

SUCH AS I HAVE GIVE I THEE

ACTS 3

Text:

Introduction:

1. THE TRAGEDY OF THIS MAN'S LIFE

Illustration:

It was 1818 in France, and Louis, a boy of 9, was sitting in his father's workshop. The father was a harness-maker and the boy loved to watch his father work the leather.

"Someday Father," said Louis, "I want to be a harness-maker, just like you."

"Why not start now?" said the father. He took a piece of leather and drew a design on it. "Now, my son," he said, "take the hole-puncher and a hammer and follow this design, but be careful that you don't hit your hand."

Excited, the boy began to work, but when he hit the hole-puncher, it flew out of his hand and pierced his eye! He lost the sight of that eye immediately. Later,

sight in the other eye failed. Louis was now totally blind.

A few years later, Louis was sitting in the family garden when a friend handed him a pinecone. As he ran his sensitive fingers over the cone, an idea came to him.

He became enthusiastic and began to create an alphabet of raised dots on paper so that the blind could feel and interpret what was written. Thus, Louis Braille opened up a whole new world for the blind—all because of an accident!

A. Notice This Man's Serious Defect (vss. 1-2)

Notice:

- Not only was this poor man lame, but he had been that way all his life. He had never known the joy of walking, running or jumping. As a child, I can imagine him watching with a heavy heart, as the other children would run and play, doing all the things he could not do. We were all born spiritually crippled and helpless.
- It's interesting that Peter and John noticed this lame man at the "ninth hour," which is 3:00 p.m. What makes that fact interesting is that it was at the "ninth hour" that the darkness lifted on Golgotha.

- During the three hours of darkness that clung to Calvary that day, Jesus became sin for all mankind. At the “ninth hour” the darkness lifted, for Jesus Christ, the Son of God had dismissed His Spirit.

B. Notice This Man’s Sad Dependence (vss. 2)

- This man had to beg in order to scrape out a living. What was worse, he had to depend on others to carry him to where he would spend the day begging.
- Look where this poor, lame beggar was deposited each day. The gate called “Beautiful” was for this cripple, a place of both beauty and bounty, for people coming into the temple to pray were perhaps inclined to be more generous here than in other places. However, where one begs makes him no less a beggar.

C. Notice This Man’s Sole Desire (vss. 3)

- The word “alms” refers to “gifts of compassion”
- This poor beggar was looking merely for a coin or two—just enough to sustain life.

- But God had much more in store for him. God wanted this man to have not mere existence of life, but eternal life through faith in Christ.
- This man was looking only for his next crust of bread. But God wanted to give him the Bread of Life

2. THE TRANSFORMATION IN THIS MAN'S LIFE

A. We Find This Man Looking

- Dead religion had found him a beggar and had left him a beggar. It could not change what he was. But now he is looking up into the faces of two Galilean fishermen who want to direct his focus away from dead religion to the living Redeemer.

B. We Find This Man Listening

- When Peter told this man to look at him, he listened, expecting to receive some money. But this man didn't need money as badly as he needed a miracle.

C. We Find This Man Leaping

- The result of this man's faith in Jesus to heal was instantaneous.

D. We Find This Man Lauding the Lord (vss. 9)

- Notice this former cripple did not enter the temple praising Peter. He praised God alone. He realized that God, by the power of Jesus Christ, had done a miraculous thing for him.

3. THE TESTIMONY OF THIS MAN'S LIFE

A. The Man's Transformation Was Obvious To Others (vss. 10-11)

- There had been such a transformation in this man's life, the change was obvious to everyone. That's the way it should be.

B. The Man's Transformation Was An Opportunity For Outreach

1. Peter spoke of denial. (vss. 12-15)
2. Peter spoke of deliverance. (vss. 16)
3. Peter spoke of decision. (vss. 17-20)