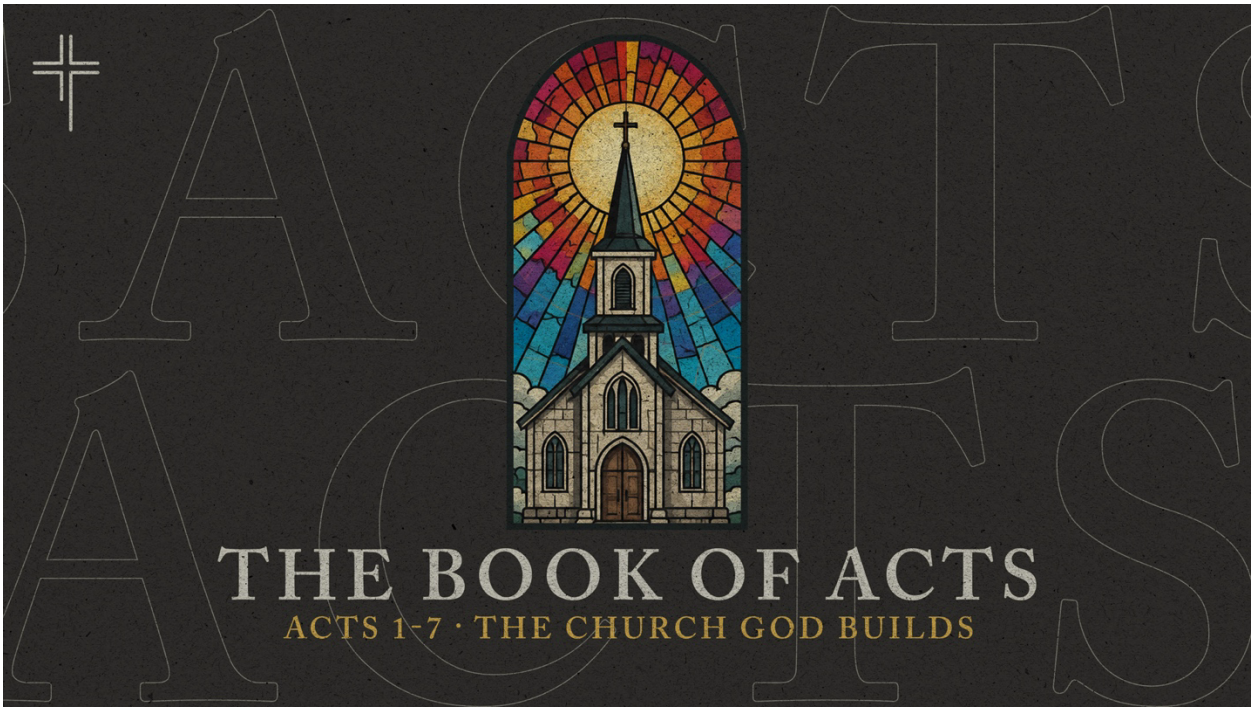


IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
SERIES: THE CHURCH GOD BUILDS
SCRIPTURE: ACTS 3:11-26
DATE: OCTOBER 25, 2026

INTRODUCTION

Our lesson today begins with the second scene in a story involving Peter and John. In the first scene, they encountered a man who had been lame since birth. Each day, he was carried to a gate at the temple to ask for alms. When he asked Peter and John for money, Peter responded, "I have no silver or gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" (Acts 3:6). Miraculously, the man was healed. He then entered the temple with Peter and John, walking, leaping, and praising God. Because the man had sat at the temple gate daily, many people recognized him and could see that he had been healed.

As we enter the second scene, the man is clinging to Peter and John. Perhaps he is expressing his gratitude. After experiencing such a remarkable healing, wouldn't you want to stay close to the people through whom God had healed you?

More and more people notice the healing and gather around them. Luke tells us that they are at Solomon's Portico, a covered area within the temple. Later, Acts 5:12–13 again describes signs and wonders being performed through the apostles while they gather at Solomon's Portico. Perhaps this became a common meeting place for Christians in the temple.

Peter sees the gathering crowd as an opportunity to speak, much as he did at Pentecost. One purpose of the signs and wonders was to provide an opportunity for the apostles to bear witness about Jesus. Peter's sermon emphasizes four key truths: (1) the man was healed in Jesus' name, (2) Jesus, whom they had rejected and crucified, was raised from the dead, (3) Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecy, and (4) the people must repent.

Like his sermon at Pentecost, this message is bold and demonstrates the Holy Spirit working through him.

