

## Restoring the Broken

### Acts 3:12-26

My son, Jackson, has a Millennium Falcon Lego set that has over 1,300 pieces. It was intentionally designed by engineers and was intimately put together by Jackson. He meticulously laid each piece in place, making sure with precision accuracy that each is where it should be.

In the bags the pieces were just that, pieces. But after he took the time and care to put it together it functions as a whole and now fulfills its purpose.

This is much like our lives. God has intentionally and intricately put us together. He designed each piece of you; your personality, your gifts, skills, talents, and even quirks. You are fearfully and wonderfully made.

But something has happened. Sin has crept in. Greed, lust, envy; idolatry, lying, cheating; selfishness, pride, anger; and more. If I were to begin to tear apart his Lego set as sin tears apart our lives it would be nothing more than a pile of random pieces with no purpose or design.

I could give the broken pile of Legos back to Jackson and he will begin, with the same care of his original creation, to place each piece back where it belongs, making sure all the parts work as they are supposed to and when he is finished you will not be able to tell it was broken in the first place.

Sin has broken each and every one of us. Sin has shattered our image and purpose.

In our passage today Peter is preaching his second sermon.

In this sermon he will show us how Jesus has come to restore and refresh.

You may know full well that you are broken by sin and the world.

I want you to know there is hope. Jesus can restore your brokenness and I want to show you how this morning.

*<sup>11</sup>While he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement. <sup>12</sup>But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? <sup>13</sup>The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. <sup>14</sup>But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, <sup>15</sup>but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses. <sup>16</sup>And on the basis of*

*faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all. <sup>17</sup>“And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. <sup>18</sup>But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. <sup>19</sup>Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; <sup>20</sup>and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, <sup>21</sup>whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. <sup>22</sup>Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed to everything He says to you. <sup>23</sup>And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’ <sup>24</sup>And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days. <sup>25</sup>It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’ <sup>26</sup>For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways.”*

From this passage we see several important points related to our restoration in Jesus.

### **All Miracles are Meant to Point to Jesus**

Upon the miracle of physical healing the previously lame man is understandably excited. He wanted some money, but instead he was renewed.

This healing set off a chain of events in the history of the church that would not have taken place otherwise.

The crowd, seeing this miracle take place, ran to Peter and John inside the Temple.

They were utterly amazed and begin talking about how amazing Peter and John are.

Hearing this, Peter sets the record straight. He says, “why are you amazed as if we did this by our power? It wasn’t us it was God.”

Notice this and this is key-all miracles, every single one is meant to point to Jesus.

Miracles are never done for the sole purpose of the miracle itself, but to point to the one who performs the miracle-Jesus.

Miracles are a small glimpse, a portrait of a restored earth, where sin has not affected creation.

This leads us to a second important point.

**Miracles that do not point to Jesus are not of God.**

I have met many so called "faith healers" in my life. When I used to work at Angola prison, we had several of these charlatans, several you would know who are on TV. When I asked them to go to the hospital and heal all the sick, they refused.

Why? Because they were frauds who were more concerned about stealing the glory of Jesus for themselves than they were about meeting real actual needs.

Pro tip- never trust a faith healer who wears glasses.

But this miracle, this work of God that Peter attests to give us hope.

Because the miracle is not dependent upon a person, we have hope.

This means that we know who performs the miracle and the person is King Jesus.

The fact that the miracle points to Jesus shows us that our impossibility is God's opportunity, so we can turn to him.

Do you need restoration in your marriage? Healing in your body? Does your situation that seems hopeless?

This beggar could not work to overcome his adversity. He needed help beyond this world.

He needed God to do what no one else could do.

God used this man's impossible circumstance to accomplish his plan.

God gave this man an affliction to accomplish his divine purpose.

The same is true of our adversities.

I'm not suggesting you will get what you want or that you will receive a miraculous reversal of misfortune.

I can tell you this, that God will not ignore you in your time of need; that your circumstance is not in vain.

I can tell you that even in your pain or confusion; your doubt and even anger that God is working and he is using your circumstance to draw you to him and to give you a testimony for his glory.

