

Acts 3:1-10 | “Look at us!”

InterVarsity Bible Study Guide (60 minutes)

WELCOME (7 minutes)

Icebreaker: Describe one of your closest friends. What do you like to do together and what do you appreciate about your friendship?

We are studying the Bible together because we want to grow in our love for Jesus through Scripture and because we want to grow in our witness to Jesus through Scripture.

Let’s pray and ask God to help us as we study today’s passage together...

GROUP NORMS (3 minutes)

Let’s remember our group norms as we study together today:

1. Use “I” statements (speak for yourself, not for everyone)
2. Avoid judgmental statements (no shame or blame)
3. Allow space for everyone to share if they choose
4. Practice active listening and give advice only if invited to do so
5. What we share here stays here (confidentiality)

INTRODUCE the Scripture Text (3 minutes)

The book of Acts is the second in Luke’s two-volume work (Luke-Acts). Luke was a physician by training, traveling companion to Paul, and the sole Gentile author of Scripture. Composed as a discipleship handbook for the second generation of new Christians, Acts remains “indispensable” as our only recorded history of the early church.

SEE the Scripture Text (10 minutes)

Let’s read the passage and talk about what we see.

- Who are the characters? How are they connected?
- What is happening? When? Where?
- Which words are being repeated?
- Is the author comparing or contrasting anything?
- Would you like to point out anything else you notice?

Acts 3:1-10 NIV

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.

DISCOVER the Scripture Text (25 minutes)

Let's discuss a few questions that will help us discover and understand the text.

1. In the process of this miracle, why do Peter and John look straight at the man and command the man to look at them (verse 4)? What impact do you think seeing and being seen may have had on Peter, John and the man?
2. The man is begging for money, but Peter and John say they have none. What exactly are Peter and John offering to give to the man? List out all the ways their offer might have impacted the man, his community, themselves, and the crowds.
3. Peter and John had a daily practice of going to the temple at three in the afternoon to pray. How is the routine of daily prayer influential in this community of believers?
4. If we could communicate the core message of this text in just one sentence, what would it be? What do we sense God is communicating through this passage?

RESPOND to the Scripture Text (10 minutes)

It was just two chapters ago that we saw the disciples a little shocked and confused around Jesus' ascension and his command to go back to Jerusalem and wait for the promised Holy Spirit. But the disciples did go back, they waited, and the Pentecost we heard about in chapter two has completely transformed them! The Holy Spirit is active in their lives, renewing the way they see and interact with people, like this man. Empowered by the Spirit, Peter and John embody a "ministry of seeing." The man is fully seen in his humanity and dignity, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, he is completely healed – walking, jumping, and praising God for all to see. The kingdom of God is breaking into the world and changing everything.

Through the Spirit, we can see, bestow dignity, and pray for those around us.

Let's discern together how we can respond to what God is saying. We will answer one option from below, whichever seems most relevant to our group's discussion of the text.

- A. While Peter and John are primary characters in the story, the man also plays a hugely prominent role. In what ways do you identify with the man born unable to walk? How could you step out in faith right now and ask your group to pray for you?
- B. Peter and John embody a "ministry of seeing" that dignifies and humanizes the man. Share ways in which your faith community (perhaps the people in this group) excel in this ministry. In what ways do you struggle? Take time to celebrate, lament, and ask God to highlight who you might be missing or not seeing (since Peter and John probably saw this man before but only stopped today).
- C. Think of your relationship with God at this moment. Are you like the man at the beginning of the passage – searching, wounded, and in need? Or are you more like the man at the end of the passage – walking, jumping, praising God? Perhaps you identify with the community of people who placed this man at the temple gate each day. Share what has impacted your relationship with God lately and what you desire from God in the coming weeks.

CLOSE (2 minutes)

Let's pray and thank God for our time in Scripture together...

Tips for leading the group discussion:

- *Participate but keep your comments short to make space for others.*
- *Silence is okay. Encourage further discussion by saying "What else?" instead of commenting on every response.*