



WEST VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

9:30 am Bible Class—all ages
10:30 am Sunday Worship
5:00 pm Proverbs study (online)
7:00 pm Wednesday Bible Class

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Will You Give What You Have?

The text only identifies him as “a certain man lame from his mother’s womb” (Acts 3:2). He’s one of the myriads of people in the first century world who found themselves forced into a life of poverty because of disability. Even though he is blessed to have people in his life who would bring him each day to a high traffic area near the Jewish temple, the only thing he could do there was the shameful work of begging. The frequent disappointments in such a profession, if you can call it that, coupled with the stigma that surrounded disability in his day (cf. John 9:2) left the man’s head bowed and his heart wearied. It’s hard to look people in the eyes when they barely see you as a person.

Imagine the shock this man must have felt when a couple of fishermen from Galilee walked up and one of them said, “Look at us” (Acts 3:4). Normally people just tossed a coin or two in his direction; in fact, even as the lame man looked up, he expected to receive some money. The fisherman, whose name was Peter, then said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk” (Acts 3:6). The man’s life was transformed in an instant when Peter “took him by the right hand and lifted him up”; the text says, “immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength” (Acts 3:7). He didn’t just stand up, through a miracle, he leaped up and went through the temple, “walking, leaping, and praising God” (Acts 3:8).

As a Christian today, I don’t have the power that Peter had to free someone from a physical disability. I also don’t have much by way of silver or gold. However, I do have something to give, something that people desperately need.

Most of the people I encounter every single day do not know the awesome power of the One by whose authority Peter was able to heal that man that day. Like that lame man, these people might have a few people in their lives who help them, but a lot more who barely even treat them like people. I often say that the default setting of someone who doesn’t know Jesus is, “hateful and hating one another” (Titus 3:3); the people I encounter have definitely experienced that. They have hearts wearied and heads bowed, not necessarily because of disability or even poverty, but because of sin.

As a Christian, I was not “redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold” (1 Peter 1:18) and I don’t need silver or gold to help anyone else. However, I must realize that I do have something far more precious and far more powerful in my life: “the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:19). I not only have it; I know how I got it and how I can pass it along to others. The Gospel, the good news that God used to bring me salvation, is the only power by which Jesus will bring anyone salvation (Romans 1:16). I’ve got it, and the world needs it.

So Christian, will you call those heavy heads to look up? Will you say to them, “What I do have, I give you?” Will you take them by the hand and help them to find the joy of the salvation of the Lord?

