“Jesus, Fount of Every Blessing” Acts 3:11-26

LEARN

1. Read Acts 3:11–16. Peter redirects the crowd's attention away from the miracle and the apostles and toward Jesus. What do we learn about who Jesus is, and why does Peter emphasize these particular descriptions of Him?
    a. Peter wants the crowd to understand that the miracle is not ultimately about the healed man or the apostles. It’s about Jesus, to whom the miracle points.
    b. Jesus is identified as:
        i. God's glorified servant (v. 13).
        ii. The Holy and Righteous One (v. 14).
        iii. The Author of life (v. 15).
        iv. The resurrected and reigning Christ whose name has saving power (v. 16).
    c. The miracle demonstrates that Jesus is alive and possesses the authority and power to give life and restore what is broken.
    d. We must not confuse the signs of God's blessing with the One who gives the blessings. Jesus Himself is the focus.

2. Read Acts 3:17–21. Peter acknowledges that the people acted in ignorance, but he does not excuse their sin. What do we learn about God's sovereignty and faithfulness from these verses?
    a. The people did not understand the full significance of what they were doing when they rejected Jesus, but their ignorance did not remove their guilt.
    b. God knew exactly what was happening. What He had foretold through the prophets concerning the suffering of Christ, He fulfilled.
    c. We’re reminded that God is sovereign even over the sinful actions of men. Their rejection of Jesus did not thwart His purposes but were part of the fulfillment of His redemptive plan.
    d. God's sovereignty does not eliminate human responsibility. Peter still calls his hearers to repent and turn to Christ.
    e. God is faithful to His promises. Even the suffering and death of Jesus were according to His eternal purpose to redeem sinners.
    f. We can have confidence that God is working according to His purposes even when circumstances appear confusing, painful, or evil.

3. Read Acts 3:22–26. Peter calls Moses, Samuel, and Abraham as witnesses to demonstrate that the Old Testament Scriptures point to Jesus. What does each testify about Christ, and what does this teach us about God's promises?
    a. Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15–19): Jesus is the promised prophet like Moses. We must listen to Him in whatever He tells us.
    b. Samuel and the prophets: They proclaimed the coming of Christ and the fulfillment of God's promises concerning the Davidic King.
    c. Abraham (Genesis 12:3): Jesus is the promised offspring through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed.
    d. God's covenant promises find their fulfillment in Christ.The entire Old Testament points forward to Jesus. He is not an afterthought or a change in God's plan. Video: "God Is In Control" by Pastor Tyler (1:00)
    e. Jesus came not merely to deliver us from the consequences of sin but to turn us from our wickedness (v. 26).
    f. These blessings are not automatic because of someone's religious heritage. They are received through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

PRACTICE

1. Peter identifies two big errors: making the miracle the focus or making the miracle workers the focus. The vital thing is what the miracle points to. In light of that, how are you doing in your daily walk with Christ regarding focusing on the Gift Giver rather than the gifts or the conduit of the gifts?
    a. Examples: We can become more excited about what God gives us than about God Himself; We can become preoccupied with our circumstances, health, finances, relationships, opportunities, or answered prayers while losing sight of Christ; We can also become overly impressed with gifted Christian leaders, teachers, pastors, or other people rather than the Christ they are supposed to point us toward.
    b. God's blessings should lead us to greater worship, gratitude, dependence, and love for Jesus.
    c. Consider whether the things you desire from God have become more important to you than God Himself.
    d. Worship Christ: Does your personal worship and participation in corporate worship reflect a desire to know and treasure Christ above His gifts?

2. Peter tells the crowd, in effect, "Do not look at us, look at Him!" Sometimes we can be tempted to draw attention to ourselves rather than Jesus? What would it practically look like this week to redirect attention to Christ?
    a. We naturally desire recognition, appreciation, approval, and affirmation from others; Even our service in the church can become an opportunity to seek recognition rather than glorify Christ; We may want others to notice our biblical knowledge, generosity, parenting, spiritual maturity, leadership, or accomplishments.
    b. We should examine our motives when serving, speaking, teaching, helping, or sharing our experiences.
    c. Practically, we can redirect attention to Christ by giving Him credit, speaking about His goodness, serving without recognition, and pointing others to His Word rather than ourselves.
    d. Work for Christ: Are you serving the church because you want to be noticed or because you want Christ to be exalted?

3. Peter explains that through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, our sins are blotted out and we experience the refreshing presence of the Lord. How should the forgiveness we have received in Christ shape our joy, gratitude, and daily walk with Him?
    a. God doesn't simply call us to turn away from sin; He invites us to turn to Him and experience the fullness of His grace and forgiveness.
    b. Through Christ, our sins are completely forgiven. The picture of sins being blotted out communicates that God wipes the slate clean, leaving no record of our guilt.
    c. The Gospel gives us more than relief from the consequences of sin. It gives us the joy, peace, and refreshment that come from being reconciled to God. As we grow in our understanding of God's forgiveness, repentance becomes an opportunity to draw near to Him, renew our fellowship with Him, and rejoice in His goodness.
    d. David understood this when he prayed, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit" (Psalm 51:12).
    e. Rather than allowing past failures or present struggles to rob us of joy, we can continually return to the finished work of Christ and find renewed confidence in God's goodness and mercy.
    f. Walk with Christ: How can you cultivate a greater awareness of God's forgiveness and goodness through your time in His Word and prayer, so that your daily walk is marked by gratitude, joy, and a desire to obey Him?

