

Our text for this morning is from Acts 3v12 to 26.

In the beginning of Acts 3 the lame beggar is being healed at the beautiful gate or the gate beautiful, and Peter says to him, I don't have silver or gold, but what I do have, I give to you, in the name of Jesus. Rise up and walk. And so the name of Jesus is central to what's happening here at the gate, beautiful. The name of Jesus is central again to the preaching of the Apostle Peter as he makes sense of this miracle that's happening, as he explains it, and as he applies it to those who witnessed what happened that day. There was a crowd, as we saw at the end of this miracle, that was greatly wondering. They were amazed. There was curiosity. There was questions. There was misunderstanding. They didn't know what was going on. There was ignorance. And so the apostle Peter begins to preach, and that's where we find him in our text this morning. Immediately on the heels of this miracle, as this lame man is now walking and leaping and praising God in the temple, Peter begins to preach. And so our theme this morning is, The preaching of Jesus' name.

The preaching of Jesus' name which sets forth Jesus as the prince and sets forth Jesus as the prophet. And as Peter preaches, he preaches a powerful sermon that explains what has happened. As he does so, he teaches us as the church what is central to the mission of the church, the proclamation of the name of Jesus. The church is not simply in the business of doing miracles. What Peter is teaching us here is that these miracles are secondary to what really matters. These miracles are simply pointing to Jesus, and the preaching of the church points to Jesus. And so if we're focused only on the miracles, We'll miss out on the message that we so need to hear. And so as Peter is preaching, we see that one of the most interesting and helpful things in the early phases of the New Testament church in relation to miracles is that the apostles always tie these signs to the Word of God to explain what's going on. When a sinner is saved, that's a miracle, isn't it? Brought from death to life, that's a miracle. We saw that in Acts chapter two at Pentecost. The signs, the sound of the mighty rushing wind, the tongues like fire on the heads of the people, the speaking in tongues. How did Peter explain that? He went back to the Old Testament. He went to the prophecy of Joel, to Joel chapter 2, to explain exactly what was going on. This wasn't just something that was produced by man. This was produced by the Holy Spirit, exactly what Joel had prophesied about. turned to the prophecy concerning the death, the resurrection, and ascension of Christ from Psalm 16 and Psalm 110 and other passages of the Old Testament.

If you go to the Gospel of John, chapter 21, there we read that Jesus had done these signs Many more signs he had done that could not be contained in the Bible, in the New Testament.

But all of these signs were simply pointing to Jesus, to his person, to his work, to his redemptive purposes for sinners like you and like me. Every miracle that he performed pointed to something revealing who he was. That's what we see in this instance again in Acts chapter three. Peter does the same thing here again. He doesn't say, oh, this miracle is so great, this miracle is so great, just give me some money. Because I've displayed my power to you now, and you can go home, and you've been healed. And so

