

### **Acts 3: Atenizō**

I want you to do something a little different today. I want you to read the story found in Acts 3:1-11 twice. It won't take you long, but read it through once, then the second time around, I want to think about who you are in the story. Acts 3:1-11

Who Are You in the Story?

Are you Peter and John? Disciples of Jesus, finally on the right track of living out this new movement called Christianity.

Are you the lame man? Maybe today you feel spiritually lame. Maybe you feel tired, hopeless, and weary.

Are you the friends who dropped off the lame man everyday? They aren't mentioned here in the story by name, but they are a huge part of the story. Think about this: Jews would go to the temple three times a day to pray. Peter and John were going for the afternoon prayer time, which was about 3pm. We are told that this man was (v. 2) being carried to the temple gate during these times as well. His friends were probably super busy, but at least they dropped him off in a high traffic area to beg for help.

Are you the group of people who were filled with wonder and amazement of what just happened? Maybe today you're new to all of this, but you've seen people's lives radically changed by Jesus and you want in!

**Everyone in the Story Was Impacted:**

Peter and John: Took the teachings of Jesus out of the church and into the streets.

The Lame Man: He was healed! Can't forget that!

The Friends of the Lame Man: They watched as their friend got up and walked for the first time IN HIS LIFE! How cool would that have been for them?

The Crowd of People: The crowd stood back and knew something special was happening right before their eyes! You see it in the story, "(v. 11) They all rushed out in amazement to Solomon's Colonnade..."

Application

This story can be applied to your life, but it all depends on who you are in the story. If I were to guess, many of you reading this would probably fall into the category of Peter and John.

It's assumed that Peter and John have healed people before (Luke 9), but this was the first time they healed someone post Pentecost. I'm sure it wasn't lost on them that they now had a responsibility to "put into action" all that Jesus had taught them while he was on earth.

Atenizō

Luke's word choice, atenizō, which means, "to fix the eyes on, or gaze upon," shows the intensity that Peter and John looked at the lame man. This is important because it shows that Peter and John were willing to stop and really "see" the man who was asking for money. It's so important as believers we "see," really see, the people God calls us to help. It's also important to recognize that Peter and John didn't give the man what he wanted (money), instead they gave him what he needed (healing)!

The question to consider today is this: How will we know how to help a person if we don't stop long enough to ask the Holy Spirit what they need?

Benediction

I want to close with a Benediction found in Paul's Letter to the church in Colossi:

Colossians 4:2-6 (The Voice) 2 Pray and keep praying. Be alert and thankful when you pray. 3 And while you are at it, add us to your prayers. Pray that God would open doors and windows and minds and eyes and hearts for the word so we can go on telling the mystery of the Anointed, for this is exactly why I am currently imprisoned. 4 Pray that I will proclaim this message clearly and fearlessly as I should. 5 Be wise when you engage with those outside the faith community; make the most of every moment and every encounter. 6 When you speak the word, speak it gracefully (as if seasoned with salt), so you will know how to respond to everyone rightly.