

Note to teams: The CSB and NIV/KJV split differently between verses 19 and 20. Also, the KJV diverges from the CSB/NIV in verse 20.

Thrive: Living on Purpose  
Session 3- *Purpose Restored*

September 15, 2024

**The Point:** Through Jesus, we can be forgiven and restored to the purpose for which He created us.

**Session Passage:** Acts 3:14-26

### **Acts 3:14-18**

**Connection to the Point.** Faith in Jesus is the way to restoration.

**Context.** The first Christians were Jewish, and they continued to meet together in the temple in Jerusalem (Acts 2:46). Acts 3 opens with Peter and John going to the temple to pray (3:1). They encountered a lame man begging at the temple gate. Peter healed the man in the name of Jesus Christ, which created awe and astonishment among the people present (vv. 2-10). A crowd gathered around them in Solomon's Colonnade. Also known as Solomon's Porch, the colonnade was a covered, columned area located along the eastern wall of the temple complex, across from the court of the Gentiles, the outermost court of Herod's Temple. Peter took this opportunity to preach to the crowd. He began his sermon by asking why they were amazed by what had occurred, noting that it had not been him or John who had healed the lame man (v. 12). The power came from Jesus Christ (v. 16), whom God had glorified and whom the Jews had handed over to be put to death (v. 13).

**Denied** (v. 14). Repeating what he had said in verse 13, Peter emphasized that when Jesus was on trial and the Roman governor Pontius Pilate had stated he had found no guilt in Jesus and offered to release Him, the crowd instead demanded Pilate release the revolutionary and murderer Barabbas. Despite multiple attempts by Pilate to have Jesus released, the crowd continued to demand that Pilate release Barabbas and crucify Jesus (Luke 23:13-25).

**Holy and Righteous One** (v. 14). Titles for Jesus, these terms are most likely synonyms and both have messianic emphases. The demons recognized Jesus's messianic identity when they called Him "the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34). Jesus referred to Himself in His message to the church at Philadelphia as "the Holy One, the true one" (Rev. 3:7). In the Old Testament, Aaron, the first high priest, is identified as "the LORD's holy one" (Ps. 106:16), and Elisha the prophet is described as "a holy man of God" (2 Kings 4:9). Jesus is a greater high priest than Aaron (Heb. 4:14-16) and a greater prophet than Elisha (Luke 24:19). References to Jesus as "the Righteous One" appear in Acts 7:52 and 22:14; and "Jesus Christ the righteous one" in 1 John 2:1. In the Old Testament, righteousness was a characteristic of the prophesied Messiah (see Isa. 53:11; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 9:9).

**Source of life** (v. 15). Jesus is the eternal Word of God, in whom there is life and through whom all things came into being (John 1:1-4). Jesus said of Himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (14:6). Repentance of one's sins and belief in Jesus as Lord and Savior is the only way to have one's sins forgiven (Rom. 5:9; Col. 2:13-14; 1 Pet. 2:24), be reconciled to God the Father (Rom. 5:10-11; 2 Cor. 5:18-19), adopted into God's family (John 1:12-13; Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 4:3-7; Eph. 1:3-6), and receive eternal life (John 3:16; 5:24; Rom. 6:23; 1 John 5:11).

**God raised from the dead** (v. 15). Peter quickly reminded his hearers that death did not spell the end of Jesus, for God the Father raised Him from the dead (Acts 2:32; 4:10; 13:30; Rom. 6:4; Eph. 1:20).

**Witnesses** (v. 15). After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples on numerous occasions, making them witnesses to His resurrection. Jesus appeared to Peter alone (1 Cor. 15:5). Then, He appeared to the apostles (minus Thomas) in the upper room (John 20:19-23). He appeared to the apostles again (including Thomas, vv. 26-29). Jesus also appeared to over five hundred believers at one time (1 Cor. 15:6).

The man chosen to replace Judas Iscariot as an apostle was chosen "from among the men who have accompanied us during the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us—beginning from the baptism of John until the day he

was taken up from us—from among these, it is necessary that one become a witness with us of his resurrection” (Acts 1:21-22).

**Faith in his name** (v. 16). The healing of the lame man was through faith in the name of Jesus. “In the biblical sense a name . . . represents a person and is an extension of that person’s being and personality. To invoke the name of Jesus is to call upon his authority and power.”<sup>1</sup>

Obviously, Peter had faith in Jesus, but what about the lame man? The initial moment of faith for the man was when Peter commanded, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!” (v. 6). The extent of the man’s faith in Jesus is not stated, but it was enough for the miracle to occur. The lame man took Peter’s hand and stood, walked, jumped, and began to praise the Lord (vv. 7-8). He continued to hold Peter and John, perhaps prompting Peter’s words in verse 16 that it was Jesus, not His disciples, who had healed this man.

**Faith that comes through Jesus** (v. 16). Peter wanted no credit for the healing. Jesus healed the lame man by faith, and even the man’s faith was not something that Peter could credit to himself. Faith had come through Jesus.

