

May 31, 2026 – Leader’s Guide

Acts 3:1–26 “The First Miracle: A Foretaste, and an Invitation”

As we gather this week, Acts 3 invites us to reflect on the healing of the lame man at the temple gate, not simply as a miracle in isolation, but as a sign of something much greater. Peter presents this healing as a foretaste of the new creation Jesus will one day bring in full, and at the same time, an invitation to experience even now the refreshing and renewal found under his reign. As you discuss together, listen for the ways this passage awakens both hope and longing - for our own lives, for our world, and for the day Christ makes all things new.

1. Before we get into the passage itself, what has your experience of miracles, healing, or answered prayer been? Have you witnessed moments where you sensed God break in powerfully? Have there also been prayers that seemed unanswered?

Give people freedom to share honestly here. Some may have stories of remarkable healing or provision; others may carry disappointment, confusion, or grief around prayers that seemed unanswered. The goal is not to explain anything, but to create space for the tension and longing that Acts 3 speaks into.

Read Acts 3:1–26 together.

2. In verses 1–10, what stands out to you about the interaction between Peter, John, and the lame man? Why do you think Peter begins with the words, “Look at us”?

Invite the group to notice the dignity in the encounter. Before the man is healed, he is seen. For someone ignored and excluded for decades, being acknowledged matters deeply. The healing is not merely physical restoration, but restoration into worship, community, and the presence of God.

3. In verses 11–18, Peter insists that this healing should not surprise the crowd because it fits within God’s larger story. How does Peter connect this miracle to the promises and hopes of Israel’s Scriptures?

Encourage the group to notice Peter’s references to Abraham, Moses, the prophets, and the promised servant of God. The healing is presented as evidence that God’s promised renewal has begun in Jesus.

4. Peter speaks very directly about Israel’s rejection of Jesus, even saying, “you killed the author of life” (v. 15). Yet he also says this took place according to what God had foretold through the prophets (v. 18). How do passages like Isaiah 53, Psalm 118:22, or Deuteronomy 18:15–19 help us understand Peter’s argument?

Help the group wrestle with the paradox that the rejection and suffering of Jesus do not disprove his identity, but actually become part of the evidence that he is the Messiah promised in the Scriptures. Peter is not stepping outside Israel’s story to condemn it, but showing how Jesus stands at the very centre of it.

5. This miracle points beyond itself to the restoration God intends to bring to the whole world. Where do you most long to see God bring renewal, healing, or restoration — either personally or in the world around you?

The passage moves from one man's healing to the hope of the "restoration of all things" (v. 21). Encourage the group to think both personally and broadly — relationships, grief, injustice, anxiety, loneliness, sickness, fractured communities, or places where hope feels thin.

6. Peter's response to the crowd is surprising: "Repent... that times of refreshing may come" (v. 19). Why do you think repentance is connected to refreshment and renewal?

Many people instinctively hear repentance as punishment or shame. But in this passage repentance is presented as a turning toward life — stepping out from patterns that enslave us and into the freedom and wholeness found under the reign of Jesus.

7. Luke begins the story by telling us Peter and John went to the temple at "the hour of prayer, the ninth hour" (v. 1), 3 pm, the time of the daily sacrifice. Why do you think Luke includes that detail? How does it deepen the meaning of what happens in this passage when we remember that Jesus also died at that very hour (Mark 15:33–37)?

Invite the group to reflect on the connection between place, time, sacrifice, and new creation. The ninth hour was when Israel remembered God's covenant faithfulness through the daily sacrifice. Luke seems to intentionally connect that moment with both Jesus' death and this healing in the temple. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, the promises of God are being fulfilled, and now - at that very hour - new creation breaks into the world through the name of Jesus. The miracle becomes more than an isolated healing; it is a sign that the restoration of all things has begun in Christ.

As you close your time together, spend some time in prayer. Invite people to name places in their lives or in the world where they long to see the renewing work of Jesus break in more fully. Pray for healing, freedom, repentance, courage, and hope. And together root yourselves again in the promise that one day Jesus will indeed restore all things.