

=LIFE OF PETER=  
Lesson 10  
Peter Works Miracles

AIM: to teach my pupils the power that is in the name of Jesus.

POINT OF CONTACT: Ask your class: What are your names? Do they have particular meanings? Eugene means “wellborn,” John means “the God of the Hebrews is gracious,” George means “of or relating to a farmer,” Stephen means “crown.” Amy means “beloved,” Florence means “bloom, prosper,” Irene means “peace,” Vera means “faith.” Some people think about dictionary meanings for names when they are naming their children; other people merely like the sound of a name or they like the reputation that has been associated with a name. If they like the name Anthony, it can be expected that someone by that name was a good friend of theirs or a member of their family—the name has a special meaning for them because of someone they knew who bore that name. One name in the Bible has a very special meaning.

INTRODUCTION: One very important day, a God-fearing, pure young lady heard of a name and learned its meaning. The angel, Gabriel, came to where the young lady was in the city of Nazareth. The angel gave her assurance of her salvation—he told her that God was with her. The angel said, “Mary, you are a highly favored and blessed young lady. You, who have not had physical relationships with any man, will miraculously receive a baby boy from God. This will not be an ordinary baby boy; this will be the Son of God. You will give Him a name; His name shall be Jesus.”

The angel of the Lord then appeared to Joseph, the man whom Mary was going to marry. The angel told Joseph about God’s Son being brought from Heaven to earth through Mary. The angel also told Joseph: “...call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.” The name which the angel gave first to Mary and then to Joseph would become a name that would be known as the most wonderful and powerful name in Heaven and on earth. In today’s lesson about Peter, we see that Peter knew of the wonder and the power of the name of Jesus.

I. THE POWER OF JESUS’ NAME EXHIBITED THROUGH PETER. See Acts 3:1-10; 4:22.

1. It was outside the gate called Beautiful.
  - 1) There were nine gates in three of the four walls which surrounded the temple at Jerusalem. (This was Herod’s Temple which was started in 19 B.C. under the direction of Herod and completed around A.D. 62-64. Herod had to assure the people that he would not start tearing down any of the old structure to build the new until he had all the plans drawn, materials procured, and workmen ready to work on the new.) There were four gates in each of the north and south walls and the one great gate in the east wall. The eastern gate, toward the sunrise, was called the Gate Beautiful.
  - 2) A man, whose name we do not know, was placed here every day. He was a crippled man, a man who had been born crippled and not able to walk a step in his forty years of life. He had to be carried to this place by others.
  - 3) The crippled man sat outside this gate begging. Because of his physical condition he had to depend upon the generosity of others to sustain him.
2. The crippled man was healed by Jesus through Peter. (Not every cripple would be healed; this man trusted Jesus. Look at Luke 4:24-28.)
  - 1) Peter and John were going to the temple. It was the ninth hour of the day—three o’clock in the afternoon and one of two times a day which were designated as hours of prayer. The other hour of prayer was in the morning. (During these two times a day sacrifices were offered by the priests. Peter and John knew that no more sacrifice had to be offered for sin—the Christian is a priest who should offer spiritual sacrifices. I Peter 2:5.)
  - 2) Peter and John saw the crippled man sitting at the gate. He begged alms from them. They told him to look at them. He thought they were going to give money to him. Peter said, “Silver and gold have I none...In the name of Jesus...rise up and walk.” Peter took the man’s right hand and lifted him up. Immediately the man’s feet and ankle bones were strong enough to hold him. He stood, then walked, then leaped into the temple. He praised God.

II. THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME EXPLAINED BY PETER. See Acts 3:12-26.

1. Peter, John, and the man were standing on Solomon's Porch. (This was a man-made embankment on the east side of the temple just inside the gate called Beautiful. It was lined with beautiful pillars.) Many bystanders wanted to know how this man could walk. They were looking to Peter and John for the answer. They had recognized the man as being the one who had sat daily at the eastern gate begging. The man was so hilariously happy that he would not release the men who were responsible for the wonderful turn of events in his life.
2. Peter asked the people, "...why look ye...on us...?" He explained that he and John had no power of their own to perform any miracles. Peter had faith that Jesus would perform that which He needed to perform. Peter was just doing his duty in obeying Jesus' command to do the works which He had done and to preach the Gospel. (Teacher, your class could pause for a moment to consider the fact that whatever we do for Jesus should be done humbly without looking for praise or even thanks, doing it because we want to obey Him and please Him in witnessing and in living right. Read Luke 17:7-10.)
  - 1) Peter said that God the Father had glorified Jesus, God the Son. Jesus was also called by Peter "the Holy One," the "Just," the "Prince of Life." He took advantage of the opportunity to preach about Jesus—crucified, resurrected, and ascended.
  - 2) Peter said that because the man had faith in the name of Jesus, the miracle could be performed. The faith must first come from Jesus and then be exercised by the recipient toward Jesus. It takes very little faith to see the power of God operative, Jesus had told the apostles. Luke 17:5, 6.

III. THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME CREATES BOLD SPEECH IN PETER. See Acts 4:1-23.

1. Peter continued to speak in the face of opposition. The religious rulers of the Jews were listening and disapproving. They had made their way into the crowd of people who were listening to Peter's preaching. They were unhappy that Peter was preaching salvation through Jesus.
  - 1) Peter and John were put into jail.
  - 2) About five thousand men were saved through the preaching. They heard that Jesus had come to earth to bless His people. The blessing would be that He would turn them away from their iniquities. The five thousand repented of their sins.
2. Peter and John spoke boldly when questioned by the religious council. They were asked to repeat the name of the Person by Whose power and name they had worked the miracle of healing in the man's legs.
  - 1) Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. (Review the fact that the Holy Spirit comes into every believer as soon as he is saved, but that the infilling of the Spirit comes as a result of asking for it for the purpose of witnessing. Acts 4:29-31. Being filled with the Spirit is to be accomplished over and over again in the Christian's heart.)
3. The men on the religious council were astonished at Peter and John's boldness.
  - 1) The religious leaders could see that Peter and John were men who had never received formal education. They wondered at how uneducated men could speak up so well. They did conclude correctly that Peter and John had been with Jesus. (If the Lord gives us an opportunity to get formal education, we ought to take advantage of such an opportunity; but God does not need our education to enable Him to make us useful for Him. Jesus empowered Peter and John to serve Him in the capacity where He wanted them. He can do the same for us regardless of training or education.)
  - 2) They could not deny the fact that a miracle had taken place in the life of the crippled man.
  - 3) They had to release Peter and John. They could not punish them, for the good deed which had been done through the power of Jesus' name had been realized by the whole city of Jerusalem.
4. The religious leaders commanded Peter and John not to speak in the name of Jesus again. Peter and John told the council to judge for themselves whether they should stop witnessing for Jesus. They had boldness to tell them to judge whether God or they should be heeded in such a matter.

IV. JESUS' NAME WAS PRAISED.

1. Peter and John reported the incident to their church. They told of the meeting with the council. They reported all the questioning and the commanding. They told of the threatenings which were leveled at them if they were to continue to preach and teach in the name of Jesus.
2. The people praised the Lord for His further evidence of power through these events which Peter and John reported. They did not praise Peter and John; they praised God. They were there to encourage Peter and John, however.
3. Peter and John asked for prayer. They did not ask that the people pray that the threatenings of the council be withdrawn. They did not ask that the people pray that the council become favorable toward Peter and John. They asked that the people pray for them to have continued and increased boldness for their Lord.
4. All the people in that place were filled with the Holy Spirit. As the result of this, they boldly continued to speak the Word of God.

CONCLUSION: Our witnessing and our teaching are to be done with the goal of magnifying Jesus' name. When we have seen the evidence of the power of Jesus' name we must remember to keep the apostles' example in mind: Praise the Lord for His working and His power.