

Give What You Have
Acts 3: 1-16
OIC 1/8/12

Title: Give What You Have / Scripture: Acts 3: 1-16 / Key Verse: Acts 3:6

Thank you for the opportunity to share a message with you today from God's word. Typically, when I'm teaching I focus on 3 questions – What, Why and How.

Today's message, based on the scripture from Acts, follows this 3 question format.

- 1) What are we talking about today?
- 2) Why is this topic important?
- 3) How does this topic work – or message apply to our/my life?

First, let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, You are God creator, maker of the Heavens and the Earth. You are the true and living God and the God of new year's and new beginnings. Like the early Church, as we approach this new year, this new beginning, help us each to see our God-given gifts more clearly and what you have so graciously given us in your Son – Jesus Christ.

I pray that for believers and seekers, that my words today will be your words and that all of us will see anew - even if it is for the first time.

In Christ's name,

Amen

Today, the title of my message is "Give What You Have". An alternative title could be, "You Can't Give What You Don't Have". Yet, I chose to state the message in positive terms – Give What You Have and, in a moment, I will share the Biblical basis for this message and my personal motivation for sharing on this topic today.

Today's message is from the book of Acts: 3:1 - 16. I will be focusing on Acts 3:6 in particular. Let's read this scripture together.

1. What is the topic? What are we talking about today?

- a. Read Scripture (Acts 3:1-16) – Together, Standing

Peter Heals a Lame Beggar

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.

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Peter Speaks to the Onlookers

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.**

- b. Personal Perspective (2 Cor 8:12) - You Can't Give What You Don't Have
 - i. Personal Example "Didn't know what to expect" (*At the start of a new year, we really don't know what to expect.)
 - 1. My "Summer" Trip to Ghana (My Friend Senyo/Baseball) – New Experience/Adventure – Never Been There Before/Taking Students
 - 2. My "Fall" Trip to US (JP → Pennsylvania, Ohio, Tennessee, Canada, California → JP) – 5 stops, 14 flights in North America over 6 days (Never did that before)
 - a. Didn't have a big name school, many students or flashy marketing material
 - i. Dan's Message the night before I left for the US trip.
 - 3. Bottom Line - God will accept your gift on the basis of what you have to give, not on what you haven't (2 Cor 8:12)
- c. Biblical Perspective (John 3:16) - God gave it all
 - i. God's Example - God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).
 - ii. God's Call/Responsible Stewardship (1 Chron 29:14) - Everything is a gift from you (God) and we have only to give back what is yours already (1 Chron 29:14)
- d. Summary - What
 - i. Give What You Have (2 Cor 8:12) - For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.
 - ii. God Gave It All (John 3:16) - ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
 - iii. Be Responsible with Your (special) God-given gifts (1 Chron 29:14) - ¹⁴ "But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.

So, that's what we're talking about today and my motivation for sharing this topic at the start of a new year.

2. Why is this topic important? Why should we care? Why does "giving what we have" matter? (Acts 3:1-10)

- a. Biblical Perspective (1st) – The short answer is...because the Bible tells us so. God's word is trustworthy.
 - i. First, the Bible is God's way of communicating with us. By reading our Bible daily, we can know God better and also know what He wants for our life.
 - 1. Just as we can't give what we don't have. If God did not give us His Holy word, we would be lost without a map. We would just be going through life guessing. That's why it is important to go into His word - daily.

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2. The Bible provides a means of communicating with God. It's important because we need to know God's word, His promises (He cannot lie) and desires for our life.
- b. Personal Perspective (2nd) – From a practical perspective, my experience in a variety of industries/businesses – hotel, consulting, education – has proven that not everybody can do everything well.
 - i. Even if we think we can...we actually can't. It's an illusion.
 1. There are always greater and lesser people than ourselves.
 2. That's good news because God does not ask us to do everything well.
- c. Prayer Perspective (3rd and Most Importantly) – Prayer is simply us communicating with God. If God's word is God communicating with us – sharing His deepest desires and wants. Prayer is simply our form of communicating with God.
 - i. Overview – Today's text tells us a lot. I am going to focus on 3 points.
 1. People Doing What They Do Daily (Giving What They Had/Actually Their Best – Time with God in Prayer)
 2. The Name of Jesus Christ (As a believer, God can use prayer in the name of Jesus Christ powerfully)
 3. The Best Results (Giving Our Best – One form of giving is prayer/Trusting God in belief to Do the Rest)
 - ii. People Doing What They Do Daily – Peter and John Giving What they Had (Read 3.1)

¹ **One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer**—at three in the afternoon.

