



“The disciples burst onto the scene and announce their presence by continuing the work of Jesus, in the way Jesus did. The first miracle of the Spirit-filled disciples is the healing of a paralytic outside of the Temple in Jerusalem. Join us this week as we compare and contrast Jesus’ two paralytic healings recorded in the Gospels with the disciples’ healing in Acts 3.”

INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY:

When have you experienced someone “being Jesus” to you? Share the story...

MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 3:6

“I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!”

SCRIPTURE READING:

Acts 3:2-10

“2 And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple. 3 Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. 4 And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.” 5 And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. 6 But Peter said, “I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!” 7 And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. 8 And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God, 10 and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.”

Luke 5:17-26

“17 On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal.[a] 18 And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, 19 but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. 20 And when he saw their faith, he said, “Man, your sins are forgiven you.” 21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” 22 When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, “Why do you question in your hearts? 23 Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? 24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the man who was paralyzed—“I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home.” 25 And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God. 26 And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, “We have seen extraordinary things today.”

John 5:1-17

“After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. 3 In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. 5 One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be healed?” 7 The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.” 8 Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” 9 And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath. 10 So the Jews[d] said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed.” 11 But he answered them, “The man who healed me, that man said to me, ‘Take up your bed, and walk.’” 12 They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk’?” 13 Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. 14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.” 15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. 16 And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. 17 But Jesus answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus performed many miracles. What was the purpose of these miracles (hint: there are many purposes!)
2. When Jesus healed a paralytic, what similarities did you see between the two healings? What differences did you observe?
3. Look at the context for these miracles in their respective books (check out the healing in Capernaum in all three Synoptic Gospels) and see where the author of these books placed these miracles and seek to deduce why he may have done this (it will help with understanding the purpose of these miracles/signs).
4. Compare and contrast Jesus' healing of a paralytic with the healing by the disciples. How are they similar, how are they different? What significance do these similarities and differences have?
5. Why are the disciples performing the same miracles/signs that Jesus did in His earthly ministry? What significance does this have?
6. What do we do with these miracles? Are we supposed to perform them today? Could God do them through His disciples? Does He? Why do you think that?
7. Many commentators suggest that the disciples performing these miracles is a sign to the world that this is the new way that the Lord is now working through the early church instead of Christ Himself. Jesus sort of "tags in" the Holy Spirit through the church. What are your thoughts about this? Are these miracles merely symbolic, or are they something more?

CLOSING PRAYER ACTIVITY:

Invite someone to close the group in prayer.