4. How should our prayer life reflect an understanding of our need to keep the Gospel in focus and depend upon God's grace to turn us from sin?
    a. Pray with an awareness of our continual need for God's grace rather than assuming we can overcome sin through our own strength.
    b. Ask God to expose wrong thinking, unbelief, presumptuous sins, and the things competing with the Gospel in our lives.
    c. Psalm 19:13–14 reminds us to pray that sin would not have dominion over us and that our words and thoughts would be acceptable to the Lord. We should pray not only for forgiveness but also for the desire and ability to walk in obedience.
    d. Augustine's prayer is a helpful expression of this dependence: "Give what you command and command what you will."
    e. Prayer should include rejoicing in the finished work of Christ, confessing sin, asking for spiritual growth, and seeking strength to obey.
    f. Walk with Christ: Is your personal time in God's Word and prayer cultivating a greater dependence upon Christ?

5. Peter's message eventually provokes opposition from the authorities because the devil cannot stand the exaltation and proclamation of Christ. On a scale of 1–10, where would you place your commitment to Christ if following Him required giving up something valuable in your life?
    a. Video: "We'll Preach The Gospel Even Louder" by Pastor Scott (1:00)
    b. It is easy to profess commitment to Christ when following Him costs us very little - this question exposes what we actually treasure and where our deepest allegiance lies.
    c. Consider what would be hardest to surrender: career, finances, spouse, children, family, friends, physical health, appearance, popularity, or even life itself.
    d. We can allow good things to become ultimate things when they compete with our obedience to Christ.
    e. Our confidence should not rest in the strength of our own commitment but in Christ's finished work and the grace that sustains us. We should ask God to make us people who treasure Christ above everything else.
    f. Worship, Walk, and Work: Does your commitment to Christ affect your priorities in corporate worship, discipleship relationships, and personal service?

CHANGE

1. Peter calls his hearers to “repent therefore and turn back,” reminding us that true repentance involves both a “change of mind” and a “change of life.” What sin, unbelief, or wrong perspective have you been excusing or holding on to that Christ is calling you to turn from?
    a. Video: “Stop Yielding To Pride, Bitterness, and Anger” by Pastor Tyler (1:00)
    b. We must recognize the weight of sin and who it is against — it’s not just an unfortunate mistake or something we regret getting caught doing.
    c. Repentance begins with acknowledging that our thinking and perspective have been wrong before God. We must be willing to change our minds about sin, Christ, ourselves, and what God says is good. (This should be part of our prayer life)
    d. True repentance involves a change of direction. As Thomas Watson describes it, it is a divorcing of sin so as never to come near it anymore.
    e. We must move beyond temporary guilt or emotional sorrow toward an actual turning away from sin.
    f. We must flee to God and embrace Christ as He truly is.
    g. Ask yourself: What am I unwilling to surrender? Where am I resisting God's Word because I would rather believe or do something else? If I don’t confess sin here in Small Group, where do I confess it? (James 5:16)

2. Peter explains that through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, our sins are blotted out and we experience the refreshing presence of the Lord. How should the forgiveness we have received in Christ shape our joy and gratitude toward God?
    a. God doesn't simply call us to turn away from sin; He invites us to turn to Him and experience the fullness of His grace and forgiveness.
    b. Through Christ, our sins are completely forgiven. The picture of sins being blotted out communicates that God removes our guilt rather than leaving us under its condemnation.
    c. God's forgiveness is not merely a reason for relief; it is a reason for deep joy. We have been reconciled to God and can enjoy the blessing of knowing Him.
    d. The Gospel reminds us that God's goodness is greater than our failures and His mercy is greater than our sin. David expressed this joy when he

prayed, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit" (Psalm 51:12).

3. How should the assurance of God's forgiveness change the way we respond when we recognize sin in our lives?
    a. Rather than hiding from God, becoming discouraged, or remaining trapped in guilt, we can come to Him honestly in confession and repentance.
    b. Because of Christ's finished work, we don't have to earn our way back into God's favor. We can approach Him with confidence in His mercy.
    c. God's grace should never become an excuse to continue in sin. Instead, knowing how much we have been forgiven should deepen our love for Him and our desire to obey Him.
    d. Repentance is not simply turning away from something wrong; it is turning back to the God who loves us and calls us to walk in holiness.

Prayer: Consider spending time rejoicing in the Gospel and identifying the things in your life that seem to eclipse Christ and rob you of joy and peace with Him. Suggested prayer prompts:

Psalm 19:13–14
"Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer."

1. Where have I been focusing more on the gifts of God than on God Himself?
2. What sin, unbelief, or wrong perspective do I need to repent of and turn away from?
3. Am I living in the freedom and joy of the forgiveness Christ has secured for me?
4. What competing priorities are keeping me from worshiping, walking, and working for Christ?
5. Who in my life needs to hear about the forgiveness and refreshing that are found in Jesus?

Weekly Activity: Continue praying about the things in your life that seem to eclipse the Gospel and rob you of joy and peace with Christ. Ask the Lord to redirect your attention to Jesus, deepen your repentance, and help you live in light of the blessings that flow from Him.