved. Another mistake is that there are portions of the church today that say, if you don't show up, you won't be saved, or you have to go to church to be saved.

Now, you usually go to a good church after you are saved because you love fellowship. You love clean and neat beauty of fellowshiping together, breaking bread together, having this clean and neat together. And in the breaking of bread, and in prayers, there's no set pattern.

And you see it especially in the different Protestant denominations. There's that absolute freedom how to develop and have your own services, your own way of fellowshiping together. Now, the tragedy in a lot of the church today is some people want everybody to be exactly alike.

You know, we've got to be cloned. And they come here because they're not satisfied with their old church or something they've come out of. And then after all, they say, well, why don't you sing this way in your church? This is the way we used to sing in our church.

And we kind of think, well, why don't you go back to that church? We just don't choose to sing that way. Now, it's OK for you, but it's a diverse body, and God has made it so diverse, and it's wonderful. And there is no certain way you have to sing, or that you have to raise your hands, or that you have to stand.

If God begins to develop a certain body of believers, then they just become comfortable in that way. And God says, that's the way you can do it. It's all centered around Jesus Christ.

But the basic thing is the apostles' doctrine, the teaching of the word of God. As Jesus said, and I think it's even Hosea said, my people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. And that's what's causing the problems in the church.

You remember the Pharisees would constantly challenge Jesus Christ out of their stupid traditions. And he was constantly correcting them with the word of God. He said, you do always err, for you know not the Scriptures.

When you know the Scriptures, when you know the apostles' doctrine, it keeps you from error. It directs your life. David said, thy word, O Lord, is a lamp unto my feet.

It tells us in the Scriptures that thy testimonies, O Lord, are my counselors. And it's interesting, I have been a pastor now twenty years, and I have met no one knocking on my door that reads the word of God on a regular basis that needs counseling or professional help. Thy word, O Lord, thy testimonies are my counselors.

And so the apostles went everywhere teaching the word of God, showing the importance of the word of God, their doctrine, their teaching, their instruction. All Scripture is given for instruction, to strengthen us, to guide us, to equip us, to conform us into the image of Jesus Christ. The entrance of the word of God is a light, and in his light we see light, the Scripture says.

It says he has magnified his word above his name. The word was made flesh. The total expression of God was made flesh and walked this earth, and then wrote out his whole physical being, his personality, his persona in the word of God from Genesis to Revelation.

Jesus said, when you read the word of God, you're eating my flesh, my work. This is my flesh. This is what sustains you.

This is what gives you life. It washes and regenerates the mind. You don't need pills.

You don't need somebody taking your hard-earned money so much an hour and bringing you back week after week and milking you for six months or the rest of your life and making you codependent. The word of God washes and renews the mind. Paul said, Peter, you've not been given the spirit of fear, but love, power and a sound mind.

You've been given the mind of Christ. You've been born again of the Spirit. You have the mind of Christ, and the word of God activates it, keeps us healthy.

It causes our faith to grow. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, not the tradition of the elders.

Jesus told the Pharisees, you traverse the earth and cross the oceans and make one proselyte of yourselves, of your traditions and your religion, and you make that person a more full-fold child of hell than yourselves, because all you do is teach traditions, and you give them rules and regulations. Jesus said, these men, these people that sit in Moses' feet and love to go around being called rabbi or father, father. Don't listen to them.

You do as Moses said, but don't do the deeds of the Pharisees. They lay these heavy burdens on you. They don't even live up to the word of God themselves.

The word of God sets us free, makes us free. Free indeed, Jesus said. And so, the early church saw the value of the Scriptures.

The apostles were uneducated men. They were men that never even had formal training in schools. They were ridiculed by the educators, by the formalists, by the Pharisees and the scribes and the lawyers of Jerusalem that served around the temple, and yet they knew the word of God.

It poured out of them. The Holy Spirit honored it because they read it, they knew it, they loved it, and so they continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, the importance of fellowship. You remember in the book of Jude, Jude's writing concerning the last days, and he speaks of in the last days there would be mockers or scoffers walking after their own lust.

These be men that are sensual, separating themselves, having not the Spirit. In other words, someone who is sensual and unclean may fellowship with believers for a while. Then after a while, they get a little uncomfortable because they don't have the Holy Spirit.

They are continuing secretly in their uncleanness, and then pretty soon, because of their sensuality and their desire for that sin more than fellowship, they will remove themselves. You remember in Hebrews 10.25, Paul's writing to the Christians there that were beginning to fall away and fulfill prophecy of the last days, that many would fall away just before the coming of Jesus Christ. He said, now don't be as the men or some as you see that day approaching, those that fall away.

Don't be keeping yourself from assembling together on a regular basis as you see that day approaching. So, fellowship again is the work of the Spirit in someone's life. There's a desire to fellowship when the Spirit of God is having His way in a person's life, because it makes the body healthy and it makes the person that's fellowshiping healthy.

