

Acts 3:11-16

“Why Christians should enjoy better health”

“While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon’s Colonnade. ¹² When Peter saw this, he said to them: ‘Fellow Israelites, 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? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. ¹⁴ You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵ You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶ 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 completely healed him, as you can all see.’”

Recall last week’s text.

As Peter and John made their way to the Jerusalem Temple, a lame man, who never walked in all his forty years, begged for money.

They informed him that they were broke.

Peter took the man’s hand and said

“We don’t have money, but what we have, we give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.”

The cripple immediately felt strength in his legs, then walked and leapt while praising God.

The word translated *walk-walking* literally means “walk around.”

Covid19 restricted nearly all of us in some way.

We weren’t free to go where we wanted.

In his forty years, this cripple had never walked.

Not even with a walker.

Imagine what it was like for him in the first hours—walking, leaping, and checking out things.

His life changed suddenly and he praised God.

By this time, Peter and John walked from the *Beautiful Gate* to an area called *Solomon’s Portico* on the perimeter of the Temple grounds.



The healed man clung to the Apostles.

Word of the miracle brought a crowd.

People thought Peter and John possessed magical power to heal.

For good reason.

No one ever saw that fellow walk before.

Suppose a lame person lay at the church building front door begging for help.

A birth malady crippled him

For decades, someone carried him to the building entrance every Sunday.

No one in town ever saw him walk.

Suddenly, people saw the man not just walking, but running, jumping, and praising God.

Would you be curious?

That’s why the crowd gathered that day.

Astonished folks came running.

Peter asked the crowd:

“Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?”

Peter meant:

“This miracle didn’t happen because John and I possess special power or holiness.”

Ever watch a faith healer in person or on TV?

Of faith healers, you can be sure of two facts

1. They intimate that they have special power or connection with God.
2. They always say: “To keep this ministry going, send money” to PO Box, Podunk, USA.”

Two weeks ago, our reading contained this statement: Acts 2:43 NIV: “Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.” Until I reflected on the implications of verse 12 in today’s text, I didn’t

notice the precise wording of: “wonders and signs performed by the apostles.”

In today’s text, the apostles deny that their power or goodness had anything to do with the lame man’s miracle healing:

“Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?”

They seemed to say: “We didn’t perform this wonder. Our power or godliness had nothing to do with making this lame man walk.”

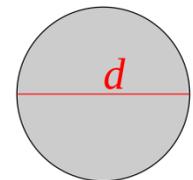
As I rechecked the Greek text of both verses, I found something very interesting.

One of my teachers said that the most important words in any language are the prepositions.

You probably remember that prepositions are those usually short words like *at*, *into*, *in*, *toward*, and *out*.

Recall the term diameter?

***Diameter* means to measure through--Dia meter.**



Dia (διὰ) is the Greek preposition in Acts 2: 43; its primary meaning is through.

Why many translators chose to translate *dia* using a secondary meaning by I do not know.

Did they want to elevate the apostles’ status?

For some reason we like to make god’s of human beings—“gods we can see,” e.g. Hollywood *stars*.

As you can see in our Acts text today, the apostles deferred completely to God.

"Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?"

The NASB & TEV do render the preposition *dia* in Acts 2:43 as *through*: **"Many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles."**

The apostles didn't provide the power, source, or the ability.

They merely acted as conduits. Without a well, a million miles of fancy pipes remain useless.

Without a generator, miles of showy wire won't power the tiniest light.



Of the business cards I've acquired over the years, the late Wes Hirschman's retirement is most unique.

Wes's card identified him as the CEO of DIDDLY SQUAT.

You understand what Wes meant; Peter and John knew their power and ability amounted to the same.

We are mere wires and pipes of God's power.

Two, Peter stunned the crowd with an accusation.

The God you worship—the God of your ancestors exalted someone. **Whom did He exalt?**

This *someone* didn't arrive in a limousine guarded by a hundred secret service men,

or a pope-mobile with Swiss guards, or chariots accompanied by generals.