1. Peter and John Going About Daily Life “Doing What they Do” to the best of their God-given ability.
 - a. Among the foremost apostles (Gal 2:9).
 - b. Along with John's brother, James, they had been especially close to Jesus.
 - i. Travelled together, arrested together...did lots of stuff together including praying at 3 specific times each day - together.
- iii. **The Name of Jesus Christ – Not by Their Own Power (They cannot give what they don't have (Read 3.6). They are praying with humility and power – in belief.**

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.”

For Christians, to pray “In the Name of Jesus Christ” is powerful. Why?

- a. As a Christian, you can communicate directly with the True and Living God (*Not the False and Dead Gods)
- b. As a Christian, you can fellowship with Your Lord and Savior.
 - i. Fellowship = Share together, to take part together
 1. God fellowship allows for spiritual growth and development of His children.
 - a. We can share with our heavenly father praise, needs, desires, frustrations...all of it.

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- c. As a Christian, this form of 2-way communication with God the Father is an important part of our relationship-building and maturation process.
 - i. In this passage, Peter and John are God's adopted children and representatives. They desire to serve Him and their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the best of their ability.
 - 1. Because of their relationship to God, they can pray with authority in the name of Jesus Christ.
 - ii. In the case of Peter and John, they had fellowship with God and Holy Spirit power.
 - 1. In the name of Jesus Christ, they were able to influence physical dimensions – the health of this lame beggar.
 - iii. In doing so, through a supernatural act, a miracle, they were able to demonstrate the authority of Jesus Christ.
 - 1. In this way, they were able to give or serve as pointers to God and Christ.
 - a. It is important to note that through the Holy Spirit, and **not by their power** but by the authority of the Messiah, this man was healed.
- d. As a Christian (esp. at the start of a new year), a prayer of belief in Jesus Christ's Name is different - we are not praying to just any God – we are praying to the savior to the world.
 - i. There is only one who claims to be the Sovereign God's firstborn Son and Savior of humanity – that's Jesus Christ.
 - 1. **Specifically, who did Jesus say He was? And how did Peter respond? (Matt 16: 13-16)** ¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ for flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father that is in heaven has revealed this to you" (Matt.16:13-17 Para.).
 - 2. By praying in Jesus Christ's name (or God the Father), you are making an important distinction between the many false gods of this world.
 - iv. The Results – Peter knew who Jesus was and Peter gave Jesus what he had. Specifically, he prayed a prayer of belief in Christ's name (based on the power and the authority of Jesus Christ)...and, what happened? OK, back to our text.

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.

- 1. Peter helped him up. The lame beggar was healed and became strong. Then, He went into the temple courts...**walking, jumping and praising God. → Amazing**

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- a. In general, I'm pretty reserved...although I can get emotional. But, if I were paralyzed for 40+ years and couldn't walk and now could – I would be walking, jumping and praising God too.
 - i. Although I can walk, I ask myself - what type of miracle in my life would send me walking, jumping and praising God? (There are a few desires/miracles in my heart – God knows them).
- b. How about in your hearts?
 - i. I don't know what your deepest heart desires are but God does.
 - 1. He knows your deepest heart desires.
 - 2. Keep pouring them out to him in the name of Jesus Christ.
- v. Summary - Why
 - 1. Do What You Always Do...and Be Ready to Give What You Already Have (Because you can't give what you don't have.)
 - 2. Do It - In the Name of Jesus Christ – in belief.
 - a. In the name of Jesus Christ, it is very powerful.
 - i. Keeps your heart and mind focused on the source of what's best.
 - b. Not everybody can do everything. In fact, no one, but God, can do everything well.
 - 3. So, give Your Best in Faith and in Christ and Leave the Rest to God.
 - a. Remember the miracle you have been praying for is not outside of God's reach or understanding.
 - b. When Pastor Dan gave a recent message on this scripture, he reminded that Jesus prayed at that temple many times and likely walked past that lame beggar. He did not heal him. So, did Peter and John on many occasions. Yet, He was not healed by Jesus nor Peter and John before. For 40 years, this man begged. Yet, as Pastor Dan reminded, God's timing is always perfect.
 - i. His purposes will be fulfilled perfectly. In His own way/In His time.