Text

Acts 3:11-26

> 11 *While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran*
> *together to them in the portico called Solomon's.* 12 *And when Peter saw it he*
> *addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do*
> *you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him*
> *walk?* 13 *The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God*
> *of our fathers, glorified his servant*[b] *Jesus, whom you delivered over*
> *and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release*
> *him.* 14 *But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer*
> *to be granted to you,* 15 *and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised*
> *from the dead. To this we are witnesses.* 16 *And his name—by faith in his*
> *name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith*
> *that is through Jesus*[c] *has given the man this perfect health in the presence of*
> *you all.*
>
> 17 *"And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also*
> *your rulers.*18 *But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his*
> *Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.* 19 *Repent therefore, and turn back,*
> *that your sins may be blotted out,* 20 *that times of refreshing may come from*
> *the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you,*
> *Jesus,* 21 *whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things*
> *about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.* 22 *Moses*

said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. [23] *And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.’* [24] *And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days.* [25] *You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’* [26] *God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.”*

Explanation

The Man Was Healed in Jesus’ Name

The crowd is “utterly astounded,” and Peter explains how the man was healed. He makes clear that the healing did not occur through his own power or piety. Peter is not claiming to possess extraordinary abilities or personal righteousness that somehow earned him the ability to perform miracles. Instead, he redirects the crowd’s attention from himself to Jesus.

Peter explicitly explains that the healing occurred through faith in Jesus’ name. Verse 16 says, “And his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong.”

What does it mean to be healed *in Jesus’ name*? It does not mean that simply speaking Jesus’ name functions like an incantation or that certain words possess supernatural power in themselves. The emphasis is on the person and authority of Jesus, in whom faith is placed.

The names Peter uses for Jesus are significant. He describes Him as the Holy and Righteous One and the Author of life. Jesus is sinless and righteous, the divine Son of God who took on human flesh. As the Author of life, He is the source of life itself; all things were created through Him and for Him (Colossians 1:16–17). John 1:2-3 tells us that “All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.” God’s raising Jesus from the dead further demonstrates His authority and vindicates Him as Lord.

Faith in Jesus’ name, therefore, recognizes who Jesus is and trusts in His authority. Peter cannot claim the power to heal or the righteousness that belongs to Jesus. Jesus is the Holy and Righteous One and the Author of life.

Faith in Jesus also recognizes that He is alive. Peter emphasizes that God raised Jesus from the dead. The healing provides visible evidence that the risen Jesus continues to work through the Holy Spirit and His apostles. The man is standing before the crowd because of the power and authority of the living Christ.

Jesus, Whom You Crucified, Was Raised

Peter's boldness is on display. He does not shy away from confronting the crowd with its responsibility for Jesus' death. Yet his purpose is not simply to condemn them; he wants them to recognize their sin and turn to Christ. Forgiveness requires acknowledging our sin and responding to God in repentance and faith.

Peter addresses his audience as "Men of Israel" and reminds them that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God of their fathers—has glorified His servant Jesus. The God who had faithfully worked through Israel's history has now acted decisively through Jesus.

Yet this same Jesus, whom God glorified, was delivered over and denied by the people. When Pilate offered the opportunity to release Jesus, the crowd chose Barabbas instead (Luke 23:18-25). They rejected the Holy and Righteous One and called for the release of a murderer. They put to death the Author of life, but God raised Him from the dead.

Peter does not minimize their guilt. At the same time, he acknowledges that they acted in ignorance, as did their rulers. They did not fully understand the plan God was accomplishing through Jesus' suffering and death. Their ignorance did not make their actions innocent, but it helps explain why Peter can confront their sin while still extending an invitation to repent.

Peter himself understood what it meant to fail to recognize God's purposes. He had denied Jesus. And Peter too had to responded in belief and repentance for what he had done.

Jesus also recognized their ignorance. When Jesus was being crucified, He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Now Peter offers forgiveness to those who rejected Jesus, if they will repent and turn to Him.

This is an extraordinary demonstration of grace: the very people who rejected Jesus and participated in the events leading to His crucifixion are being offered the opportunity to receive forgiveness through Him. This is Peter's hope and the reason he preaches.

Jesus Fulfills Old Testament Prophecy

As in his sermon at Pentecost, Peter appeals to the Old Testament's testimony about Jesus. The apostles were witnesses of Jesus' resurrection and ascension, and their testimony agrees with what God had already revealed through the Scriptures.

Peter summarizes this point by explaining that God fulfilled what He had foretold through the prophets: that His Christ would suffer.

Jesus had made this evident to the disciples after His resurrection. Luke 24:27 tells us that Jesus, beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, explained what the Scriptures said concerning Himself. Later, in Luke 24:44–47, Jesus explained that everything written about Him in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms had to be fulfilled. He also explained that repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem.

Peter's sermon reflects this same understanding: Jesus' suffering and resurrection were not unexpected events but the fulfillment of God's plan revealed in Scripture.

Isaiah's Prophecy of the Suffering Servant

One of the most significant Old Testament passages describing the suffering of God's servant is Isaiah 53. (*Teachers, Read Isaiah 53:1–12).*

Isaiah describes a servant who is despised and rejected, suffers for the sins of others, and bears their iniquities. Although He is righteous and has done no wrong, He suffers on behalf of the guilty. Yet His suffering is not the end of the story. God's purposes will prosper through Him, and He will make many to be accounted righteous.