you just put some money in the pot, and you can go home. Plant your seed here, As many charismatic healers will say today, and they fly off in their private jets. That's not what Peter's doing here. Peter takes the back seat. Peter says, this is what's going on. Let me explain to you what's going on. He turns back to the Old Testament. As the people begin to wonder, as they stand in amazement, Peter immediately deflects attention away from himself. He takes the Word of God as he understood it through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit and he begins to preach. In verse 12, he deflects the glory away from himself, and he asks this question. He says, ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? Or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power and holiness we had made this man to walk? Peter is concerned that the crowd is thinking that he and John have some sort of power to produce this miracle. that it's their power or their holiness as if they were somehow special men, extraordinary men, a level above the ordinary person, that somehow they could perform these miracles. Peter doesn't make a statement. He doesn't say, we didn't do this in our own power or by our own holiness. Rather, he poses a question to the crowd. That's important as we consider what Peter's doing here as he's preaching. He asks it in the form of a question. You men of Israel, why are you marveling at this? Why are you looking so earnestly on us as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? Do you really think that this miracle is due to our power or our holiness? And by asking it in a question, The question does two things. First, it deflects the problem back to the crowd and gets them to think. Peter doesn't just say, it's not our own power or holiness. That would prevent the crowd from thinking through what's happening here. He asks the question, and when we ask questions, it gets the person to think. And so Peter wants the crowd to think along with him. You see here the makings of an effective sermon, a model from the New Testament. And second, as the problem is deflected back to the crowd as they think through this, wait a minute, is it really their power or holiness? What's really going on here? And as that question is turning in the minds of the people, Peter is able to set up his sermon. He's about to preach, showing where the true power lies. in the performance of this miracle. The power of the prince, the power of Jesus, who is the prince of life, who is exalted in the midst of this crowd, in this man that has been healed, the gate beautiful at the temple. And so the apostles fade from the background, the crowd fades into the background, and Jesus comes to the foreground in sharp relief as the only solution that could be possible for the healing of this blind man, for the man that had received strength in his legs and was now dancing and leaping and praising God. So Peter deflects the attention and the glory from himself to Jesus. That pattern is established throughout the scriptures, isn't it? The prophets, the apostles who are all spokesmen of God, the people of God, never take

the glory for themselves, but should always point lame sinners back to Jesus, back to the power of the Prince. Because if we do the opposite, there's always trouble around the corner. If we place the light on ourselves, then we want people to look to us rather than to look to Christ. But here we have a lesson not just for preachers, but for all church members, for all believers who are engaged in the work of representing Christ in the way we live and the way we talk, the way we evangelize, the way we witness to the world. We're reflectors of Christ. We're reflectors of the power and the light of Christ. We are not that which people look to. We are simply reflectors pointing back to Jesus. We are reflectors and we need to have those lights lined up so that it's not ending in us, but focused on the glory and the power and the name of Jesus. If the church is focused on itself, if the church is focused on making its name and making its greatness known, we'll lose the focus to which Jesus has called us. We'll lose the message of the gospel, won't we? We'll lose the name of Jesus because then it's about our name and about the name of our church. But when the church points to the power of Jesus to heal sinners, the glory of Jesus will be exalted and Jesus himself will be preeminent in all that we do as the church. That's what we see here. Peter is reflecting back to Jesus. We see that in the beginning of verse 13 as well. The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his son Jesus. So what Peter is doing here is simply doing what God has done. God has glorified his son in all that they saw and heard in those moments when that man was healed at the beautiful gate. God is glorifying his son through the preaching of Peter, through the preaching of the gospel this morning. That's what God is all about. He's about exalting his son, the power of his son to heal sinners like you and me. And so the prince is glorified through the preaching of the gospel. And as Peter preaches, interestingly, he turns to the sufferings of Christ first. He points out in verse 13 that the suffering of the prince of life has both divine and human agency. It is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who has lifted up and exalted his son. Children, what does this language bring to mind? What does it make you think about? The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob. It speaks to us of the promise of God, doesn't it? Or what we also call the covenant that God has made with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. He had made a special relationship with these three figures from the Old Testament. It is this God, eternally faithful, the God who had made these promises, who exalts His Son as the fulfillment of those promises. Peter is preaching primarily to a Jewish audience who would have known immediately what he was speaking about. As soon as he had mentioned Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they would have understood. He's speaking here about this covenant, about the faithfulness of God, that God would provide a seed, a seed that would culminate, would come and be fulfilled in Jesus. And so what's behind this miracle is the fulfillment of the promise, the covenant faithfulness of

