



## The Joy in Reflecting His Image

### *Marriage as a Witness of His Goodness*

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. Now a man crippled 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. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John.

Then Peter said, “Look at us!” So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. When all the people saw him walking and praising God, 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.

While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon’s Colonnade. When Peter saw this, he said to them: “Men of Israel, 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? . . . 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 given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.”

—Acts 3:1–12, 16 (as applied to marriages)

#### **I. Marriages, as the beggar, are in need of healing.**

1. There is intrigue in a vital marriage, just as there is in a physical healing.
2. Often, God gives us not what we *think* we need, but what we *really* need.
3. The source of healing—not only physically, but in marriages as well—is God.
4. The giving of praise for a healed body and marriage is to God.

## II. The witness of a vital marriage

### 1. The power in a story:

*One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see. Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?"* —John 9:25–27

### 2. Vital marriages are an affirmation of your relationship to Christ.

*"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."* —John 13:35

### 3. Give credit where credit is due.

*But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*—1 Peter 3:15

### 4. Rely on God's power through prayer.

*Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" "From childhood," he answered. "It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us." "If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes." Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again." The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, "He's dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up. After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" He replied, "This kind can come out only by prayer."* —Mark 9:21–29

5. Unity in marriage reflects and reveals Christ's deity and the power of the Gospel.

*"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me."*  
— John 17:20–21

### **III. Our message is one of a God who both desires and is able to give us more than we ever could hope or imagine.**

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever!  
Amen.*  
— Ephesians 3:20–21

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#### *Discussion Questions*

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1. In what way are all of our lives and marriages like the cripple at the temple?
2. How do we often ask for silver or gold instead of healing?
3. In what practical ways have you seen God's power able to heal marriages?
4. Why are healed marriages such a witness to the world?