

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

Ministering to Human Need? Who? Us?
Acts 3:1-10

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Ministering to Human Need? Who? Us?

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Prepare the words to the song or chorus you will be singing if it is unfamiliar to the worshippers.

Make copies of the hymn, **“Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life,”** so everyone can read and study the verses during the Gathering Time. The hymn is printed at the conclusion of the Worship Time in this session.

Place the following items in a central location (such as a coffee table): a piece of bread, a glass of water, a small blanket, a T-shirt, a cross and a heart cut out of construction-paper.

Bible Study Leader:

For the Teens: Provide modeling clay for use in their application time.

Worship Time Leader:

Ensure that rhythm instruments are available for the children to accompany the music.

Suggested Music Sources:

“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”, CCLI # 1619451

“Do You Really Care?”, CCLI # 64832

“Reach Out and Touch”, CCLI #13625

“Make Me a Blessing”, CCLI #11603

“Come, Now Is the Time to Worship”, CCLI #2436948

“Your Love Is Amazing (Hallelujah)” CCLI #2678212

“What A Friend I’ve Found”, CCLI #2098033

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***Ministering to Human Need? Who? Us?***
Acts 3:1-10**Focal Text**

Acts 3:1-10

Background Text

Acts 3

Main Idea

Peter and John ministered to human need in the authority and power of Jesus

Question to Explore

How important to you and your church is ministering to human need?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to identify specific human needs that God is calling them to meet

Gathering together:Ask a teen to greet people as they arrive and to hand out copies of the hymn, **“Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life.”**

Consider playing background music on a CD player as people get settled.

Sing: **“Come, Now Is the Time to Worship,”** or another welcome-to-worship praise song.Ask the children and preschoolers to name each item on the coffee table. Say: These are some things people need in their lives. Ask the adults to help them identify a need that each of these items meets. (This is an abstract concept so they might need quite a bit of help.)Say: Today we will be discussing how we can minister to peoples' needs. Have you ever had a need that was so overwhelming that you had to put all your energy into

meeting it? How did you feel when the need was finally met? Let's focus today on the Lord and on the way He meets our needs, and on how He wants us to help meet the needs of others.

First thoughts:

Ask the group to reflect on the hymn they were given when they entered.

Say: This is one of the most stirring and sung hymns written in the 19th century. Then about eighty years after it was written, the great grandchildren of those people begin to sing it again during the 1960s, in large gatherings of university students who were considering a call to serve as missionaries around the world. Now, forty years later, it still speaks to us.

Say: Please read the verses silently while I read them out loud.

**Where cross the crowded ways of life,
Where sound the cries of race and clan,
Above the noise of selfish strife,
We hear thy voice, O Son of man!**

**In haunts of wretchedness and need,
On shadow'd thresholds dark with fears,
From paths where hide the lures of greed,
We catch the vision of thy tears.**

**From tender childhood's helplessness,
From woman's grief, man's burdened toil,
From famish'd souls, from sorrow's stress,
Thy heart has never known recoil.**

**O Master, from the mountainside,
Make haste to heal the hearts of pain;
Among those restless throngs abide,
O tread the city's streets again.**

**Till sons of men shall learn thy love,
And follow where thy feet have trod;
Till glorious from the heav'n above,
Shall come the city of our God.**

Frank Mason North, 1903 (From Matthew 22:9). Public Domain

This song has named all the hurting people of our world. The hymn is a prayer for these people. Ask the group to suggest the subject of each of the five verses.

Closing the Gathering Time

Say: We and all God's people can do no better than to make this our daily prayer until Christ returns. As we study today about meeting the needs of people, let's remember that praying must be followed by actively doing God's will.

Take time at this point to mention any prayer concerns, announcements of ministry, activities, or anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Lead in a time of prayer for the concerns that were mentioned.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

Ministering to Human Need? Who? Us?

Focal Text

Acts 3:1-10

Background Text

Acts 3

Main Idea

Peter and John ministered to human need in the authority and power of Jesus

Question to Explore

How important to you and your church is ministering to human need?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to identify specific human needs that God is calling them to meet

Introduction to personal study:

Jesus said, “The poor you will always have with you” (Matthew 26:11). We have many opportunities to reach out to those in need. Some have financial needs; many have spiritual needs, while others just need a listening ear. When we take time to notice the needs around us, and respond in love to those needs, we learn the truth of Acts 20:35: it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**”, found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you as well.