God. It is God who has sent his Son into the world to fulfill his redemptive purposes. So there's this divine agency. God sent his Son. The Son came willingly according to the covenant of redemption. He covenanted with the Father to come into this world, to die, to suffer. And through this suffering, he would be exalted. But there's also human agency, isn't there? Human agency, human responsibility, seen in the fact that it was the people who had delivered up Jesus. It was the people who had denied Jesus. It was the people who had desired a murderer instead of Jesus. That's what Peter says. Verse 13, he builds that contrast. The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. Jesus was determined to be innocent by Pilate. You remember that. This man has done nothing amiss. Pilate was ready to let Jesus go. But you denied the Holy One and the just, Peter said. and desired a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of Life. Peter shows the madness, the folly of the crowd, the rebellious hearts that were engaged in this God-defying act of destroying the Prince of Life. It was these people who had a hand in this. But then we read this, but God raised up Jesus again, and the apostles and the crowd is now witness to the fact that Jesus is risen again. The power of this resurrected Lord is at work in the life of this lame man. It's helpful to note that Peter forms a sandwich here, as it were. He begins with divine agency. God has glorified his son. And then there's this human agency, this picture of death and of rebellion and foolishness and hardness of heart when the crowd cried out, crucify him. And then there's that divine agency again. But God hath raised him up. You see how all of these things are working together to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. Death does not have the last word. Sin does not have the last word. Lameness does not have the last word. That's the point here, because Jesus is alive. The redemptive purposes of God have been fulfilled. The Savior is here. He's present. He's at work through his spirit. Because he suffered and died and rose again, he is exalted as the savior of sinners. That's what Peter is preaching. That's what we hear in the gospel this morning. He is the great healer of the sick. Peter takes these realities of who Jesus is and he applies them to what has happened. This glorious prince, the prince of life, the holy and the just one, the one who was perfect, the one who was set apart for these things, was crucified and rose again. It's through this name of Jesus and all that is bound up in that name, in the person of Jesus, that this man is healed. Listen to what Peter says in verse 16. In his name, Through faith in his name has made this man strong, whom ye see and know. The faith which is by him, that is by Jesus, hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. This glorious prince who is exalted before you even now in the preaching is the one who has healed this

man. So do you think it's our power and our holiness? It is Jesus, His power, His holiness, His name that has healed this man. The name of Jesus is central.

It goes back to what Peter had told this man, silver and gold have I none, but in the name of Jesus. And it's not as if the mere pronouncement of that name had some magical power to it. It doesn't mean that if we use

the name of Jesus that it holds some magical power to it and a person can be healed. The name of Jesus points us to the person of Jesus. When you mention someone's name, you think of that person, don't you? It's not just some random name up in the clouds somewhere. It brings to mind a face, a personality, a persona, perhaps a power that they exert in your life or an influence in your life. That's what the name of Jesus

is getting to. points us to the person of Jesus

as the powerful Prince of Life. As Peter is preaching here, he's showing us different aspects of the name of Jesus. He's the Prince of Life. He's the Holy and Just One. But

it's this name that bears the power to heal, and that's what

we need to take away this morning. Jesus is the Prince of Life. Faith in this name is what brings healing to our soul, just as it brought healing to the feet

and the legs of this lame man at the gate beautiful. Faith

is the instrument, the empty hand that lays hold of Jesus

for healing. The crowds had crucified Jesus,

but now Jesus is displayed in a different light for them to

see, the one whom you crucified. God has exalted as the Prince

of Life, as the only one that can deal with your sin. A stunning reversal of events.

What mercy of God is on display in this miracle and the sermon

that follows. It's not the power and holiness

of the apostles, it's the name of Jesus. Faith in the name of

Jesus. Beloved, do you believe in this

name? Do you believe in the name of Jesus? Or do you think it's your own

power? Do you think it's your own holiness that's going to

get you to heaven? That's going to bring healing to your soul? How often don't we fall into

that line of thinking? That it's somehow up to us to

save ourselves. That we have to improve ourselves

somehow first. But the reality of what's happening

here is that this man was lame. He was unable to help himself.

We saw that last time, didn't we? He was utterly dependent

on other people. He couldn't move himself. We

can't move ourselves to God, spiritually speaking. We are

wholly dependent on the grace of God as revealed in the name

of Jesus. But here he is as the Prince

of Life this morning, able to heal, able to save, able to take

us again and to remind us again of who he is for our soul.