## **Faith in Jesus Brings Healing**

Peter goes on to remind them of some hard truths. He tells them that “you delivered and disowned him.” “You disowned the Holy and Righteous One.” “You chose a murderer over the Son of God.”

He paints them guilty for what they did to Jesus. He lays out their sin before them and lets them know they stand condemned. But then, he does the unexpected.

He actually tells them in verse 16 the most blessed truth.

### **Faith in Jesus brings healing.**

He lets the crowd know that the lame man was healed by Jesus himself.

The same Jesus they condemned is the same Jesus who healed and restored this man.

God is in the healing business. He loves to heal and restore the broken.

### **Jesus restores the broken and the sinner through faith in him**

“Your adversary, the Devil would love for you to assume the worst about your situation. He would enjoy seeing you heave a sigh and resign yourself to feelings of depression and defeat. However, it’s been my experience that when God is involved, anything can happen. The one who directed the stone between Goliath’s eyes and split the Red Sea down the middle and leveled the wall around Jericho and brought his Son back to life takes delight in mixing up the odds as he alters the inevitable and bypasses the impossible.”-Charles Swindoll

The blind songwriter, Fanny Crosby, put it this way, “Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.”

Your situation may look bleak right now but trust me this is where Jesus loves to show off.

I want to challenge you and encourage you to place your faith in Christ today.

I don’t know your particular need or the details of your individual circumstance, but I know this-God does and he cares deeply for you.

Jesus loves to restore the broken. He delights in redeeming the sinner.

Peter makes it very clear for us-the way to restoration is through faith in Jesus.

Where is your faith today? You may say, “Preacher, you don’t know what I have done. God can’t forgive me.”

You are exactly the type of person Jesus died to forgive.

You may say, “Preacher, you don’t know how bad my situation is; there is no way it can be fixed.”

I’ve seen God free men from prison with life sentences with no possibility of parole. I’ve seen God restore and redeem marriages of serial adulterers. I’ve seen God remove tumors from the brains of a terminal cancer patient. I’ve seen God reconcile abusive parents to grown children. I’ve seen God take a sinful and unredeemable boy, who made a mockery of his salvation as a

teenager, who was selfish and prideful as a man, who took his grace for granted and break him down to nothing and call him to pastor this wonderful church.

What I'm telling you this morning church is that Jesus loves the broken.

The more destitute your situation, the deeper you are in sin, the more hopeless your circumstance provides Jesus the most blessed opportunity to show you just how much he loves you and provides a moment for a miracle to take place.

What miracle do you need in your life right now? How do you need Christ to work in your life? Trust in him. Turn to him. Place your faith in him.

### **Ignorance is not an Excuse to Reject Jesus**

Peter lays out the charges against them. He tells them plainly they are guilty, but then in verse 17 he seems to give them an out.

He states, "I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also."

But in saying this he is not excusing their sin, he is supporting what Jesus said as he was on the cross, "they know not what they do."

Yet, even in their ignorance of killing the author of life they stand guilty and condemned.

We are now 2,000 years on the backside of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. We have ample evidence of Jesus' life and of his exaltation.

For an individual to know the truth of Christ, yet reject him, is a greater judgment for those who have never heard of Christ and die in their sin.

### **The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus are historical realities**

For a person to hear the gospel, to be pierced to the heart by the Holy Spirit and to reject the blessed forgiveness and salvation of Jesus is to reject life everlasting.

This is not a decision made in ignorance, but in selfishness and pride.

You are willing to give up eternal life for temporary pleasures. Why would you knowingly and willingly give up freedom? It's like having a terminal disease and rejecting a free cure. It's pure insanity.

Christ has come to give life and to reject the author of life is to invite eternal condemnation on yourself.

But, what about those who have never heard of Jesus? What of their eternal life? Is it simply rejecting Jesus that condemns us to hell?

In John 3:18 Jesus gives us some insight into answering this question. *"He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*

It is not rejecting Christ that sends a person to hell, it is the fact that they are a sinner. Hell is the eternal destination for all who are unredeemed, who do not have Christ.

