

## UNIVERSAL RESTORATION

Scripture: Acts 3:17-4:4

December 15, 2020

**Message: 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. Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.**

### Acts 3:22-23

Resurrection. It was the hot button issue of the day. The Pharisees claimed their souls would pass into an after-life. The Sadducees denied any existence after death. But both agreed that the ideas of a new rising sect of Jews had to be put down. Not only were these Jews proclaiming a donkey-riding Galilean to be the Son of God, they were talking about a new kingdom. Now. The Pharisees and Sadducees thought it all would end when they crucified their leader, Jesus. If He was dead, He couldn't be a problem anymore.

But it got worse. The people claimed He was resurrected. On the Day of Pentecost, the city was set ablaze with fiery tongues and a mighty roaring wind through the power of the Holy Spirit. And now, a confirmed miracle, the healing of a lame man from birth, right in front of the Temple Gate, was stirring the whole city. It was undeniable that some new power was at work.

The healed man entered the Temple Gate himself now, choosing to do so alongside the people that gave him a new life. Everyone else ran up in amazement to see the miracle and its deliverers. Peter asked, "Why do you stare at us as though we did this by our own power or piety?"

Enough was enough. Peter was claiming that Jesus did this. Usually in the gospels, faith associated with healing is centered on the one being healed or a bystander, but here we see it is the healer's faith that brings about the change. Peter wasn't claiming personal power or holiness, he was claiming it was his faith in Jesus' power that brought about change.

The people of the day were so focused on restoring the kingdom of Israel and what the resurrection would look like in the future, they missed the universal restoration and new life rising up in front of them. They were focused on the power in the miracles and not the lives that were changed because of them.

Peter was already at work ushering in the kingdom of God by restoring people here and now. Jesus' witnesses advocated not some theoretical hope for the future but the belief that the first case of the promised resurrection had already occurred. Does your witness restore the lives of others in a personal way?

**Prayer:** Lord, give us eyes to see your kingdom, ears to hear those in need crying out, and hands to lift people out of their situations into a new way of life. Amen.

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