

## Approaching God

Read this portion of Psalm 6 and begin with an opening prayer

*Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing; heal me O LORD, for my bones are greatly troubled. My soul also is greatly troubled. But you, O LORD - how long? Turn, O Lord, deliver my life; save me for the sake of your steadfast love. (Psalm 6:2-4)*

Are there any ways in which David’s prayer in Psalm 6 resonates with you right now? Notice the basis for which David plea arrives before God. Everything is rooted in God’s “steadfast love.” His confidence that God will hear and answer is not in whether or not he has been doing well spiritually, whether he blew it the night before, or whether its been weeks since his last quiet time. His confidence is that God is a God of steadfast, unwavering, unquenchable love. Start your prayer with that same confidence today. And if you don’t have it - ask him to be gracious to you.

## Acts 3:1-26

**Passage Introduction:**

Acts 2 provided a remarkable picture of Christianity’s earliest days. The gift of the Spirit invigorated the apostles, the gospel was being proclaimed with unstoppable boldness, and the church was growing at a rapid pace. Acts 3 continues the story of the spread of the gospel and the miraculous work of the Spirit through the ministry of the apostles.

## Bible Reading, Study & Meditation

**Start with Engaging the Text:** Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.

**Context Clues:**

Gates in the first century were huge doors that served as protection for cities or complexes like the temple, and a gate’s size and intricacy signaled the value of either the person or deity who was honored by the gate. The more magnificent the gate, the more the apparent value of the revered subject.

**Acts 3:1-26 - 1** One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. **2** Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. **3** When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. **4** Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” **5** So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. **6** Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” **7** Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. **8** He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. **9** When all the people saw him walking and praising God, **10** they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

**Solomon's  
Colonnade:**

This grand porch had giant columns that surrounded the temple; it overlooked the city and served as a place for people to gather and converse in. Interestingly, this was the same place where Jesus was nearly stoned for preaching the gospel to the Jews in John 10:22-39.

→  
Vs. 22 - Peter's  
quote from  
Moses is from  
Deut 18:15-19

**11** While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. **12** When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? **13** The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. **14** You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. **15** You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. **16** By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

**17** "Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. **18** But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer. **19** Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, **20** and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. **21** Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. **22** For Moses said, '*The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you.* **23** *Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from their people.*' **24** "Indeed, beginning with Samuel, all the prophets who have spoken have foretold these days. **25** And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.' **26** When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

C.S. Lewis on the lame beggar in Acts 3 asking for money, but getting wholeness, healing and salvation instead:

*"Imagine yourself a living house. [You ask God to make some repairs.] At first... he is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on. But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is he up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of... You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace!"* (Mere Christianity - Book IV - chapter 9)

## Questions for Reflection & Meditation

- How does the gospel influence your commitment to compassion and care for those in need? What are some ways the gospel should influence our thinking in that regard?
  
- What are some of the different titles that Peter uses to refer to Jesus in this passage? What do those titles communicate to you about the person and work of Jesus?
  
- In what ways can you take the initiative, as Peter did, to pursue open doors for gospel declaration?

### Key Takeaway:

As you read today's passage, what are 1 or 2 main takeaways that you want to carry with you this week? How would you briefly summarize your observations and meditations for today?

### Close in Prayer:

What are some things that you have personally witnessed that have caused you to feel "wonder and amazement" at the work of God? How might that move you to praise God and speak out for him today?