Jesus comes to rescue us from where we are all going.

We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. All of us are as filthy rags. None are worthy. All are headed to hell without the intervention of Jesus.

Which makes personal evangelism, going on missions, and giving to missions vitally important.

We want as many people as possible to hear about the lifesaving, life-giving message of the gospel.

### **Those Who are in Christ are Eternally Blessed**

From this condemnation, Peter then provides the remedy.

Look at verse 19, *“Therefore, repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”*

This is the most wonderful verse! We were condemned, but now we have a remedy.

Peter tells them the answer-REPENT and turn to Jesus. Here is hope. Turn from your sins to Jesus.

When you repent and turn to Jesus your sins are wiped away.

When you genuinely repent of your sins and place your faith in Jesus you have:

- Total forgiveness
- Spiritual refreshment
- Universal restoration

The phrase “your sins may be wiped out” is a beautiful word picture.

Parchment was expensive so sometimes scribes used acid-free ink as they wrote. The ink just lay on top of the parchment, so a person could take a wet sponge and wipe a message away, blotting it out.

Imagine having all your sins listed out on a white board one by one for the entirety of your life. As you look at them you begin to grasp the gravity of your guilt.

Now imagine sitting there pondering the weight of your sin record and the certainty of the coming judgment without having any hope of changing your sad reality. But then, when you feel eaten by shame and fear, someone marches in and forever wipes that record of your wrongs off the board.

He declares you innocent!

Would that not make you soar in worship to the one who wiped your sin away?

That is exactly what Jesus does with our sin-he wipes it away. We have no guilt. No shame. No condemnation.

But there is more. Through repentance you can enjoy spiritual refreshment.

Peter's language here is both a 'here and now' refreshment and a 'to come' refreshment.

When you repent you are immediately given the Holy Spirit who begins to restore and refresh your heart for the glory of God.

When Jesus returns Peter says he will restore all things.

Every wrong will be made right. Every tear will be wiped away. Every injustice corrected.

When Jesus returns, those who have repented of their sin and turned to him shall experience the fullness of the restoration that has begun here and now.

We shall have a world with no effects of sin, no pride, no greed, no lust, no envy.

We will have a world dominated by Christ-centered worship and servant attitudes.

Would you not want to experience this blessed reality?

All those who place their faith in Jesus are eternally blessed.

### **Those Who Reject Jesus are Eternally Punished**

Consequently, all those who reject Christ are eternally punished.

To listen, to hear, to understand the reality, the gravity, and weight of sin is to bear full responsibility of your decision.

To know the depth of your sin and to know how you can be forgiven; to know how to have the slate wiped clean; to understand the extent of the love of God for you and magnitude of Christ's sacrifice for you and to reject this is to reject the author of life.

How can a person reject this love?

I implore you today come and be restored by Christ. Know forgiveness. Feel the tangible nature of his love.

Jesus desires to restore the broken. Will you be restored by Jesus today?

"Each side of a Rubik's cube has 9 independent squares that can be turned horizontally or vertically. The object is to move each of the color squares which are mixed up, so that each side of the cube has squares of only one color.

Operating the cube teaches many lessons about the fact that choices have consequences. Each turn of an axis affects the arrangement of the colored squares on the other sides.

One twist may bring the colors of one side into alignment, but that twist may lead to greater chaos and confusion for other sides of the cube.

We make choices every day, and those choices, including our choice to follow God and place our faith in Jesus, or to live apart from him, have consequences.

While making choices, in an effort to obtain self-righteousness, answers, and satisfaction apart from God might appear to be correct from one's perspective, the choice to reject God has devastating consequences for your life that may not be seen from this side of eternity.

Punishment for rejection of God is an eternal consequence and is a result of your choice against God.

Only when you decide to make choices in line with following Jesus can all aspects of your life and death, of salvation and judgment, or righteousness and sin correctly fall into place." (Taken from *Teach the Text Commentary Series, ACTS*)