

KCLC Radio: Believe it or Not

5-Day Devotional



BELIEVE IT OR NOT (1981) & the Healing at the BEAUTIFUL GATE



1981



52 American hostages released from Tehran after 444 days, almost the same hour Reagan is sworn in — a nation watching people walk off a plane it had stopped believing would ever land.



Reagan shot in March, survives; Pope John Paul II shot in May, survives — two of the most recognizable men on the planet, both nearly killed, both still standing.



A year swinging between despair and disbelief — "this shouldn't have happened" and "this shouldn't have turned out okay, and somehow it did."



MTV goes on the air August 1st; IBM releases its first personal computer that same August — the world changing fast, not always in ways anyone saw coming.



Into this year — hostages walking free, leaders walking away from bullets — a song called "Believe It or Not" becomes the theme to a show about an ordinary man handed a power he never asked for and never quite believed was real.



SONG'S HISTORY

Joey Scarbury, theme song for *The Greatest American Hero* — an ordinary guy handed extraordinary power, keeps insisting "it should have been somebody else." That premise primes the key line perfectly: "who could it be? Believe it or not, it's just me."



THE HUMAN CONDITION — BEFORE NAMING THE STORY

- Have you ever been stuck — and you can't change it? It's demoralizing.
- You just keep doing the same thing, over and over, and there's no change.
- That's the picture we open on in **Acts 3**.

THE HEALED MAN — ACTS 3:1-10

1

THE SETUP — STUCK



Lame from birth, carried to the Beautiful Gate every single day (3:2) — decades of the same motion: carried, set down, ask, repeat.



He still shows up, still does the routine, just without any expectation attached to it anymore. That may be the more honest picture of "stuck."



He jangles the cup without even looking at Peter and John — he's stopped making eye contact. Why would he expect anything different today?

2

PETER & JOHN ARRIVE



- Not naturally fearless men. Weeks earlier Peter denied Jesus three times.
- They are walking on air because they witnessed the resurrection.
- Two men whose own loop was broken open eight weeks before are about to break his loop open.

3

"LOOK AT US" (3:4)



- Peter interrupts before he heals — makes the man raise his eyes before anything else happens.
- Sometimes the first miracle isn't the healing — it's being seen.
- He wanted the coin — but didn't want to be seen. Long-term stuckness shrinks what a person is willing to want.
- Being seen could cost him something before it gives him anything.

4

THE HEALING — UNEXPECTED, SURPRISING



- "Silver or gold I do not have" — worse news, for one beat.
- "But what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."
- He took his hand and pulled him up.
- "His feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet..." (3:7-8) Not a cautious first step. He jumps.
- Walking, leaping, and praising God!

5

THE CROWD — "WHO COULD IT BE?"



- The crowd recognizes him (3:10) — they knew his face, his voice, his whole situation, for years.
- Now they can't reconcile what they know with what they're watching.



"BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IT'S JUST ME." — THE HEALED MAN'S WHOLE TESTIMONY IN ONE LINE.



MOVEMENT 1 — WE ARE THE LAME MAN

- Everyone has a gate. Everyone has some version of stuck — the routine performed without expectation, hope rationed down to coins, shame that makes it hard to look up and be seen.
- The healing wasn't earned, wasn't even fully wanted in its full size — he asked for money, got his legs back. Grace exceeding not just circumstance, but our own depleted sense of what we're allowed to hope for.
- This man never meets Jesus — not in this moment. But he meets Jesus in the name spoken over him. The name is enough.



MOVEMENT 2 — WE NEED PETER & JOHN

- We need people who have seen Jesus and aren't afraid to say His name.
- People who stop for us. Interrupt the loop. Make us look up.
- Take our hand before there's proof. Speak the Name that carries power they didn't create.
- Faith is often somebody else's obedience creating the space for our miracle.



MOVEMENT 3 — WE WILL BE THE CROWD

- One day we're the lame man. Another day we're the crowd.
- Testimony invites a choice: Will we believe it or not?
- The question isn't whether God can do the impossible — the question is whether we'll believe He just did.



"Believe it or not, I'm walkin' on air, I never thought I could feel so free."

IT'S CALLED THE BEAUTIFUL GATE — AND ON THIS DAY, FOR THE FIRST TIME, SOMETHING ACTUALLY BEAUTIFUL HAPPENS THERE.



Day 1: When You Are Stuck

Reading: Acts 3:1-5

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

Devotional: The man at the Beautiful Gate had spent his entire life in the same place, doing the same thing, expecting nothing more than a few coins to survive. His rut was not a phase—it was his whole life. Yet God had not forgotten him. If you find yourself going through the motions today, existing rather than living, know that your current chapter is not your final chapter. God sees you in your stuck place, just as Peter and John saw that man. The first step out of any rut is simply to look up.

Reflection: What would it look like for you to “look up” out of the stuck place you are in today?

Day 2: More Than Enough

Reading: Acts 3:6-8

Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

Devotional: Peter had no silver or gold to offer, yet what he carried was worth infinitely more. He carried the name and authority of Jesus Christ. The lame man had lowered his expectations to match the smallness of his circumstances, willing to settle for coins when restoration was available. God does not deal in bare minimums. He deals in abundance. Consider where you have settled for less than what God wants to give you. John 10:10 describes the life Jesus came to bring—not a diminished, surviving kind of life, but one that is genuinely full and free.

Reflection: Where have you settled for less than the abundant life God wants to give you?

Day 3: Grace Comes Unexpectedly

Reading: Isaiah 61:1-3

*The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.*

*They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the Lord
for the display of his splendor.*

Devotional: Seven centuries before the healing at the Beautiful Gate, God was already declaring his intention to restore broken people. Beauty for ashes. Gladness for mourning. Praise for despair. This has always been the heart of God—not to leave people in their ruin, but to rebuild them into something they could never construct on their own. Grace rarely arrives on a schedule we anticipate. It shows up when we have nearly stopped watching for it. That unexpectedness is part of what makes it grace. You did not earn it, you did not predict it, and yet here it is.

Reflection: *When has God's grace shown up in your life at a moment you least expected it?*

Day 4: Faith Passed Down

Reading: *Acts 3:9-11*

When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. 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.

Devotional: The lame man never walked with Jesus during his earthly ministry. His faith came secondhand, carried to him by Peter and John, who had received it from Jesus himself. And yet it was no less real, no less powerful, and no less life-changing. Every believer today stands in that same line. Someone cared enough to pass the faith along to you. That act of sharing is not a minor footnote in the story of the church—it is the story of the church. The chain has held for two thousand years because ordinary people refused to stay silent about what God had done.

Reflection: *Who passed their faith down to you, and who might be waiting for you to pass yours to them?*

Day 5: You Are Called to the Gate

Reading: *Acts 4:18-20*

Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Devotional: When ordered to stop speaking about Jesus, Peter and John refused. They could not stay silent about what they had seen and heard. That same compulsion belongs to every believer who has experienced the grace of God. You have been placed near people who are sitting at their own gates, stuck and surviving, their expectations worn down to almost nothing. You may not have the gift of miraculous healing, but you carry the name of Jesus and the testimony of what he has done in your life. That is enough. Go to the gate. Look them in the eye. Speak.

Reflection: *Who is the person at "their own gate" that God may be calling you to speak to this week?*

Closing Prayer: *Lord, thank you for meeting me in my stuck places and offering more than I ever expected. Give me courage, like Peter and John, to speak plainly about what you have done in my life. Help me see the people around me who are waiting at their own gates and use me to bring your grace to them. In Jesus' name, Amen.*