

Out of Your Comfort Zone: God's Surprising Challenge to Change the World – Week Five

Seeing Needs...Meeting Needs

Acts 3:1-10

Main Idea: The early church provides us with a powerful illustration of how God wants to work in every local church. This passage teaches that when a church is active in meeting needs in the community, non-Christians will be attracted to Christ and the gospel will be fruitful.

1. *SEEING NEEDS – People with serious needs are all around you. Acts 3:1-5*

- A. The setting – Peter and John were going up to the temple.
 - 1. The temple functioned as HQ for the early church.
 - 2. This is the apostle Peter and John the fishermen. *Very busy men!*
 - 3. They're going at 3:00 p.m. *They have a commitment to fulfill.*
 - 4. They meet a man with a serious need.
- B. First lesson – People with needs tend to be invisible. 3:2a
 - 1. This man had been at the temple for years. But previously, he'd been "invisible" to them.
 - 2. Needy people tend to be invisible to us until God convicts us to meet their needs.
- C. Second lesson – People with serious needs often come to the church for the wrong reasons. 3:2b, 5
 - 1. This guy came out of desperation to get money.
 - 2. Needy people sometimes come to church simply to get relief from their problem.
- D. Third lesson – People with serious needs can be demanding and irritating. 3:3
 - 1. This guy had been doing this for years; he'd perfected his begging routine.
 - 2. Needy people often feel the only way they'll get their needs met is by being demanding.
- E. Fourth lesson – People with serious needs tend to be shame based people. 3:4
 - 1. The beggar wouldn't look Peter and John in the eyes.
 - 2. Needy people are often driven by core motives of shame.

2. *MEETING NEEDS – Fulfilling the needs of people advances God's kingdom. Acts 3:6-26*

- A. The setting – Peter and John meet the man's need. 3:6-8
 - 1. They heal the man in the name of Christ.
 - 2. The man accepts the healing in Christ's name.
 - 3. When we meet needs we need to do it in Christ's name, giving credit to him.
 - 4. When we meet needs we need to remind them that Jesus understands their pain.
- B. First result – When a church is meeting needs, people will love and feel loved. 3:11
 - 1. Notice that the newly healed man was clinging to Peter and John.
 - 2. When needs are being met, the love of Christ is multiplied in a congregation.
- C. Second result – When a church is meeting needs, non-Christians are attracted. 3:9-10
 - 1. The people recognized the man and are filled with amazement.
 - 2. Need-meeting churches grab the attention of the watching world.
- D. Third result – When a church is meeting needs, it has opportunities to share the gospel. 3:11-26