Following the miracle at Pentecost, the new community of believers kept feeling a sense of awe as many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles (Acts 2:43). Luke now focuses his narrative on the healing of the crippled beggar. The healing of this man began a new chapter in the apostles' public ministry.

Focusing on the Meaning:

First Recorded Healing Acts 3:1-10

Jesus' believers continued to live as observant Jews, but now they had Spirit-filled eyes and hearts. As was apparently their practice, Peter and John attended an evening prayer service at the Temple in Jerusalem. This service possibly accompanied the evening sacrifice offered at twilight (Exodus 29:39).

Eyes to See Acts 3:2-5

For over forty years, this disabled man had been seeking comfort (Acts 4:22). He was regularly carried to the Temple gate, to beg gifts of charity from those passing into the Temple, where he hoped to benefit from the financial generosity of worshippers.

Today, Peter and John had "eyes" to see his need. Peter fixed his gaze on the man, perhaps seeing him for the first time. They had compassion for his disability.

Power to Heal Acts 3:6-8

When he had the man's attention, Peter confessed that he had no money to give him; rather, he offered a gift much more life changing—healing in Jesus' Name. Peter then seized the man's hand, perhaps one of the few times someone had actually bent to touch him, and then drew him to his feet. Miraculously the man's feet and ankles were strengthened. In that moment a lifetime of disability was gone. First he tried standing, then walking, and finally leaping with joy. Each leap was a testimony to the glory of the God who had released him from forty years of hopelessness and dependency on the compassion of others who had considered him "unclean." Leviticus 21:17–20 emphasizes the seriousness of this man's situation. According to the requirements for priesthood, any one with a physical defect was prohibited from approaching the altar (Leviticus 21:17). A crippled man was specifically prohibited from such service (Leviticus 21:18).

"The Name"

God declares in Zechariah 10:12, "I shall strengthen them in the Lord, and in His Name they will walk." The God of all creation has chosen to reveal Himself to us and to give us His Name. By that Name He reveals His nature to us and invites us to know Him, His power, authority, and holiness. In the person of Jesus, the Word of God, God reveals Himself most fully to us (John 1:1; John 17:6). God bestowed on Jesus the name that is above all names. At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven

and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:9-11). It was in this name, the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, that God healed the crippled beggar.

Multiplied Blessings Acts 3:9-10

Rejoicing as only one who had been freed from forty years of bondage could, the healed man continued to praise His Saviour (Acts 3:9). As his praises rang throughout the gates, the crowd who gathered recognized him as the one who had lay begging. He was apparently a familiar sight to the regular worshippers, but none of them had the power or authority to cure him. In fact, they were filled with “wonder and amazement at what happened to him” (3:10).

For both the healed man and the witnesses, the miracle was also a sign. Jesus Christ of Nazareth had the power and authority to heal while He was living among them (Luke 5:23-24). From His place at the right hand of the Father, this same Jesus filled His followers with His Spirit, and continued His ministry through them. Jesus had promised that His followers would do even greater things than He had (John 14:12). The promised Helper had come. This was One who would remain with them forever (John 14:16). This was the age that had been prophesied by Isaiah; the time of the Messiah had dawned, and the church of God was born (Isaiah 35:3-10).

Witnessing in His Name Acts 3:11-26

With Spirit-filled eyes, Peter and John recognized the man’s need and reached out to him. They saw beyond his request for monetary help and touched his deeper need. God blessed their obedience. As is often the case when we are obedient with the little things, God will give us the opportunity to do more (See Matthew 25:23). Here God gave Peter the opportunity to touch many in the crowd. With his Spirit-filled sensitivity, Peter seized the advantage of the moment and boldly spoke to the crowd.

Peter began by emphasizing that it was not what either he or John had done that cured the man (Acts 3:12). Rather, the God of their Fathers has glorified His Servant Jesus who continued His ministry through the disciples. Peter showed how Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of the obedient and suffering Servant of Isaiah 52 and 53. Although the crowd had sent Him to His death, God has exalted Him (Acts 3:11-14).