He is the one who redeems

us from our crippled state. He is the one who gives us the

grace and the power to battle against sin. He alone is the

hope of our righteousness, the hope of obedience, the hope of

life. He is the hope for the worst

of sinners. For those who can't help themselves, for those who

are dead, here's the Prince of Life this morning. That's what

this miracle is teaching us. That's what the apostolic preaching is teaching us. That's what the preaching of the gospel this morning is teaching us. There's a Savior who calls us to renounce our own power, our own works, to rely on Him alone, to trust in Him alone. to hold up empty hands, to say this morning, nothing in my hands, I bring simply to thy cross, I cling simply to the prince of life, we come. The amazing part is that our hearts are reflected in what this crowd had done to Jesus. We are no better than them. Our hearts are just as rebellious and utterly dark as them apart from Christ. The message of life comes to them as it comes to us this morning. There is life for a look at the crucified one. The prince of life is exalted here. Do you see him? Do you trust him? It's the only way to life. It's the only way to life. And so the preaching of the name of Jesus sets forth Jesus as the Prince of life, but it also sets him forth as the prophet who speaks. Peter transitions in his sermon from this royal aspect of Jesus, the kingly office of Jesus, we could say, to the prophetic office of Jesus. Jesus as the prophet. This too explains what's going on at the gate, beautiful with this lame man now healed. He turns to apply these truths and he pivots now to Jesus as the prophet who reveals God's saving purposes. The prince was sent to achieve God's saving purposes, to show forth his power. Now the prophet has come to reveal In verse 17, Peter points out that they had done these things to Jesus in ignorance. He says, but now, brethren, I know, or I wot, as we see it in the King James, simply means I know that through ignorance you did it, as did also your rulers. Does this ignorance excuse their actions? Does it excuse their rebellious hearts against Jesus? No. In fact, their ignorance is being dealt with now with what Peter is revealing about this prophet, what the prophet has revealed about himself. God has revealed these things through Jesus, the prophet. And so that ignorance is not excusable at all. It's inexcusable. In verse 18, Peter says, but those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should suffer, he has so fulfilled. Their actions were done in ignorance, but God has revealed what he intended. A connection is made. The evidence is inescapable. They can no longer claim ignorance for their actions. There's now a powerful call to repentance. Paul said this too, didn't he? When he spoke about sins before his conversion, he said, I did it in ignorance. Until he came face to face with Christ on the Damascus road. He began to understand. The revelation of God came. The light of God shone into his heart and he began to see what his sins were against a holy and a righteous God. He thought that he was righteous. He thought that he was doing right. He did it in ignorance, but then the revelation of God came and shone light into the darkness of that ignorance. This ignorance that Peter highlights here speaks to the darkness of the human heart and mind in relation to who Jesus is. This ignorance blinds us to the reality of Jesus and his power