3. How does it work? How does giving what you have work? (*Closely related to JOY principle)

- a. Give a prayer...
 - i. **In belief (Acts 3:6)** - Make Jesus Central in Your Prayer Life. Pray in His Name...daily. In the Name of Jesus Christ.
 - 1. Very Powerful as evidenced by the example of the lame beggar.
 - a. Peter and John in Acts 3 are the example to follow here.
 - b. This is the "J" for Jesus in the JOY principle.
 - ii. **In Belief From Your heart (Matthew 22:36 – 40)**
 - 1. Responsible Stewardship - You have God-given talents, gifts.
 - a. Use your God-given talents and gifts to bless others – wherever He has put you. Give from the heart.
 - i. Regardless of your situation/circumstances/shortcomings.
 - b. This is the "O" for Others in the JOY principle.
 - 1. ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your

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mind.^[a] 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39
(By praying in the name of Christ, you are tangibly expressing your Love for the Lord). And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'^[b] 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

2. For a moment (just for a moment), forget everything else in scripture and just consider what Jesus said.
3. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind – that's a love that is deep and wide. It permeates your whole being. A powerful, all encompassing heartfelt love - for God and for service to others.

iii. Now (Give to God Now) – In belief/Pray In Christ's Name/From **Your** Heart...Now

1. What type of year will 2012 be? More like a "Crazy" Rollercoaster or like a "Calm" Onsen (insert ppt slide)?
 - a. Give 2012 to God; Use Your God-given gifts in a God-glorifying way (*Regardless of circumstances – the craziness or calm in your life).
2. In your bulletin are a few prayers that you may wish to consider depending upon where you are in life and in your relationship with Christ.
 - a. If one of these prayers applies to you, great. Please feel free to pray it.
 - b. If none of these prayers apply to you, that's fine too. Please just take a moment now to search your heart and ask God to meet you where you are at...now. I've noted prayers that might be more appropriate for a Christian and/or a non-Christian or both.

(Direct congregation to the bulletin insert then summarize "How" Take a few moments now to quietly share your hearts desires with the heavenly Father and then I will close with a few final thoughts and prayer)

iv. Summary – How

1. Pray in belief in the name of Jesus Christ
2. Pray in belief in the name of Jesus Christ from the heart
3. Now

Prayer for those Desiring to Give What They Have (with renewed determination) **(Matthew 22:36 – 40)**

- Jesus Christ, make my heart, mind and soul more like yours. Help me to follow your model of service to others and to use my God-given gifts in a God-glorifying way. Amen.

Prayer for those Struggling with Sin **(1 Corinthians 10:13)**

- Jesus Christ, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need, and may turn every false satisfaction to grow in you – the true and living God. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and to run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the pioneer and perfecter of my faith. Amen

Prayer for those Searching for Truth (John 8:32 – Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.)

- o Jesus Christ, you claim to be the way, the truth and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing and that leads to the life you promise. Amen

Prayer of Belief for those that Want to Accept Christ **(Matt: 21:22 – If you believe, you will receive)**

- o Jesus Christ, I recognize that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared admit, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen

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Closing Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

You don't ask us to give what we don't have – because we cannot. Before the hectic pace of 2012 entralls us, we have taken a moment to be still before you and give you what we do have. We pray with expectation. Expecting, like the onlookers at the temple in the Book of Acts to be amazed.

Help us each to give to you what we do have in 2012 and may Your will be done in our lives and at OIC.

You are the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. May the grace of the Lord always be with God's people.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen