

# Acts 3

One thing that is pretty well guaranteed is that a bride will do her utmost to look her best on her wedding day. From the dress to the make-up, from the shoes to the hair-do, everything will be perfect. The church is the Bride of Christ and we can make the church look beautiful or ugly. When people look at the church - what do they see? Do they see in us something of God or something repellant? Jesus when he was alive said to the disciples - 'Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.' Would it not be nice to be able to say 'Anyone who has seen the church has seen Jesus.' Sadly this is rarely the case.

But in today's passage that is really what is the case. Peter and John tell the cripple to look at them - not their wallets. What they are really saying is - by looking at us, you are really looking at Jesus whose servants we are. And the power of the Spirit in Jesus is the same power at work in us. Therefore be healed. All too often today, we look to our wallets and not to the power of the Spirit and how close we walk with Jesus.

Peter and John respond to the situation they find themselves in. They did not think that they were "off duty" because they were going up to the Temple to pray and that later they would be back "on duty" afterwards ready to preach again or whatever.

## Read Acts 3.1-10

- What was the occasion for this event and why is this significant?
- What details in the story stand out and why might they be important?
- How do you react to something amazing like this?
- Does the "Name of Jesus" have the power to heal today?
- Do you think that there is a relationship between 'poverty' and 'power', and if so, what is it and what can be done about it?
- How attractive is the church today? Is it really like Jesus?

## Read Acts 3.11-16

- Why does Peter ask the question about them all being surprised?
- What does Peter then do?
- Why does he seem so confrontational at the start of his sermon?
- What is the central point Peter is working up to?

## Read Acts 3.17-26

- Having started so bluntly, Peter now is more gentle - why and what is he leading up to?
- Why does Peter quote from Moses?
- How does his sermon end and what might he expect people to now do?
- How do you respond when you have the opportunity (like Peter) to speak about Jesus?
- From this sermon and the one in chapter 2 what are the essential parts of the gospel to communicate?
- Are there times when you are just doing 'ordinary' things and you never think that this could be the very time to speak of Christ to someone? What would help you to be more open to opportunities?

Reflect on how to tell people about Jesus and (following Peter's example) how challenging/difficult or easy that telling should be.