to save. This is the ignorance that Peter is speaking about, a blindness, a darkness over the human heart. And the only way out of this darkness is for a change to take place. Ignorance is over the human mind, over the human heart. The New Testament takes the mind and heart together. This ignorance is a veil over our minds, over our understanding as to who Jesus is. The crowds in the moment when they cried out, crucify him, crucify him, didn't understand who Jesus was. But now, as Peter's preaching, as he goes back to the scriptures to the Old Testament, as he's teaching them about the God of the covenant who has exalted Jesus, that ignorance is being pushed back. The darkness is giving way to the light of who Jesus is. The only way for that ignorance to be dealt with is through a change of mind, for the will to be renewed. And hence, we have the call to repentance. In verse 19, repent ye therefore, Peter says, and be converted. Repentance has exactly that idea at its heart, this change of mind. In the Greek, the word for repentance is metanoia. Metta means with, and noia has this idea of mind or heart, which scripture takes together as one unit. When we speak of mind, we often think of our brain. That's not the connection that scripture makes. It's more holistic than that. It encompasses our thinking, our willing, our hearts as well. And so when the Bible calls us to repentance, it's calling us to wholesale change. It's calling us to change the way we think. It's calling us to change the way we desire and the way we will. Repent ye therefore, Peter says. To change our mind about God, to change our mind about sin. Repent. Repent. and how you stand over against Christ and the name of Jesus. And Peter says, repent and be converted. To be converted here simply means to return, return to God. In a sense, Peter is repeating the same thing with a different word. Repent and return to God. That is the call that's issued forth as a result of the name of Jesus being preached and applied through this miracle. Jesus is the Prince and the Prophet. He calls us to repent, to change the way we think, to take those areas of our minds as believers, the way we think and the way we will, the way we desire, to change. As the light of God shines into our hearts through His Word, as His revelation becomes ever clearer, we see our hearts With greater clarity, we see the corners of darkness that are still there, and we're called to surrender those to God to be dealt with. Our sin. And that's the great promise, isn't it? For those that repent and believe in the name of Jesus, that your sins may be blotted out. Repent and return that your sins may be blotted out, that your ignorance can be dealt with. that your rebellion can be dealt with, that your slate can be wiped clean in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the great promise. The name of Jesus, you see, deals with the very central problem that plagues humanity, that plagues men and women and children like you and me this morning. Sin and guilt, that your sins may be blotted out. This is what Jesus accomplished in his sufferings and death and resurrection. Do you want that

this morning? Do you want that reality to take place that your sin is taken away? That you can stand before a holy God that your guilt is taken away, that that burden that plagues you can be taken away, not just so you can be free in your own conscience, but that you live unto God, that you return to God with all that you are. Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. This is the good news that comes connected to the name of Jesus. There's another promise attached here that Peter notes in verse 19, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things. Peter's speaking here about the times of refreshing, the times of the rest and the peace that the Holy Spirit affords to those who believe in Jesus. There's a rest and peace that's offered in the gospel even this morning through these words that Peter preached hundreds of years ago, thousands of years ago. The times of refreshing of the Holy Spirit as he takes up residence in the hearts of sinners. when we repent and believe the Spirit is there. Times of refreshing. Do we long for rest? Here it is. The Spirit gives rest in the name of Jesus. But there's also an urgency attached to this call to repent because it comes in light of Christ's second coming. Repent and believe. The times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you. This idea of the sending of Christ is the second coming of Christ, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things. Speaking of the times of the end, the timing is urgent to repent, because we don't know when Jesus is coming again. So there's this sense that built into the preaching of the apostles and built into the preaching of the church today should be this urgency in the call to repent and believe in the name of Jesus, because the time is coming. The end is coming. Jesus had taught his disciples about that, hadn't he? And he said, the time and the hour no man knows, not even the Son of Man. The sense is urgent here. We don't know when Christ is coming again. We don't know if we're guaranteed tomorrow. The call now is to repent and to believe in the name of Jesus, that your sins may be blotted out. So when Christ appears as the judge, you can stand before him with a clear conscience, standing not in a righteousness of your own, but in the righteousness and the obedience of Christ. That's the beauty of this call to repentance. It provides everything. Sometimes we're tempted to think, well, I can't repent on my own. That's true. But when God commands us to do something, he gives the grace to do it as well. So embedded in this call is this idea that God gives the grace to do it. Christ is coming again. The proclamation of his name this morning, as it was in the time of the apostles, calls ignorant sinners to repentance. He's revealed himself. Our ignorance is no longer excusable. We can't hide and say, I didn't know. Christ has spoken. He's come as the prophet. In fact, all the prophets before him had spoken about him and pointed to him. So what Peter

is doing here, he's showing that they're doubly responsible for the revelation that they had. The revelation of Jesus was inescapable to them. They had known, they had heard before from the prophets. He says in verse 25, you're the children of the prophets. You knew. You had heard about Jesus. But now this prophet has come. He's come in accordance with the word of God, has spoken through the mouth of Moses. Peter takes up that language and he says in verse 22, for Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me. Moses, the pre-eminent prophet of the Old Testament, was merely a type, a faint representation of Jesus as the coming prophet. Moses pointed to Jesus who was coming to speak the Word of God, the one who was going to speak all the words that God had commanded him, the very revelation of God. That's why John says in John

