

Acts 3:1 – 12

One of the habits that Bible students should try to develop is to read the Bible for thought content rather than paying attention to the chapter and verse divisions. These chapter and verse divisions were added many centuries after the actual writing of the Word of God. These chapter and verse divisions are very helpful for finding one's way around the Scriptures, but they have no authority for interpretation. That is why reading for thought content is important.

This morning we are going to be reading a passage from the Book of Acts. But before we get to that, I would like to get some points made about the Book of Acts relating to reading for thought content. Since I know that the recording of this teaching will go onto the website along with the teaching notes, I thought it would be good to get this into the record for anyone who listens to these teachings in the future. When we read the Book of Acts for thought content, we see the following major sections:

Acts 1:1 – 2:46, 47. Events leading up to, including and immediately following the initial outpouring of the gift of holy spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 3:1 – 6:6, 7. Events including and developing from the healing of the man who was born lame.

Acts 6:8 – 9:30, 31. Events leading up to, including and immediately following the death of Stephen. This includes outreach to Samaria and our introduction to Saul (Paul) of Tarsus and his conversion.

Acts 9:32 – 11:20, 21. Events leading up to, including and immediately following Peter going to the house of Cornelius (a Gentile) and the first outreach to the Gentiles.

Acts 11:22 – 12:23, 24. Events include Barnabas bringing Saul (Paul) to Antioch and the beginning of Antioch developing as a teaching and outreach center. This section also includes the imprisonment of Peter and the death of Herod.

Acts 12:25 – 16:4, 5. Antioch becomes a teaching and outreach center that includes outreach to the Gentiles and Paul's first missionary journey. This leads up to the first Church Council at Jerusalem and the events immediately following.

Acts 16:6 – 19:19, 20. Continuing outreach to the Gentiles by Paul and those traveling with him. This culminates with Paul in Ephesus and all Asia hearing the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks (Gentiles).

Acts 19:21 – 28:30, 31. Events leading up to, including and developing from Paul's trip to Jerusalem. This includes Paul being sent to Rome for a hearing before Caesar.

Now we are going to go to Acts 3 and from what has just been laid out, you can see where this record will fit in. It is really the first event after the initial outpouring of holy spirit and Peter's sermon in the first section. The earliest time possible for this event, the healing of the man born lame, is later in the afternoon on the Day of Pentecost. The initial outpouring of holy spirit recorded in Acts 2:1 –4 probably occurred at the first hour of prayer. After the twelve spoke in tongues, it was noised abroad, and a multitude gathered (Acts 2:6). This would have taken time. When Peter spoke to the people, it was the third hour of the day (Acts 2:15) or about 9:00 am. Then we get to Acts 3.

Acts 3:1

Now we see it is the 9th hour or about 3:00 pm. So, the earliest it could be is later in the afternoon on the Day of Pentecost. We see that this record begins with Peter and John. But it's not the same Peter and John that we've read about in the Gospels. Now they are men of body, soul and spirit. They have been born-again; they have that incorruptible seed; they have been endued with power from on high. They may look the same, but we know that they have changed.

Acts 3:2, 3.

This man was lame from his mother's womb. He has never walked a day in his life. Later, if we read to Acts 4:22, we learn that this man was over 40 years old at this time. He was laid at the gate of the Temple daily. This means that he would have been at the gate of the Temple when Jesus was in the Temple. Yet, Jesus never healed him. Thinking back to the teaching on John 5, healing this man must not have been a work that the Father gave Jesus to do. This is one more illustration that ministering gifts of healing is done by the revelation manifestations.

Acts 3:4

Peter fastened his eyes on the man. This was not just a casual glance. We know that the spirit is an inner man, that when Peter fastened his eyes on this man (with John as well), that it was not just Peter's eyes but the eyes of the inner man as well, the eyes of Christ within. Remember that Peter and John had been going to the Temple continually according to Luke 24:53. This man was laid there on a daily basis. But now, Peter is seeing him like he has never seen him before and with an inspired utterance he says, "Look on us".

Acts 3:5, 6, 7.

Peter had received revelation; now he acts on that revelation by the manifestation of believing – believing to bring to pass the impossible at his command according to what he has received by revelation. He is speaking and acting “in the name of Jesus Christ”. To speak and act in the name of Jesus Christ is not just a “magical phrase” like “abra cadabra”. It means we are speaking and acting as his representatives with all the power and authority that he himself has. That’s what our power of attorney is. When Peter spoke in the name of Jesus Christ by the manifestation of believing, he did so with not one iota of a doubt that what he was saying would come to pass. In verses 6 and 7, we see inspired action and inspired utterance. And the man immediately received strength in his feet and ankle bones.

Acts 3:8 – 10, 12.

When we read in John 5 some time ago that Jesus said “The Son can do nothing of himself”; if that was true of Jesus it is certainly true of Peter and John and they expressed that in verse 12. It is Jesus Christ who did the work to fulfill the Father’s will and completely paid the price of redemption. And we are his ambassadors, his representatives to carry out this work now. It is not because we are so good but because he was so good and that the Father is so good.

So, there it is. The first record of the Church in action after the initial outpouring of holy spirit. Believers acting as representatives of Jesus Christ with God at work within them to will and to do of His good pleasure. Believers that were created in Christ Jesus unto good works which they carried out. That is the Church today.