Although they had killed the “Author of Life,” God raised Him from the dead, a fact to which Peter and John boldly witnessed (3:15). The miracle they now witnessed was granted in the authority and name of this living and exalted Jesus (3:16).

Although the crowd acted in ignorance before, they could claim ignorance no more. It was clear: Jesus alone has fulfilled the messianic prophecies (3:17-18). Therefore, Peter urged, “Repent and return to the presence of the Lord” (3:19).

Peter declared that Jesus was first sent for these very hearers, these sons of Abraham. Jesus is the fulfillment of the covenant and only through Him could they experience the fullness of their relationship with God (3:20-26). Peter, who had most recently experienced the filling of God's Spirit, knew more than ever that this was the relationship God desired with His chosen people. Peter spoke from the depths of his being as one who had walked with the risen Saviour and experienced the transforming power of His Spirit. This was the Messiah for whom his people had been fervently waiting; now was the time of salvation.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

Like the rushing wind the apostles had experienced on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit continued to blow in their lives, opening their eyes and hearts to human needs and opportunities around them. There is no safer place than the centre of God's will, and no place is more exciting. When we are filled with the Spirit of God and open ourselves to His guidance, we can expect our horizons to be stretched and our perceived limitations to be challenged. Jesus refused to be bound by religious and social tradition. He reached across many barriers to meet the needs of all individuals. As His Spirit opens our eyes to the needs and opportunities around us, let us ask Him for the courage to minister in His name.

For Personal Reflection:

1. **What have I learned from this study?**
2. **What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**
3. **What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

Ministering to Human Need? Who? Us?

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc. Children who stay with their parents in the youth or adult studies should have the material on worship as suggested in **The Children's Corner** at the beginning of this **Unit** of studies. (Ask your leader who downloads the studies for those suggestions).

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles and sharing with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Acts 3:1-10

Background Text

Acts 3

Main Idea

Peter and John ministered to human need in the authority and power of Jesus.

Question to Explore

How important to you and your church is ministering to human need?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to identify specific human needs that God is calling them to meet

Connect with Life

Say: God has given us the privilege of ministering in His Name. When we are walking in the Spirit we will have eyes to see the needs around us. As we see how Peter and John responded to one opportunity, let us pray for God to make us aware of opportunities for service in our lives.

Guide the Study

Ask a volunteer to read Acts 3:1-5.

Ask: How important to our Christian walk are regular times of worship? Note the importance of meeting together for worship. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Ask: How does regular worship impact our spiritual sensitivity?

Ask a volunteer to read Act 3:6-8.

Discuss the seriousness of the man's disability under Jewish law, from the background material. Ask for volunteers to share personal examples of how God met their need in times of despair.

Explore the significance of the name of Jesus. Say: Each of us is known by several names or titles. Ask: What names are you known by? Wait for responses; if no one else does so, suggest the name "Christian" or "Christ-follower." Discuss the importance of this designation.

Have someone read Acts 3:9-10.

Say: Think of the first person you would call to tell exciting news. Name some of the ways we celebrate. Wait for responses. Note the importance of giving glory to God.

Ask a volunteer to read Acts 3:11-13.

Discuss Peter's ability to see the opportunity to speak to the crowd. Ask: How can we be prepared to speak when the opportunity arises? Ask for volunteers to share any witnessing tools they are familiar with. Be prepared to suggest a model.

Say: This is Peter's second recorded sermon. Like the first message we studied in the last session, Peter begins by placing the focus on God's demonstrated power and uses Scriptural references familiar to the audience.

Discuss Isaiah's prophecy of the Suffering Servant, from the background material.

Have someone read Acts 3:14-18.

Ask: By what titles or names does Peter refer to the Saviour in these verses? Record the responses on a large piece of paper.

Ask a volunteer to read Acts 3:19-26.

Focus on the call for repentance in verse 19. Say: Peter gives his hearers a clear invitation to repent. He makes his message personal. It is a message that requires a response.

Say: Our role is to tell the message and present the invitation; the Holy Spirit's role is to work in the hearer's heart and convict of sin.

