*DEVOTIONAL*

November 6 - 11

*“In the Name of Jesus”*

**Monday, November 6 Acts 3:1-11**

*“In the name of Jesus, get up and walk”*

Peter and John were on their way to the temple for afternoon prayers. At the Beautiful Gate, one the twelve gates that led into the temple area, they met a man lame from birth. The Beautiful Gate was so-called because “it was adorned after a most costly manner having much richer and thicker plates of gold and silver” according to Josephus, the historian. When the man saw Peter and John approach the gate, he asked them for money. With perhaps a gesture toward the ornate gate, Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have.”

The Spirit-filled disciples sensed a stirring within them. What would Jesus do in that situation? Heal the man! Could they? Dare they try? Faith that it would happen surged in them: “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk.” What Peter offered was more valuable than all the silver and gold of the gate. Peter took him by the hand and the miracle happened. The power of Jesus’ name, spoken by his disciple, was made evident, and the man leapt up and praised God.

*All things are possible, Lord, in your name. Amen.*

**Tuesday, November 7 Acts 3:12-16**

*“The name of Jesus has healed this man”*

What happened to the lame man drew the attention of the worshippers at the temple. They knew him, having seen him in his customary place, perhaps for years. The Lord had three purposes in the healing. First, he loved that lame man and released his healing power out of his heart of compassion and concern. Second, he wanted to alert the people, particularly the leaders of Israel, that the movement he had begun as Jesus of Nazareth was continuing through his disciples in whom he was living.

During his time on earth, Jesus had healed people out of sheer love for them, but also as a sign of his authority and power as the Messiah. The healing of the lame man was an undeniable, further sign that he was alive. Once again, he had Jerusalem’s attention. His followers were the third purpose for the healing miracle. They, most of all, needed to know that he had meant it when he said, “Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:24).

*May the power of your name, Lord, flow through me. Amen.*

**Wednesday, November 8 Acts 3:17-26**

*“Turn from your sins and turn to God”*

Once again, as in his first sermon in Acts chapter two, Peter faithfully shares the Good News. There is sensitive compassion in gracious acceptance of the people’s ignorance. But that does not lessen the need for a response now. We sense Peter’s longing for the people to be given the same gift of faith he has received. There is warning and clarification of the danger of one more refusal. And the Apostle ends with a reminder of how much the Lord wants to bless them.

What does all this mean for us today? Can it still happen? Acts three is not a description of a one-time, never-to-be-repeated period in the Holy Spirit’s activity in the world. The great, debilitating delusion is that the gifts of faith, healing, and working of miracles ended with the age of the early church. Not so! The Lord is the same. The needs of people are the same. What he did through his Spirit, living in people just like you and me, he wants to do today. The Holy Spirit who gave us the gift of faith to believe the Gospel also gives us a gift of applied faith for the specific needs and challenges of life.

*Give me boldness, Lord, that my faith may be evident to others. Amen.*

*DEVOTIONAL*

November 6 - 11

*“In the Name of Jesus”*

**Thursday, November 9 1 Corinthians 1:1-3**

*“Whoever calls upon the name of Jesus Christ”*

Paul begins this letter, which will eventually have in it some very stern criticism, with a reminder of the relationships which he and its recipients share by having called upon the name of Jesus Christ. In that name, he was called by God to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ and they were called to be saints. The mention of his apostleship was an affirmation of the authority which God had given him to take the gospel of salvation to the Gentiles. His task was not to set up programs or build structures but to carry a message of love and healing.

To be called to be saints means to be set apart for God. The Christian is to be different – separated – because he or she belongs to God. They were invited into the Christian life by God and not by some human initiative, which means that the members of this small congregation in Corinth were a part of the larger purpose of God for humanity. They were to join with Paul and with other believers in the various churches to proclaim the name of Jesus and live according to his teaching.

*I have called on your name, Lord, and you have given me your grace. Amen.*

**Friday, November 10 Philippians 2:5-11**

*“At the name of Jesus every knee will bow”*

In many ways these verses make up the greatest and most moving passage that Paul ever wrote about Jesus – certainly the most descriptive. But not only is this a vivid description of who Jesus is, it is a call to us. Not many of us want to be servants, do we? And, even when we do serve, we want to be able to choose when and whom and how we will serve. We stay in charge. Jesus calls for something else. To be a servant like him is to give up the right to be in charge. It is to become available and vulnerable.

It is the paradox of the Christian Gospel that the last become first, the humble are exalted, the servant becomes Lord, the poor become rich. The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-11) are Jesus’ catalog of the way things are turned upside-down, inside-out in the new reality of God’s kingdom. His enunciation of the humble being exalted (Matthew 23:12) was gloriously fulfilled in his own case. Jesus ascended after the Resurrection and now sits at God’s right hand. Because he was a willing servant, God has given him the name that is above every name.

*Only in humility, Lord, will I know the heights of what it means to serve you. Amen.*

**Saturday, November 11 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12**

*“Everyone will honor the name of our Lord Jesus because of you”*

Like many of Paul’s prayers, this one consists of some beautiful phrases, tightly woven together. The “bottom line,” as it were, is stated first. The end of all Christian faith and life is to be counted worthy by God. This is never to be understood in the sense of earning God’s approval by our goodness or efforts, but rather in the sense of pleasing him in response to his love for us. When we commit ourselves to living in ways that say, “Thank you, Father, for loving me,” we are bringing pleasure to God.

The second part of the prayer is a wonderful portrait of the Christian life. When we practice goodness in response to God’s love, we will experience the pleasure of being his child. There is a rich satisfaction in doing and being good. Loving acts, gracious words, and thoughtful affirmations all have a way of bringing the pleasure of goodness. The end result is the mutual honoring of Jesus Christ in us, and we in him. When Christ is lifted up in our desire for goodness and commitment to works of faith, then we are lifted up in him.

*Your grace, Lord, is the source of every goodness in life. Amen.*