1 verse 1, in the beginning, was the Word. And the Word was with God and the Word was God. He is the very revelation, the very explanation of who God is. This prophet has come with a message, a message of salvation, a message that calls for a response this morning. Jesus the prophet has spoken to the healing of this lame man. It reveals Jesus as the prophet. It calls for a response. It was true in Moses' day as he prophesied of Jesus as the coming prophet. It was true in Peter's day as he preached the name of Jesus as that prophet who

had come. It's true in our day as the name of Jesus is proclaimed as the prophet this morning. It calls for our response as well. Whoever hears the word of Jesus is called to respond. Listen to how Moses frames it, how Peter picks it up. Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. The key word in this response is hearing. You'll hear the word and you will not hear the word. Why does Peter frame it that way? Why did Moses frame it that way? Why does the word of God frame it that way? Because the word hearing is important to understand here. The word hearing is not just picking up a sound with your ear, where it goes through and the sound waves hit your ear and get processed in the brain. That's not all that scripture is speaking about when it talks about hearing. Hearing implies obedience, doesn't it?

Children, when your mom tells you to pick up the toys in the living room, she tells you, right? You hear it, the sounds get processed through your ear and into your brain. But what else has to take place? When you've truly heard your mom tell you to pick up the toys in the living room, and if you don't do it, and you wait, and your mom comes into the living room and accidentally steps on those toys, and she says, didn't you hear me? What is she saying? Didn't you obey me? You maybe heard through your ear, but did what you hear settle down into your heart, and did that move your will to do what I asked you to do, what I told you to do? You see, hearing has this idea in the Bible about obeying. It implies hearing and doing. It implies obedience to whatever

is being said. It's not slavish obedience that's suggested here. Rather, it's a joyful hearing, a joyful submission, a joyful obedience to the voice and life-giving message of the prophet, Jesus. Hear Him or not hear Him. We're never neutral when it comes to the message of the prophet. So how do you hear the prophet this morning? How do you hear Jesus when He exalts Himself? When you hear the name of Jesus, how do you respond to that? There's no wiggle room here. There's no neutrality. We either hear or we don't hear. We either obey or we don't obey. We can hear all the sounds that come from my mouth this morning. Those sounds can end in the brain simply as sound waves. We understand the words. But do those words grip our hearts so that we respond with obedience and say, this means life for me. I need this. So I better listen to what, not what I am saying, but what Jesus is saying in his word this morning. How do you hear? Maybe you know that song, children. Be careful, little ears, how you hear. Be careful, little ears, how you hear. We could take that song and apply it to everyone. Be careful, big ears, how you hear. Be careful, little ears, how you hear. Be careful, all of us, how we hear this morning. The words of Jesus command and expect obedience from all who hear it. And again, as we hear those words, these words provide the very obedience that we need because the Spirit accompanies the word. The Spirit gives that obedience. That is the beauty of the message this morning of the gospel. Just as that word came to that man in the name of Jesus, rise up and walk. The power came for him. He believed those words. And as he believed, his body came to life, as it were, and he walked. It's mysterious, to be sure. Unexplainable, to be sure. But the reality was that there was power behind those words, the power of the person in the name of Jesus. And that's what stands behind these words this morning of the prophet. Power to raise dead sinners to life. So let's not hide behind our inability and say I can't obey. Because behind these words this morning, behind the preaching this morning is the power of Christ. There is hope and there is life in this message of the prophet. And we ignore this message to our own peril. Shall come to pass, shall come to pass in verse 23, that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. What do we see here? We see a repetition of what was said in the Old Testament when God made covenant with the people in Deuteronomy. Obedience brings life. Disobedience brings death and cursing. The wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. There's an either or that's presented to us in the words of the prophet this morning. You either hear and live or you don't hear and you die. Disobedience brings death and the curse. Obedience brings life and blessing. It's reality that we need to grapple with this morning. We see this blessing, this blessing offered again. The final verses of our text, Peter's bringing it home again. There's blessing here, there's