Ask: How can we offer a clear invitation, but stop short of pressuring the listener to say what we want to hear just so we'll go away? Be prepared to offer suggestions.

Encourage Application

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to go away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Sometimes we think about needs that are in other places of the world (e.g., children starving in Africa). What are some needs in your own city? How about your neighbourhood? Do any of your friends have needs?

Discuss the difference between spiritual, emotional, and physical needs.

Is there a need you could meet this week in someone's life? Remember that it does not have to be complicated or expensive; sometimes a person's greatest need might be friendship or someone to listen to them. Share as a group what you think you could do.

Ask for a volunteer to pray, thanking God for the opportunities to minister with which He has blessed each of you. Pray, too, that He will make you sensitive to the needs around you. Thank Him for the power to meet those needs through the Holy Spirit.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship times. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

Ministering to Human Need? Who? Us? **Acts 3:1-10**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

(Bring with you the modeling clay provided earlier.)

1. Take a few minutes to think about a basic human need. Take a piece of clay and form it into a symbol of what you are thinking about.
2. Share with each other your creations and the meaning behind them.
3. Sometimes we think about needs that are in other places of the world (e.g., children starving in Africa). What are some needs in your own city? How about your neighbourhood? Do any of your friends have needs?
4. Discuss the difference between spiritual, emotional, and physical needs.

Is there a need you could meet this week in someone's life? Remember that it does not have to be complicated or expensive; sometimes a person's greatest need might be friendship or someone to listen to them. Share as a group what you think you could do.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Ministering to Human Need? Who? Us?***
Acts 3:1-10**Beginning the Service**

Sing “**What A Friend We Have in Jesus**” (#182, BH) and “**Do You Really Care?**” Invite preschoolers and children to join in with shakers, maracas or other instruments and invite teens to try their musical skills as well.

Ask one of the teens to lead out in prayer. (You may need to do this ahead of time so as to not embarrass them).

Sing: “**Make Me a Blessing**” (#569, BH). Ask volunteers to share how they have been blessed by others recently.

Offering

Collect the offering in the style your church has chosen.

Praying for the World:

Since this topic is focused on ministering, take some extra time today to talk about opportunities in which your church could be involved. Perhaps you need to be more involved in a project currently underway, or maybe you need to pray together as a congregation about a new ministry you could undertake, remembering that annual special offerings such as the Samaritan’s Purse Christmas shoe box offering as well as other missionary emphases are possibilities for your church.

Ask someone to lead in prayer for the ministry opportunities you have discussed together.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God’s call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

Ministry: Planned? Serendipitous?

Many opportunities to minister to the needs of people are serendipitous kinds of experiences. Know what the word means? Serendipity: The gift of finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for. (source unknown).

Peter and John had a serendipitous experience early in the days of Good News; while they were on their way to the temple to pray, they met a man who needed a physical problem tended to.

The experience is told in Acts 3:1-10, and what followed is told in the rest of chapter three, through chapter four. As a matter of fact, the entire story of the spread of the Gospel across the Roman Empire during the first century begins with the attention attracted by the healing of a man who had been crippled for thirty years.

Some of our best opportunities for witnessing to the Good News in Jesus Christ come to us rather unexpectedly—while we are on our way to do something else.

1. Note to Worship Leader: Tell the church that you will read the following story about a young preacher's "serendipitous morning."

"One Sunday morning I left Seminary Hill in Fort Worth, Texas, to preach at a small country church in south-central Oklahoma. It was the kind of church where the invited preacher would be expected to lead everything: praying, singing, preaching ... On the outskirts of Fort Worth, at the junction of the roads from Dallas and Fort Worth, I picked up a man hitching a ride from Dallas to Oklahoma City. He had been down for the annual Texas-Oklahoma football game, had a wild week-end and was trying to get back home in time to go to work on Monday morning. He appeared to be badly in need of clean clothes and a bath.

Our conversation centered on the outcome of the game between the University of Oklahoma and the University of Texas, at first, but we soon got around to talking about where he was going and what I was doing out so early on Sunday morning. I soon learned that the man was not a Christian, as attested by his own admission.