He arrived as a child in poor circumstances. King Herod tried to murder the child Jesus; religious bigwigs later succeeded in killing him.

The crowd had been a part of that "legal lynching." Think of a being at a public trial before a governor.

The governor listens to witnesses who trump up charges against the prisoner.

After reviewing the evidence, the governor wants to release the accused.

You join the crowd demanding the falsely accused person's execution.

Then you learn this info about your involvement:

"God . . . has glorified his servant (child) Jesus.

"You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he (Pilate) had decided to let him go.

You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you . . .

You killed the author of life . . ."

This expression "author of life" deserves far more attention than inflation and the war in Ukraine (I'm not demeaning either serious event). Most commentators rightly connect this expression to the salvation that Jesus won on the cross for us.

Yet there's more to the story of "life's author."

Strong Bible evidence links this term with other Scriptures.

Reference Bibles rarely show the full significance of “author of life.”

Jesus didn’t begin his existence in Bethlehem. He preexisted as God.

He created everything in the Cosmos.

As Peter’s fellow apostle stated in John 1:1-4:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.”

To defeat evil and death for us, Jesus, the Word took the form of a servant, lived in human flesh, and fully humbled himself even to . . . the cross.¹

During Jesus’ ministry, he selected and trained 12 apostles to see his life, learn his teaching, and to witness his death, resurrection, and ascension.

John also wrote 1 John 1:1, 2.

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ²The life

appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.”

Decades ago, an Oregon Senator told the story of a young man who struggled to find a girl his mother would like. He dated several girls and brought them home. His mother found major flaws in each one. She didn’t like the way one laughed, or dressed, or did her hair, talked too loudly. He despaired finding a girl his mother would accept. One day, however as he walked across the campus, he met a girl, who looked just like the pictures of his mother when she was college age. She dressed like his mother, laughed like his mother, liked the same foods his mother liked. Perfect, he thought, she invited the girl home, but his father didn’t like her.

It’s that hard to find a satisfactory president, or governor, senator, leader, or preacher.

Someone will always be dissatisfied.

Suppose a person appears whom you don’t like, and you do your best to get rid of him.

You and many others succeed and you drive him away--maybe because you envy him.

But one day you discover that this person you so despised, did many things to benefit you. You never knew about his goodness till he was gone.

¹ See Philippians 2: 5-11

You discover further that He was not just a good person. He was God in human flesh—the Creator who spoke the Universe into existence—the stars in all the galaxies.

He designed and planned DNA, human minds and all the fascinating creatures that occupy the earth. He created all animal life, every type of green plant. He created and set in motion all the physical laws on which we depend.

He perfected family love and personal relationships.

You need to see the connections between Acts 3:15, John 1:1-4, 1 John 1: 1, 2, and Genesis 1:1. Our text: “You killed the author of life . . . but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.”

Key words:

Word	pronounced	Greek
Author –	<u>arkāgón</u> -	ἀρχηγόν
Life -	zoās	ζωῆς

Acts 3: 15

beginning	arkā	ἀρχῆ
life	zoā	ζωῆ

John 1:1-4

beginning	arkās	ἀρχῆς
life	zoās	ζωῆς

1 John 1:1, 2

ἀρχῆ is also found in the Greek (Septuagint Version) of Genesis 1:1; “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

Many of Jesus’ contemporaries rejected him.

When they discovered the truth about his identity, some repented, believed in Jesus, and found forgiveness.

How have you acted on your knowledge of Jesus?

How did you treat him last week?

What will you do with your knowledge of him?

Faith in Christ makes us worry less.

Trust in his way leads us to forgiveness.

Worry and hate combine to become two of life’s most destructive forces.

Coroners never list them as the Cause of Death, yet worry and hate kill more people than Covid19 and all other diseases combined.

The Lord willing, we’ll speak more of Jesus’ healing power in coming weeks.

In the meantime, I pray that all will come to know and put their trust in Jesus, the *author of life*, the designer, builder, and power of the Universe.

We must become conduits of his love, faithfulness, and forgiveness.

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