life here. He's drilling home that point in the minds of his audience, reminding them of the tremendous covenant blessings they have enjoyed as the people of God. In a sense, he's heightening their responsibility. He's pointing out the great mercies of God, the great faithfulness of God to them, the extraordinary covenant privilege they had as the people of God. You're the children of the prophets, the children of the covenant which God made with our fathers. The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob was theirs. They had everything going for them in terms of salvation, what God had offered to them in that covenant Himself. He had taken upon Himself those obligations of that covenant as He passed through that sacrifice with Abraham. We see that displayed in the cross this morning. He had taken upon Himself the obligations of the covenant For us, you are the children, the children of the prophets. You've received revelation like no other people on earth. He's turning the screws tighter, even as he's highlighting the blessings that the people had received. You've received all of this. This covenant promise to Abraham and thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Extraordinary blessing had come to the Jews, to the covenant people. Verse 26, unto you first. They were first in line. Children,

when your teacher tells you to line up, You wanna be first, don't you? You wanna get the best? You wanna be at the front of the line, you wanna get it first so you don't miss out. What God was saying here is that Israel was at the front of the line when it came to redemption, when it came to salvation unto you first. God, having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you. Extraordinary privilege, extraordinary blessing. The covenants, the prophets, the revelation of God. They were the first to witness all of this, even as it was playing out in the life of this lame man who was healed.

What comes with great privilege and great blessing? Great responsibility. Great responsibility comes with great blessing and great privilege for how we hear and how we respond to what God has given us and spoken to us. Many ways. We are no different in what we have received in terms of what God has spoken to us, what God has made with us in terms of a covenant with us and our children. There's no different than what he had given to the Israelites and to the Jews. We are children of the covenant, we are children of the prophets, children of the apostles, children of the living God from whom we have received all things. If we are the people of God this morning in the true sense of the word as we see it in this chapter in light of what he's given us. Are we responding as the people of God? And to us, God has raised up his son Jesus and sent him to bless us. Think of all that you have received. in terms of covenant privilege, in terms of hearing the gospel again and again and again, of growing up in the Reformed faith, of being instructed from a very young and tender age. It's no small thing. Every evidence points to the mercy of God. God has sent Jesus to bless us, turning every way, every one of you, from his iniquities. This is the great goal, the great purpose of Jesus being sent. The great goal of all of these

covenant privileges. The great goal of this revelation of the prophet sent, raised up from amongst our brethren. Tremendous promise to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles. Jesus has raised up, sent to turn away every one of us from our iniquities. A beautiful promise here that ends Peter's sermon, unto you first. We're the first in line this morning. Maybe we think we only deserve crumbs from the master's table, well we're first in line. for those crumbs, but he gives more than crumbs, doesn't he? The message comes to us now. God has sent his son to bless us with life, with life, to bless, to bring peace to troubled hearts, to turn hearts again to God, hearts that have been turned away in sin and rebellion. Preaching the name of Jesus bears tremendous blessing for accursed sinners like you and me. He turns away from our iniquities. The blessing of forgiveness, the blessing of reconciliation with God, the blessing of life eternal. This is the message of the gospel. This, in a nutshell, this morning, is the preaching of the name of Jesus. It exalts the prince who gives life. It exalts the prophet who speaks the very word of life. The question comes, how will you hear him this morning?
Amen.