Christians recognize Jesus in this description of the suffering servant. Jesus was rejected, suffered, and died for sinners, fulfilling God's plan to provide salvation. Peter's audience needed to understand that Jesus' suffering did not disqualify Him as the Messiah. It was part of what God had foretold.

Moses' Prophecy of a Coming Prophet

Peter also refers to Deuteronomy 18:15, 18–19, where Moses tells Israel that God will raise up a prophet like him from among their own people. God says of this prophet, "And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him... And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him." The people are commanded to listen to Him, and those who refuse to listen will be held accountable.

Christians understand Jesus to be the fulfillment of this prophecy. Yet Peter's emphasis here is particularly important: the people must listen to Jesus. They cannot dismiss Him or His message without consequence.

Peter is warning his audience that they have an opportunity to repent and respond to Jesus. The Old Testament foretold not only the suffering of the Messiah but also the accountability of those who refuse to listen to Him.

God's Promise to Abraham

Peter concludes his appeal to the prophets by returning to God's promise to Abraham. God had promised that through Abraham's offspring all the families of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:3; 22:18).

Paul later explains in Galatians 3:16 that this promise ultimately points to Christ, the offspring through whom God's blessing comes to the nations. Paul wrote, "Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ." Peter is drawing on this same promise. God's plan from the beginning was to bless his people through Jesus.

Notice the contrast between the previous prophecy and this promise. Moses' prophecy includes a warning for those who refuse to listen to God's appointed prophet. God's promise to Abraham, however, highlights the blessing available

through the promised offspring. Peter is offering his audience the opportunity to receive that blessing through Jesus.

You Must Repent

What, then, must Peter's audience do? His answer is clear: they must repent. Acts 3:19 says, "Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."

Peter concludes his sermon by explaining that God sent His servant to bless them. They "by turning every one of you from your wickedness." The blessing promised through Abraham is offered to them as they turn from sin and respond to Jesus.

This is an extraordinary opportunity. Peter has confronted these people with their rejection of Jesus, yet he does not leave them without hope. He offers them the opportunity to repent and receive forgiveness through the very Jesus they had rejected.

The contrast is striking: they rejected the Author of life, but through Him they can receive life. They are guilty, yet forgiveness is available. This is the grace of God proclaimed through the gospel.

Discussion Questions

- What words would you use to describe Peter's sermon? What stands out to you about the way he speaks to the crowd?
- Why do you think Peter and the other apostles regularly appealed to the Old Testament when telling people about Jesus? How might this shape the way we share the gospel today?
- How does Peter demonstrate humility in this passage? What can we learn from his response when the crowd is amazed by the healing?
- If someone unexpectedly asked you to explain the gospel, how prepared would you feel to respond? What would help you become more confident in sharing your faith?
- Peter directly confronts his audience with their sin and calls them to repent. Why can this be difficult for us to do when sharing the gospel? How can we address sin honestly while still communicating the hope and grace offered through Jesus?

- Peter warns his audience about the consequences of rejecting Jesus, but he also describes the blessings available through Him. When you hear Christians share the gospel, which emphasis tends to receive more attention? Why is it important to communicate both the seriousness of sin and the hope of forgiveness?

Conclusions or Applications

MAKING MOST OF THE OPPORTUNITIES

It is possible that we don't feel like we have many opportunities to share the gospel. Yet, I imagine we have more opportunities than we realize. If Christians regularly prayed for opportunities and remained watchful, we would likely notice more moments when we could share our faith. It is easy to go about our days focused on work, family, responsibilities, and other concerns without considering how God might use us to bear witness to Christ. We can become so focused on what we are doing that we overlook the people around us and the opportunities God may be placing before us.

We can also recognize that we do not always have to wait for opportunities to come our way. Sometimes, we can take the initiative to create them. In Peter's case, he encountered a man who had been lame from birth and recognized an opportunity to demonstrate the power of Jesus. When the crowd gathered and looked at Peter and John as though they had healed the man through their own power or godliness, Peter recognized another opportunity—not to draw attention to himself, but to direct the crowd's attention to Jesus. The people were looking at Peter and John, but Peter was looking for an opportunity to point them to Christ.

This is an important distinction for us to remember. Our goal is not simply to find opportunities to talk about our faith, but to be ready to use those opportunities to point people to Jesus. We may not be able to perform a miracle like Peter did, but we can still demonstrate Christ's love, serve others in their time of need, and explain the hope we have in the gospel. Sometimes an opportunity may arise when someone asks a question about our faith. At other times, we may need to take the initiative by asking a thoughtful question, offering to pray for someone, or beginning a conversation about spiritual matters.

Whether opportunities come our way or we take the initiative to create them, we want to be ready. Peter would later write, "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15). Colossians 4:5–6 similarly encourages us, "Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person."

Notice that these passages emphasize both readiness and the way we conduct ourselves. We should be prepared to explain what we believe, but we should also walk in wisdom, speak graciously, and treat others with gentleness and respect. Sharing the gospel is not merely about knowing what to say; it is also about living in a way that reflects Christ and being attentive to the people God has placed around us.