Lookit, if you cut off the circulation of your small finger, your whole body won't die. The body will continue on, but atrophy will set in with the individual, that one little portion, and that part of the hand. A lot of people have spiritual atrophy.

They're cutting themselves off. Sometimes it's just a lust for TV or pleasure or movies or something other that's always at the night when it's Bible study night or prayer. Their priorities become shifted, and it's amazing how spiritual atrophy begins to set in.

Now, the church doesn't die. The church goes on, but pretty soon you see that atrophy set in, and pretty soon there's death. When the blood doesn't get to the extremity of that first part of the body, that appendage, pretty soon, little things begin to go wrong.

The feeling goes. The nerve's not working right. The temperature of the flesh, everything, heat, something goes wrong, and you see spiritually the same thing happens to an individual that breaks off fellowship.

So, fellowship on a regular basis is healthy, not just for the body, but for the individual that atrophy doesn't set in. You don't get cut off and wither on. But the life of the body just keeps flowing through everybody.

And in breaking of bread, just fellowshiping together, commemorating the Lord's death till he comes on a regular basis in the body that God has put you in. And in prayers, that marvelous desire, a desire to pray. And prayer isn't a duty.

It's not some mechanical thing that we have to do. Prayer is communion and fellowship and talking with God. Now, there are certain Christians that I love to fellowship with.

I just like to talk with them. I like to have them talk to me. I like to learn from them.

But no one can compete with talking to God. And that's what prayer is. I'm talking to God.

I'm going to my Father in heaven when I have a need or a fear or a doubt. And I learn that he's always there. I learn that he will help me.

I become confident in his love and his grace and his protection and his provision. I know that I have constant access when I have a need. And so, the early church was so aware of this.

They loved to pray. They loved to pray for each other. They loved to pray together.

Jesus said, whenever any two of you on this earth touch anything and agree on anything on this earth, you will have it of your Father which is in heaven. Agreeing together in prayer. And fear.

Remember, it says the fear of the Lord is clean. There's a wholesomeness, a holiness. The fear of the Lord is clean.

When someone begins to sin and defile themselves, they've lost the fear of the Lord. They're no longer clean. The fear of the Lord is clean, the Bible says.

And so, fear came upon every soul. Tremendous reverence. And many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

You remember in Mark chapter 16, verse 17, Jesus said to go out and to make disciples, or literally to teach, baptizing in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. And these signs shall follow. And Jesus spoke of miracles following salvation.

That you could depend upon it if you needed it. Not preceding the salvation, but following. And this is what I find interesting.

It says, fear came upon every soul and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. Now, that's interesting to me. It doesn't say by the three thousand and the apostles.

Now, remember, Peter already preached at Pentecost and there were already three thousand believers. But it's interesting, the miracles and the signs and the wonders were done by the apostles. It doesn't say by many or some of the three thousand.

Now, what am I saying? I'm not saying that there are no miracles today, that nobody here cannot perform miracles if God wants to perform a miracle through your life. We've seen miracles. I've seen miracles through my life praying for people.

But I do know that I'm no apostle. And I do know that there's a difference because the twelve foundations of the city, New Jerusalem in glory, are going to have the apostles' names. They did have certain gifts and powers given by God that I believe work in a more powerful, regular way than ordinary Christians.

And we do know also that during the church age and even now, there are gifts of the Spirit. People can be given gifts, miraculous gifts, the gifts of healing. And it's plural, gifts of healing.

There are people that are given gifts of signs and wonders to work mighty things. And you see, you could be in a situation, Jesus Christ is not going to forsake anybody, and you might be in a situation, you need a miracle to come right through your life for someone else. We were just sitting in a restaurant the other day, just to show you, you can't figure out how God works.

But it's interesting that just the other day we were having breakfast over at Denny's, an important meeting with the pastors over eggs and sausage and biscuits and gravy. And this woman walks up to me, and I didn't recognize her, but she recognized me. And she says, I've just got to tell you, I've got to tell you.

And I'm thinking, well, what? And I didn't know her, but she had been coming not too long ago, bringing a friend of hers that had lymphoma cancer. And there's just a hole for her. Bringing her to men's prayer meeting.

And like we normally do on Saturday night, as the Bible says, as the Bible says, if any of you are sick, bring to the elder. Call on the elders of the church, they'll anoint with oil, and God can heal and help that person. And so we just do it out of obedience to the Lord.

And evidently, this woman was bringing her friend that doesn't even come to this church for men's prayer. There was nothing else to be done. The doctor said there's no hope for her and all this.

And she said, well, we'll anoint her with oil. We started to anoint her with oil, and Pastor John prayed for her. And we hadn't seen her for some time, and we forgot all about it.

And the woman says, you can't believe what's happened. We said, well, what's going on? You remember Celestella? Well, my gosh, she's driving everybody crazy at Strong Memorial Hospital. And I said, well, why? She said, well, she's completely healed, and the doctors don't know what happened to her.