**Perfect health** (v. 16). The lame man had sat outside the temple proper as a broken man, prohibited from going further inside the temple to worship. However, through faith in Jesus, both on the part of Peter and the lame man, Jesus healed the man so perfectly that he now had access to enter further into the temple to worship. Jesus took his brokenness and made him whole.

**Brothers and sisters** (v. 17). In the New Testament, the phrase typically refers to Christians (Rom. 1:13; 1 Cor. 1:26; Phil. 1:12; Col. 1:2). However, here Peter used the phrase to refer to his fellow Jews. He identified with them in preparation for sharing the truth of the gospel.

**Ignorance** (v. 17). The Jews did not recognize who Jesus was, and that was the source of their *ignorance (agnoia)*. The Greek term refers to someone who through a lack of information engages in immoral conduct. This did not leave the Jews without guilt for their rejection of Jesus, but it did inspire hope in Peter that they would believe in Jesus, receive forgiveness for their sins, be reconciled to God, and receive eternal life. Jesus had prayed that God would forgive those who nailed Him to the cross because they did not know what they were doing (Luke 23:34).

**God fulfilled what he had predicted** (v. 18). Though God still held the Jews responsible for their rejection of Jesus, He had used their rejection of Jesus to fulfill the words of His prophets concerning the sufferings of the Messiah (Jesus). Perhaps some of the best known Old Testament prophecies regarding the Messiah’s sufferings are the prophet Isaiah’s Servant Songs (Isa. 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-11; 52:13–53:12).

### **Acts 3:19-21**

**Connection to the Point.** Jesus forgives and refreshes us when we repent of our sin.

**Repent and turn back** (v. 19). The term *repent* translates the usual Greek word for repentance (*metanoeo*) which means “a change of mind or practice.” It involves remorse and sorrow for one’s sins, but it also involves a change in one’s thinking that results in a change in one’s actions. This is captured by the term *epistrepho*, which is translated *turn back* or “convert.” The individual needs to turn away from his or her sins and turn toward God.

**Sins** (v. 19). The term (*hamartia*) means “missing the mark,” in this context a departure from God’s standards. Paul wrote that all people have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).

**Wiped out** (v. 19). Putting their faith in Jesus would enable the people’s sins to be *wiped out*. Repentance leads to the canceling of sin. The term (*exaleipho*) can also be translated “to erase.” In ancient times, due to parchment being expensive, scribes sometimes used acid-free ink to write on it. Since this ink did not soak into the parchment, if necessary the writing could be erased with a wet sponge. God wipes away our sins and their penalty, because Jesus has paid the price for them. Paul described forgiveness as Jesus canceling the record of the debt against a person (Col. 2:14). John called this forgiveness “the atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 2:2).

**Seasons of refreshing** (v. 20). Those who repent and put their faith in Christ also experience *seasons of refreshing*. The idea pictures a cool breeze that provides refreshment. In this present world, filled with evil and darkness, one of the great blessings of forgiveness of sin are these times of respite or refreshment from the battle (Eph. 6:10-17; 1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:3-6; 1 Pet. 5:8-9). That does not mean that life is always peaceful and easy, but it does mean that while we have difficulties in life, we also have times of refreshing.

**The presence of the Lord** (v. 20). *Lord* is a term usually associated with Jesus in the New Testament, but here it refers to God the Father. God is the source of these *seasons of refreshing*.

**Send Jesus** (v. 20). Jesus promised that He would return (Matt. 24:42; 25:31; 26:64; Mark 8:38; Luke 12:40; John 14:1-3). Paul spoke of the coming of Christ also (1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1,8). The Father sent Jesus to do the work of redemption as Suffering Servant at His first coming, and in the future He will send Jesus back to earth at His second coming as Conquering King.

**Appointed for you as the Messiah** (v. 20). Peter emphasized that Jesus is God's chosen Messiah whom He had sent to live, suffer, and die for the sins of Peter's audience, and God had resurrected Jesus from the dead. This same Jesus would return at the end of the age and inaugurate His kingdom, which they longed to experience. Rejection of Jesus would result in exclusion from this coming messianic age that God desired for them to experience.

**Heaven must receive him** (v. 21). After His resurrection, Christ ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9-11). The Messiah will sit at the right hand of God until all His enemies are made Christ's footstool (Heb. 10:12-13; see Ps. 110:1).

**Until the time of the restoration of all things** (v. 21). This verse can be interpreted in a few ways based on the meaning of the term translated *restoration* (*apokatastasis*). It can also mean "fulfillment." In regards to *restoration*, Peter may have been referring to the time at the end of this age when God will both glorify all believers in Christ and recreate the heavens and the earth (Rom. 8:18-25; 2 Pet. 3:6-7; Rev. 20:11-21:4). If the intended meaning was *fulfillment*, then Peter was probably referring to the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies concerning the end of the age when God will establish His rule on earth (Isa. 11:6; 65:17; 66:22).

