



Sermon Growth Guide

January 23, 2022

Missing Pieces – We Believe

Acts 3:11-16

Key Verse: Acts 3:16 “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.”

Big Idea: Jesus calls us into a community—a family—so that what *each* of us believes becomes what *we* believe.

Foundations

When we first read this story looking for missing pieces, we wonder how this passage speaks to that issue. There are some commentators that see it as an occasion to chastise Peter for speaking so ungraciously to the people who are gathered, wondering what has happened. Those commentators miss the point.

The point is that there are people who have gathered as a community based in Jerusalem who are trying to make sense of recent events: the crucifixion, the resurrection, the ascension, the growing number who believe Jesus is the promised Messiah and now this miraculous healing. They are wondering together.

Together is a concept that we often miss in our individualistic culture. Even in our Christian discipleship, the focus is often on individual spiritual practices like prayer, Bible reading and bearing witness to others. These are not wrong but by themselves without a community supporting and nurturing the believer, they can often become duties rather than joys.

How are we to understand the role of the church in our personal lives? What does it mean when we say “each of us and all of us together” live out the faith?

Understanding God’s Word

In Acts 3:11–16, we see people coming together to make sense of the events in Jerusalem, especially since Easter and Pentecost have turned the city upside down. Peter addresses them and makes it clear that as a community, they participated in the crucifixion. He is stating what all of them have seen—together. He also states what they have just seen in the healing of the lame man—together.

All of them recognized the healed man. He was the one who had, all his life, been at the same place every day doing the same thing—begging for subsistence. They have come out of their homes, into the streets, forming a gathering of the curious—a community of those who want to know what to believe. The presence of the one who is healed creates a community and the healed man bears witness to the kind of fellowship that is created by the Spirit of God acting in the name of Jesus.

Applying God’s Word

What is your current understanding of the role the church plays in your life as a follower of Jesus?

Witnessing God’s Word

What we believe together determines how we will live together. The way in which our congregation loves one another and bears one another’s burdens bears witness to the nature of the gospel to those outside of our fellowship. In what specific ways do you see this happening?