I was not particularly prepared to "witness" to him, but the opportunity was too good to pass up. When we arrived in Ardmore, where I needed to turn east, I pulled over to the side of the road to let him out of the car. Instead of reaching for the door handle, he asked questions that provoked a long conversation. We talked about the Christian life and how one becomes a Christian.

Time quickly slipped by and before I was aware of it I realized I was supposed to be at the church. When we finally parted I was certain that I would not reach the church in time to preach that morning.

When I arrived at the country church, the last few people of the congregation were driving away. I explained why I was late and they graciously accepted my apology. The members of that small church seemed to realize that God had usurped my time and had directed me on another mission. I never knew what happened to that man, but I am confident that if I was faithful in the presentation of the Gospel, then God was certainly capable of using it in a manner to help a man find his way to Christ.

There are at least two ways to look at my experience: the first is to see it as a failure to accomplish my primary directive; after all, the people who came to church that Sunday morning to worship had missed that experience and gone home without singing, praying, hearing God's word preached, and without Christian fellowship. A second way to look at that experience is as an indication of how God can rearrange my schedule and make a serendipitous experience out of a chance meeting between a young preacher and an older man who needed to hear the Gospel.

I missed preaching a sermon, an experience I sorely needed early in my seminary training, but I had an experience in personal witnessing, for which there was no preparation.

2. Such was the experience of Peter and John on that day long ago, a day lost in time if not for the record of the doctor, Luke.

But the events that followed that experience recorded in the Bible were totally in the hands of the Almighty. To Peter and John it was just an interruption of their schedule, and sidetracked them from time spent in the temple at the hour of prayer. The healing of the lame man caught the attention of the people in the temple on that day and provided Peter with an audience eager to hear his explanation of what had happened.

But the outcome of the experience had reverberated throughout the city of Jerusalem, with echoes that reached the ears of the priests and other religious leaders of that day.

Call to Commitment

The point is this: whether serendipitous or planned, taking care of the physical needs of people is always doing that which is according to God's will and which will open doors to the hearts and homes of people who may never come to hear preaching.

One of the most audacious and even outlandish efforts at taking seriously the Christian duty to look after the needs of people was performed in the city of Atlanta, Georgia, during the short period between Christmas and New Year's Day in 1969. Students from college campuses across the nation came to Atlanta for "Mission 70". They came to sing, listen to preachers, observe dramas, and participate in activities that were designed to open the hearts of young people to the call to mission service.

Long periods of time were scheduled during the days for students to take paint brushes, hoes and rakes, hammers and nails, and work in the most dilapidated, run-down,

neglected areas of the city. The attention of the national media was drawn to those efforts, and a national news anchor came to the city to record on film and interview the young people in this very unusual expression of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Each of us needs to seriously ask ourselves if we merely agree that meeting the needs of people is just a great thing to do, or if we are actively seeking ways to meet the needs of people as God offers us those opportunities.

Pray a brief prayer asking God to turn our claims of following Christ into a true walk with Him that results in meeting the needs of people.

Concluding the Service:

Sing: **“What a Friend I’ve Found in Jesus,”** or **“And Can It Be.”** Both songs are found in many evangelical hymnals.

Leader: Call for God’s blessing on the church:

“May the Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and work” (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17).

Dismiss.

Prepare enough copies of the following hymn for each participant to read and study during the “Gathering Time”. One copy for every two persons is probably enough.

Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life

Where cross the crowded ways of life,
Where sound the cries of race and clan,
Above the noise of selfish strife,
 We hear thy voice, O Son of man!

In haunts of wretchedness and need,
On shadow'd thresholds dark with fears,
From paths where hide the lures of greed,
 We catch the vision of thy tears.

From tender childhood's helplessness,
From woman's grief, man's burdened toil,
From famish'd souls, from sorrow's stress,
 Thy heart has never known recoil.

O Master, from the mountainside,
Make haste to heal the hearts of pain;
Among those restless throngs abide,
 O tread the city's streets again.

Till sons of men shall learn thy love,
And follow where thy feet have trod;
Till glorious from the heav'n above,
 Shall come the city of our God.

Frank Mason North, 1903 (From Matthew 22:9). Public Domain