### **Acts 3:22-26**

**Connection to the Point.** God raised Jesus to turn us from our evil ways.

**Moses said** (v. 22). Peter indicated in the previous verse that God's holy prophets spoke of the return of the Messiah. He first quoted Moses from Deuteronomy 18:15-19. As the Israelites prepared to cross over the Jordan River and enter the promised land, Moses warned them not to listen to those who practiced divination and other occultic methods (Deut. 18:10-14). Instead, he urged them to listen to the prophet of the Lord that God would raise up from among them (v. 15). On the one hand, Moses was referring to the many prophets God would send throughout Israel's history who would proclaim God's will to His people. However, by the time of Christ, some Jews recognized this passage as referring to the Messiah. The Qumran community (a Jewish sect located in the Judean wilderness that existed from 130 BC-AD 70) looked for a prophet like Moses as part of their expectation of the Messiah. Stephen's speech emphasized the Mosaic-prophetic aspect of the Messiah, Jesus (Acts 7:37).

**The Lord your God will raise up** (v. 22). This passage emphasizes the authority of God in sending His Messiah. God carefully planned Jesus's coming as Messiah, and He directed the process (Mark 1:15; Rom. 5:6; Gal. 4:4; Eph. 1:3-14). It did not happen randomly.

**A prophet like me** (v. 22). Jesus was a prophet like Moses in that, as Moses was the mediator of the old covenant; Jesus inaugurated and is the Mediator of the new covenant in His blood (Luke 22:20). Moses delivered the Israelites from slavery to Egypt; Jesus delivers all those who will repent and believe in Him from slavery to sin, death, and Satan. Supernatural events were part of the ministries of both Moses and Jesus. But Jesus is greater than Moses, for He is prophet, priest, and king. Whereas Moses led the Israelites to the promised land, Jesus gives His people eternal life (John 10:28). Moses was a man, whereas Jesus is the incarnate Son of God who is to be obeyed and worshiped.

**Everyone who does not listen** (v. 23). The term for *listen* (*akouo*) occurs in both verses 22 and 23. While it can mean “to hear” or “to listen to,” in this context it means “to hear and obey.” Listening involves more than merely hearing Jesus’s words. Listening involves taking His words to heart and receiving Him as one’s Savior and Lord rather than rejecting Him. It also involves heeding Jesus’s words and doing what He says (Matt. 7:24-27; John 14:15).

**Completely cut off from the people** (v. 23). Those who reject Jesus’s message are faced with the dire consequence of eternal separation from God in hell. This phrase comes from Leviticus 23:29. In its original context, it dealt with those who refused to observe the Day of Atonement, during which people were to gather together for worship, refrain from working, and practice self-denial (Lev. 23:23-32). God declared that those who refused to follow these instructions would be “cut off from his people” and destroyed (vv. 29-30). This is a sober warning concerning rejecting God’s offer of salvation through Jesus Christ. Like the Israelites who spurned God’s offer of atonement for their sins on the Day of Atonement, so too those who refuse God’s offer of atonement through Jesus Christ will face God’s judgment.

**Samuel** (v. 24). From the time of Samuel’s call as a young boy to serve God under the leadership of the priest Eli, people recognized Samuel’s prophetic gift, and Samuel became the leading prophet of his day (1 Sam. 3:1,19-20). However, while there is no recorded prophecy of Samuel’s directly referencing the Messiah, Samuel spoke of the type of kingship which would bless the people of Israel (12:13-15; ultimately by the reign of David’s descendant the Messiah) and mediated the establishment of the kingship of David. Samuel foretold David’s kingship (15:28; 28:17), and at the Lord’s command he anointed David to be king over Israel (16:1-13). Peter recognized David as foretelling of the Messiah in his psalms (Acts 1:15-17; 2:25-36) and Paul made a further connection between David and the Messiah (13:32-37). The prophet Isaiah foretold that the Messiah would be a branch that came from the “stump” of David’s father, Jesse (Isa. 11:1-9).

**Sons of the prophets** (v. 25). The Jews who listened to Peter were *sons of the prophets* in the sense that as Jews they were heirs of the promises God made to Abraham and recipients of the blessings of the Messiah, the son of King David. They had great privilege by hearing the prophecies of the coming Messiah. However, with that privilege came the responsibility to repent and believe in God’s Messiah, Jesus.

**And of the covenant** (v. 25). The Jews were the inheritors of the covenants God made with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:1-14; 17:1-14), Moses (Ex. 3; 19–20), and David (2 Sam. 7). However, they had to embrace Jesus as their Messiah to receive the benefits of these covenants in Christ.

**All the families of the earth will be blessed through your offspring** (v. 25). This is a reference to the words God spoke regarding the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18). The ultimate blessing is available through Jesus Christ for all those who repent of their sins and put their faith in God’s Messiah, Jesus Christ, thereby receiving the blessings of salvation. Furthermore, *all the families of the earth* have been blessed through the influence of Christians. For example, hospitals, schools, and care for the poor were all largely initiated by God’s people.

1. John B. Polhill, *Acts*, v. 26, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 128.