And she works as long as she's running around telling everybody that Jesus Christ has healed her. And yet there's another girl in our church who's got tremendous faith, and she's struggling for her very life. It's Celestella that we've prayed for with cancer.

You can't figure that out. I don't have an answer for all these things. But I do know that signs and wonders do follow.

We've seen these things happen. But here, there were 3,000 believers beside the 12 apostles, but God wasn't working the signs and wonders to them. It says many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

Does that mean that God doesn't do signs and wonders to us? Absolutely not. But I think the Holy Spirit's clearly showing us that there was something about the apostles that God handpicked these men for a specific reason. And it probably happened on a more regular basis through their ministry continually.

That's all. You might see a miracle tonight. You could go pray for someone tonight and see a miracle.

I've seen it. I've seen it happen in my own life. And yet I've prayed for people, I've seen them get sicker.

So I know I don't have the gift of healing. But I know that God heals. And all they believed were together and had all things common.

Just that there again, there's the true agape love. Someone who is freed from materialism. That they really have been touched by Jesus Christ, and if they see someone with a greater need, they are not so possessed by their possessions that they couldn't let go of it if there was a greater need in another home.

That's what it's saying. There is no legal mandate here. There's no thing that Jesus laid out of the apostles that you have to do this or have to do that.

It's nothing but spontaneous love from a heart that has been overwhelmed by Jesus Christ, and their possessions do not possess them. Jesus Christ truly possesses their possessions. Now, you remember the sad case of the rich young ruler who was a moral man.

He obeyed some of the Ten Commandments. His relationship with man was all right, and his parents. But his relationship with God was really lacking, and that's what Jesus put his finger on.

This rich young guy with all this potential came running up to Jesus, and a lot of people like that. They get an excited time, and they get all excited running up there, and sure enough, Jesus put his finger right in the guy's problem. He knew this guy was really materialistic down deep inside.

He liked things and money and power and influence, and so Jesus told him, he said, now I've done all these things since my youth, but what must I do to inherit eternal life? He said, sell all that you have and give to the poor and follow me. And the rich young kid looked at him and says he went away sad, for he had much possessions. He couldn't follow.

His possessions possessed him, and he couldn't follow Jesus. Oh, he would have moments when he'd get all excited, but it would, you see, it never would take him to the point where he'd just walk away. He couldn't do it.

He couldn't do it. His possessions possessed him. Now you see, that isn't a teaching where everybody has to do that.

In this particular young man's life, that was his, you see, his snare. It could be something else in someone else's life, and Jesus put his finger on it and said, now you walk away from this. You stop doing this.

You make a decision in this part of your life if you're going to follow me. But this young man, you see, his possessions possessed him. And that was his downfall.

Here they sold their possessions and goods and part of them to all men as every man had need. Just the love of God just moving in a mighty way. Far different than the legalistic pharisees and how people operate under the law of Moses and legalism.

And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple. They loved to go to church. They didn't just form coffee clutches and call that fellowship.

They didn't just have one or two or three friends and stop going to church and call that fellowship. They continued daily in the temple. They just loved to get together and breaking bread from house up.

They still had good home fellowship. You see, they were being consumed with worship and a new life, and they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And look at who builds the church.

Not evangelists, not pastors, not street ministry. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. No strain, no five-year plans or two-year plans or programs and committees to try and increase the Sunday school or get more people to show up or get more money.

God, you see, when God's pleased, he just brings people. They just show up. And that doesn't mean that you don't evangelize, that you don't teach, that you don't share your faith with us.

But, you see, God's the one who adds to the church. God's the one who does the saving. He does it all.

And so fellowship is wonderful. You don't form a church to try and build something. A church is a place of fellowship.

When a church becomes something other than a religious business or an organization rather than an organism, then the spirit is dreamed and clenched and pretty soon you've got nothing but dead legalism and ritual and traditions, and a church has to resort to entertainment and gimmickry to get people to come. Or some way to affect the emotions and the senses with gold and fancy altars and incense and candles and robes to do something to the emotions. But the spirit, nothing's happening to the spirit.

And so then they begin to use traditions to tell people you're saved just to keep them showing up. And then they form all kinds of things. And no one's spirit's being touched.

And no one's lives are being converted. And there's no victory over sin. There's no change.

And people get discouraged and condemned and dislike Christianity. There's no joy in legalism. There's no joy in having to do something to be blessed.

But there's joy in God Almighty working in us through his Spirit, through his Son Jesus Christ, performing the work for us and in us and through us. And so we gather together. That's what church is, gathering together and fellowship.

Now, Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. That would be three p.m. in the afternoon. Now, the Jews had three times of prayer at the temple, nine in the morning, twelve at noon, and three p.m. the afternoon service.

And notice, they're born again and they're going to church. Not because they have to, but because they desire it. They desire to be around God's people.

And so, it's about three o'clock in the afternoon. They're going up to the temple, and a certain lame man from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple, which is called Beautiful. That would be the eastern gate that overlooks the Valley over toward today.

It's not the exact gate that we see, the famous gate that you'll look today, but it would be in that general area. That gate, by this time, had been destroyed by Titus and probably buried under rubble. It's interesting that a famous archaeologist named Warren was doing an excavation outside the eastern gate that we see today that was sealed up by the Turks, and the ground gave way and he fell underground, and as he lit a torch, he looked and there was another full gate underground, just like the one above ground.

A full gate that was buried underground. And when the Muslims found out about that and saw that there's another gate that would predate Arab existence and Islam by hundreds of years, they immediately put a cemetery there to stop any more excavation. But beneath the eastern gate that you see today, in the famous picture of Jerusalem, when we go over there every year, is another full-size gate, the eastern gate, and it could be that's the foundation or the gate Beautiful that it speaks of here.

What's interesting is there's an indication in the Psalms that when Messiah, or Jesus Christ, returns, the king returns, the Psalmist shouts, lift up your heads, O gates, for your king cometh. And there's going to be a mighty earthquake on the Mount of Olives and Mount Zion, and it's going to change the whole Temple Mount, and more than likely, the original gate is going to push right up, and that's the gate we're going to come back and go through with Jesus Christ at the second coming, the original gate that is underground there. Very possible.

But anyhow, there at the Temple Mount, they've got this beggar, they've laid there, he's been lame since birth, never can hold down a job or anything, probably can't even get somewhere to buy a lotto ticket, to ask alms of them that enter the Temple. Now, here's a man who has been crippled all of his life, nobody can help him, his friends have sympathy for him, and so they take him to church and put him in front of the doors of the church, just hoping that when people go in, they would give alms. Now, the alms were the excess of the tithe.

Now, when you tithe the Lord, which was under the law, you had to tithe almost before the year. The legal tithe under the Mosaic law was 30 percent, and the different tithes for the temple and the temple taxes and the offerings. The alms were above and beyond, that would be an act of love or kindness out of your pocket to someone else, just to show love.

Beside the tithe, you were legally bound to tithe in the Old Testament under the law. Aren't you glad that the New Testament church had changed and now it's under grace and it's out of love and out of a joyful heart that you give to God. But he's there to ask alms of them that entered into the Temple, who seeing Peter and John about to go into the Temple, asking alms.

He's saying, hey, you got a dime? You got some shekels? And Peter fastening his eyes upon him John said, look at us. I've got some food stamps here for you. He didn't, did he? He didn't have any money.

It's interesting, Peter didn't make any offer to give him any money, either. I'm sure if somebody had a welfare program going then, they'd probably see that it's so cruel. Here's a guy that's lame and needs money for food and can't take care of himself, and you're going to tell him about Jesus? He said, look at us.

And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. See, he resigned himself to this life of just being a beggar, living in that state, just asking for money to continue the rest of his life. And obviously, here the Spirit of God does something far different than even a social program that a lot of people will even do today.

So Peter said, silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. Now, I would imagine if someone heard that, that was a non-believer, they'd say, how cruel, how stupid and foolish.

This man needs food, he's lame, he's a cripple, and you're going to tell him about Jesus? You're just giving him Jesus? But you see, here's a man who had a greater need than to walk, really. He could stay on the welfare the rest of his life and be crippled, you know, hoping in people's mercy, or he could exercise faith. And it shows us here that when someone truly does exercise faith from the heart, they change.

They don't end up back at the gate or at the flop house the next night for another meal, drunk again. The conversion is real. There's an absolute effect when it's real.

This man never showed up there again. In fact, immediately the conversion was so real, he never resorted to that again and then to go through the motions all over again. His life was drastically changed, and isn't it wonderful that the apostles weren't into the prosperity doctrine? What if Peter did have a pocket full of money, because he's a king's kid, and he had tremendous faith, and rather than serve Jesus Christ just with the clothes on his back and the sandals that he had, trusting in the Lord like Jesus did, as a real servant of God, he just didn't have a lot of money to say, here you go, man, here's five bucks.

Get you through the rest of the week and go on into worship. Peter didn't give him money, and it seems like he had none to give. There's an interesting proverb.

I think it's Proverbs 8, verse 19, that my fruit is better than gold, fine gold, and my revenue greater than choice silver, the Lord says. The thing he really needed, you see, was a touch from Jesus Christ to stand on his feet and get his life going, and Jesus Christ can supernaturally do this. If Jesus Christ can do that to a man who's been crippled from his life, he can do that to someone here tonight who's not that crippled.

If Jesus Christ can turn a life around like that, it's that cripple that someone had to carry into a gate. Everybody here tonight walked into their own strength. Just think what Jesus Christ can do for you.

Now, notice the faith. There's a lot of faith involved here from different directions and different measures. Now, notice Peter just didn't say it and then walk in.

Now, Peter must have sent something. First of all, God gave Peter a measure of faith. At this point, the man had no faith whatsoever, so you can't give the man credit for his faith, for his healing or initiating it.

He had no faith. He was just looking for money. He wasn't looking for a healing.

He had no concern for Jesus Christ. He didn't know who Jesus was or even care about Jesus Christ. So, here's nothing but the pure grace and love of God and the concern and the sensitivity of a man of God for the need of someone else.

He wasn't rushing in the church, pushing by somebody to get the best seat in the temple. He was aware of people around him in the parking lot or walking in the front door. He was looking.

He saw a need on somebody. He just didn't rush through the door to get in and get a seat. He was aware of those around him.

And the most important thing in his life is to share Jesus with somebody, to be free from my own problems enough to see the need in somebody else and be concerned for someone else for a change. And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and his ankle bones received strength. In the Greek, it says they snapped and they popped as the ligaments reinforced themselves and went back to normal.

They actually made a noise. And he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. You see, it was a true touch from God, and the first thing he wanted to do was go into the temple.

Not go back to what the old problem was or some other area. The first thing he wanted to do was get in with the rest of God's people. A true touch.

And all the people saw him walking and praising God, and they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the beautiful gates of the temple. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together under them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

Now, there's this tremendous column made on the eastern wall or portion of the Temple Mount of Solomon overlooking the Kidron Valley. That is what's called Solomon's Porch, and that is what is around the Court of the Gentiles. Actually, it goes from the north to the south on the far eastern edge of the Temple Mount.

And the eastern gate, or the beautiful gate, went up through Solomon's Porch. And so that's where many people would congregate under those amazing colonnades all along the length of the temple area. And they all came running over.

Multitudes of people were always in there fellowshiping, and the money changers were there, and the sellers of doves where people wanted to buy offerings to glimpse of the priest into the courtyard or the inner part of the temple for sacrifice. And so there's a lot of people in that area. And they saw this, and they knew this man.

And notice, as soon as Peter noticed something, when Peter saw it right away, and there's this, there's something about it, and I must caution everybody, that when God begins to use you, the ignorance of the people that your life may touch usually comes forth and they kind of look at you as though you're something. Be very, very careful. And when God begins to use you, if you pray for somebody or in any way, and people begin to be enamored with your life, you better be careful and correct it immediately, because it can be destroying.

You see, that's what destroyed Satan. He was a creative being, and God gave him abilities to bring God's glory. And God gave him the privilege of having influence over others with those abilities.

And Satan began to want people to look to him, forgetting that the only reason anything was being done to his life is because God enabled him. And that's what got him cast out of heaven. That's what got him to disfavor with God beyond redemption, and defiled the whole universe, and has been destroying lives ever since.

Thinking we're something, or we're doing God a favor by being used as him, and we're all very expendable. God won't skip a beat. The kingdom of God or his plan will not skip a beat or miss anything if I drop dead or someone dropped dead here tonight, ever.

The mighty, mighty, mighty saints of old have gone by the wayside, and the church has continued on. Salvation has continued on. God is still glorified, and the gates of hell have not been successful.

They will not stand. They will not succeed. Ever.

God will just replace us and go on through the power of his Holy Spirit. It's very important. Peter immediately, and you see, this is why God used Peter.

This is why God used them. There's nothing in them, and Peter is so faithful. He saw, he could sense they're enamored with him, almost to the point where they're going to worship him as though there's something special.

And Peter thought, he answered unto the people, You men of Israel, why marvel you at this? Or why you look you so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk, as though we had something to do with it. You know, someone may come up to him and just go, Oh, you are so wonderful. You are so anointed.

Would you pray for me? Would you touch me? And see, Peter is so faithful to the Lord. We're really nothing. Now, notice how faithful Peter is to correct these people who are almost trying to make him, put him on a pedestal as though he's some mighty man of God or something.

The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, have glorified his son Jesus. Don't be looking to me and try to put glory on me or exalt my ministry. And it's interesting, Peter didn't claim to have the healing ministry or try to form a healing ministry.

In fact, you never see that in the book of Acts. It's amazing. If the church wants to stay faithful, it has to stay faithful to the book of Acts to see how the Spirit operated and why the Spirit did miracles when it did miracles.

Notice, he did not use this as a platform for the gift of miracles or the gift of healing, any more than after Pentecost he used that phenomenon for a teaching on the gift of tongues. You never even mentioned it. Remember that.

And here he says, immediately, every time there's a miracle or a supernatural phenomenon, a work of the Spirit, it's always to exalt Jesus. And the apostles are always faithful to speak and teach of Jesus, not even the Holy Spirit. Or, I fast a lot, and so God has given me this anointing and this power because I went off into the hills for 30 days and I just sought God's holiness and power.

You know, you hear that stuff and it makes you want to, yuck. Some of these guys on television, on the radio, I love to read the Word of God and see how true men of God react when God does something through them. The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, have glorified his son Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied him in the presence of Pilate when he was determined to let him go.

Now, here they're ready to call him a God and praise him and glorify him, exalt him, and he says, You're the one that killed Jesus. Right away he's preaching. Let's get back to Jesus, who you rejected.

This is who did this, the one that you put on the cross. That would change their attitude toward him quick. But you denied the Holy One in the just and desired a murderer to be granted unto you.

As you remember the account, they desired Barabbas, and Pilate gave them Barabbas to be politically correct and expedient, to maintain his office and not create problems, even though down in his heart he claimed and he declared as a judge, as a Roman judge, he said, This man is innocent. Yet to be politically expedient and correct because of the fear of his office, he went along with the crowd knowing he was wrong. Gave into the pressure, the pure pressure of the voters, a quibbling, a weak man.

You denied the Holy One in the just and desired a murderer to be granted unto you, and you killed the Prince of Life, the one that really gives us life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses. And through his name, now he's making sure they know, it isn't through me, it isn't through my anointing or some gift of healing or power that I have or holiness. It's through his name.

This man walks that was lame. This man's life has been changed because of Jesus, not me praying for him or laying hands on him. I've heard people make statements, Oh, you're better now.

Oh, I prayed for you. I'm glad the money came through. I prayed for you.

Touching the glory. Be careful. If the money came through, you're healed because Jesus and his love did something for you.

So, Peter's very careful. It's his name. I'm not some kind of a special person.

Through faith in his name. In other words, faith in the name of Jesus. Believing.

A decision to believe. That's what faith is. A decision to believe what the Word of God challenges me to believe.

Not to understand. Faith is never a decision to understand or the ability to understand. It's always a decision to believe and to act upon the Word of God.

And so, it's through his name and through faith in his name that's made this man strong whom you see and know. He ain't faith which is by him. Now, here Peter's faithful to say even the faith is a gift from Jesus Christ.

You can't even boast about the faith. Have given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you. Now, you see there are different areas and measures of faith.

Now, first of all, you remember Peter's very faithful to say. Now, Peter had the initial faith. The man didn't.

But what did Peter do? He did not leave it up to the man because the man had no faith. So, here you see faith and operations. Two different measures of faith.

Yet, all being given by God to perform a miracle. And Peter's faithful to bring it all out and point all the glories back to God. Notice, Peter had the faith to begin.

He grabbed the man and lifted him up. If he hadn't have done that, probably the man would have sat there and not even tried. But, Peter grabbed him, remember? And until Peter grabbed him and picked him up, nothing happened.

And then that man responded. Now, remember in Matthew 17.20 when Jesus cursed the fig tree? No, that's later. This is in Matthew 17.

I think that's when he came down off the Mount of Transfiguration after he revealed himself and he showed his glory to Peter, James and John. Moses and Elijah appeared and God the Father spoke. They came back down off the mountain and here's this man with a lunatic boy, demons were just throwing him in the water in the fire trying to kill him all the time.

And they've been trying to cast out the demons and everything and the cloud was there. And Jesus cast the spirit out of the boy. And then they said, why couldn't we do this? And Jesus said, because of your unbelief.

You're at a stage, and this early in your walk, it's difficult right now in a case like this. He said, now, if you have the grain of the seed of a mustard, or this small tiny seed which grows into the largest herb there is, he said, there will come a time when you'll say unto this mountain, Be ye removed, and it shall be removed. In other words, if you have the faith of a grain of mustard, as you continue to walk with me, you continue to grow, I will bring you to that point and you're going to be able to do the same thing.

You'll even go beyond that. Any mountain, any obstacle, you'll have the faith to remove it. And then he said, this time comes forth by prayer and fasting.

In other words, if you really want to cast those mountains, if you really want this kind of faith, you better have a life of prayer and fasting and walking close to me. Now, that faith, each one of us can grow into that measure of faith, but it's up to us. Now, there's an initial faith that's given to us for salvation, and that's the gift of God.

Remember, it's all from God. Romans 12.3 says, every one of us is given a measure of faith. I think it tells us in Ephesians 2, verses 7 and 8, that you're saved by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves.

It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. That's even the gift. God gives us the gift of faith to believe that he might save us.

But then after that, there's that gift of saving faith, and God gives every single one of us a measure of faith, and then faith grows and increases like the mustard seeds as we read the word of God. And then also, Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 12, verse 9, that some people, there's a measure of faith beyond everyone else. It's the gift of the Spirit.

But we all have different measures that God gives us, and you can have your own faith grow depending on the amount of the word of God you read and what you believe. Faith is a decision to believe what God tells me, not to understand it. And when I act upon it, God honors it, and then my faith increases.

But faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Every single person here that says you've been given the gift to believe by God, you say, well, maybe if I'm not really born again, if I can't believe, maybe God doesn't want to give me the gift. I don't know anywhere in the Bible where someone did not want to believe that God didn't give them the gift to believe.

That's how much God loves you. If you want to be saved, God will give you the faith to be saved. If you want to remove the mountain, if you want to increase faith, read the word of God.

Walk with Jesus Christ. Learn the beauty of prayer and fasting, and see what it will do for you. Yes, every man is given a measure of faith.

And here's an interesting thing. As soon as Peter exercised his faith, and that man responded by his faith that God gave him, you see, Peter's being faithful to say, the whole thing was all done by God Almighty. All the faith came by him, by Jesus Christ.

Not by Peter. And Peter wouldn't walk away if the guy wasn't healed and blame it on the lack of faith of the guy, like so many people do, because all the faith comes from Jesus Christ. When it all works together and people respond and trust and believe, it releases God to perform the miracle and work in your life.

He gets all the glory. He's pleased, and you're blessed. It's like a child.

You see, faith is much like the child who refuses to take the first step and walk. It's all programmed in the child. The muscles, the strength of the hips, everything is designed as soon as the sperm hits the egg.

God and the DNA and the marvelous genetic code of the human life is programmed at that time. There's a certain age if the child will start to exercise by his own will and decision to move his leg and step and not run around that little stroller and bouncing off the tee he's set in the living room the rest of his life. And mommy and daddy won't be afraid of him falling and bumping his nose and letting him walk.

You see, God's programmed it that he'll walk, his legs will get stronger, the stability will come, the coordination will come, and pretty soon he'll be running and jumping. What if he refuses to do it? He'll be crippled the rest of his life. He can grow to the age of 30, and the atrophy will come in, the muscles will never develop, he'll be crippled all his life simply because he didn't want to fall down.

He's afraid to bump his nose in the beginning, and the parents encourage him to walk. That's the same way faith is. Don't be afraid to fall.

God's going to be there. He says, underneath us are his everlasting arms. Don't be afraid to step.

He's not going to let anything happen to you. You're a child, and that faith will grow. The mustard seed will begin to grow.

Now look at the grace and the beauty of God. Now he's already told them, you see, and this is the true gospel. You must tell the person their sin.

Get people out of their denial and their social programs and blaming it on other people. You know, I'm a victim and all this stuff. You've got to tell the people that you are in trouble because you've done what you've done with your life.

But I have good news for you. I have a blessing. Jesus Christ is willing to forgive you and free you and turn your life around if you turn your life over to him.

Notice what Peter does here. He says, you're responsible for rejecting the Son of God. This one who healed the cripple, you're wondering who did it.

It wasn't me. It wasn't John. It was the very Messiah and Savior that you rejected, that your hand put to the cross.

You killed the Prince of Life. But God raised him from the dead. Your deed did not stand.

The power of Satan was nullified by the love of God, raising his son from the dead. That's the love of God for you. He overcomes our sin and our ignorance.

Now look at what Peter says here. Talk about grace. And now, brethren, I want not through ignorance you did it, as did also your rulers.

Now here's the love of God. All the way back in Leviticus, chapter 4, verse 13, God made a provision in Levitical law for all kinds of sin, and one of the offerings for the sins of Israel was the sin of ignorance. A special offering for the sin of ignorance.

God prefiguring Jesus Christ going to the cross through the ignorance of his very own people. As John said in John chapter 1, he came unto his own and his own refused him. They actually...what am I trying to say? If you try to give something, his own received him not.

That's it. Thank you, Rosemary. Thank you, Lord, for my help me.

And here's the grace of God. What did Jesus say on the cross in Luke? Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. He was the fulfillment of the Levitical sacrifice for the sin of ignorance.

If he came to fulfill all the law, his life, if he fulfilled all the animal sacrifices, all the meal offerings, every aspect of sin, and so on the cross, Jesus said, knowing and in their ignorance, they turned him over to Pilate. They rejected him. They said, grab us, and yet God still loved these people so much, just as much as he loved you and I. Jesus on the cross says, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

And that carries right down to your life tonight. No matter what you've done, Jesus has said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Your sin is covered at the cross if you'll put your faith and your trust in Jesus Christ who died for you.

Peter goes on to say, but those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, so hath he fulfilled. Psalm 22, Isaiah, chapter 53, Zechariah, all the prophecies of the Old Testament speaking of the rejection of Jesus Christ. Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Isn't it wonderful to know my sins are blotted out, no matter what they are, by the blood of Jesus Christ. There's no more charge against me. When God opens the book at that last day, the book of records of what my sin has been, there'll be no record there.

My name's been transferred to the book of life, the Lamb's book of life, and all the charges of against Bill Gallat and all the thirty years of sin and blasphemy blotted out. There's nothing there. Your sins can be blotted out, everything you've ever done.

In the time of refreshing, isn't it wonderful? Jesus said, I will not leave you comfortless or without refreshment or strength. I will come to you. I will send you the Holy Spirit to be refreshed daily on a continual basis by the Holy Spirit of God, because I've repented.

I've put my trust in the Lord. And he shall send Jesus Christ as before was preached unto you, the second coming, whom the heavens must receive until the time of restitution of all things which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began." In other words, the time when all the promises and the covenants to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David's promises of the kingdom on this earth, everything will be brought to pass. For Moses truly said unto the fathers," now notice, here's the verification that Moses wrote Deuteronomy, because they're quoting Deuteronomy.

Moses is the writer. He wrote Deuteronomy. "...Moses said truly unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me.

Him shall you hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you, and it shall come to pass that every soul which shall not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." Interesting. The lies that reject Jesus Christ as you watch the slow deterioration of a life who continues to reject Jesus, just as the word of God says. Now, what was Jesus like? Why would Moses say a prophet shall come like unto me? Well, first of all, look at the lives of Moses and Jesus.

Moses survived being put to death by a decree, by a leader, to kill all the infants. Jesus Christ survived Herod's decree to kill all the babies. You had Jesus Christ leaving the wealth.

It was actually Jesus Christ being raised by another man, not his own father, Joseph. You had Moses being raised by another man, the Pharaoh, not his own father. You had Jesus Christ leaving the wealth of his father to deliver his people.

You had Moses leaving the wealth of the Pharaoh to deliver his people. You had Moses being rejected as a criminal and a murderer, having to flee. You had Jesus Christ being rejected as a criminal, a common criminal, and put to death.

You had Moses after he was rejected in his first attempt to deliver his people disappearing for a long time. Jesus Christ has disappeared from his people, the Jews, for a long time. While Moses is gone, he becomes a shepherd and he marries a Gentile bride.

Jesus is a shepherd. He's taking a Gentile bride to church. Moses came back a second time and delivered his people.

Jesus Christ is coming back a second time and he will deliver his people. And there's many, many more that I could tell you. I'll let you look at it and get blessed.

So it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. You are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our father, saying unto Abraham, and in my seed shall all children of the earth be blessed.

That one seed that comes out of the loins of Abraham, and then God made that statement to David. It's a seed, not seed. The seed being Christ, Paul brings out in the book of Galatians.

That seed is Christ. And not only to the Jews, but all of us Gentiles are being blessed. We've been given new life by Abraham's seed, the son of God, the Messiah, the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, God's own son, whom man crucified, but God raised him from the dead for our eternal life, for our redemption.

And unto you first, the Jew, God having raised up this son, Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities. Only God can turn us away from our iniquities. I've met so many people in so many programs, and they may get in a program, and that program deals with one iniquity, but then they get into another iniquity.

They're free from that iniquity because of the program, but they sometimes are driven into another iniquity. And you run out of programs. Why not just take the one step and get right to the guy who can free you from all iniquity, Jesus Christ.

He's got the power. He's got the love. Or you're never going to be free from that iniquity, no matter what you do.

What kind of a program? You can get hypnotized. You can say whatever you want to, read this, read that, take that in the mail, join this. Now, what happens? How can we be free from our iniquity? We're crucifying Christ.

Put to death. And see, then that old sin nature is gone. It can't just continue.

That old man's dead, and then Christ comes in and dwells within you. You've got a new life, a new power growing within you, giving you power over that iniquity, leading us away from that iniquity, giving us new desires, fulfilling us in ways that are free from iniquity. I'm fulfilled now in doing things that are not sinful.

Life is satisfying. I've experienced the prince of life. Shall we stand? Well, we got through it a little longer than I thought, but I had so much in chapter 2, seeing what the Lord does, I pray that God has spoken to your heart and you realize how wonderful it is.

I would pray that there's nobody here tonight that really hasn't made that decision for Jesus Christ yet. Or maybe you did some time ago and something in your life has turned you off to Christianity and it's made you doubt Jesus. Doubt people, doubt organizations, doubt movements, but don't doubt Jesus.

Maybe tonight you need to renew yourself. You need to open your heart afresh and realize how wonderful he can be, and he's the one that will fulfill, and he's the one that will free from iniquity. He has the power, and he'll fill you with a love that doesn't compare with anything on this world, a love and a peace and a joy that you can't comprehend.

It's past understanding and it's wonderful. Father, we thank you what the real church is like and can be like. We thank you, dear Lord, for the faith that you will grant to us and the opportunity to have our faith grow.

And we pray, dear Father, that we be faithful to you, that Jesus Christ would receive all the glory, that you would begin to use us, Lord, and oh, what fulfillment, what joy it is, what purpose in life when you begin to use us. Oh, it's wonderful, Lord, to see you touch lives, to see your light come upon darkness, and to turn a life around. Oh, Lord, we thank you for that.

Enable us, dear Lord, to be faithful to you and give you all the glory. And, Lord, may we be sensitive to those around us as we enter into places that we might offer Jesus Christ. In his name we pray.

May the Lord richly bless you as you continue to study his word. If you'd like more information about Steady Tapes by Pastor Bill Gallatin, please write for our free catalog or call 716-398-3550. Our address is

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