

Acts 3:6

Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

Pastor Chuck Smith tells the story of how one time at church, a family brought up their dad who was in a wheelchair for prayer. Pastor Chuck prayed and told the man to get up out of the wheelchair, and he stood and walked. The family was amazed and said, "Wow, we just brought him here for you to pray for him because he had a cold".

True story, but if you think about it, how many times are we praying for God to give us "Spare Change", when He wants to give us "Life Change!"

If you read today's devotional verse, you have to go back a few verses to get the entire picture.

† **Acts 3:1-5** *Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.*

This man could not walk and he didn't even think of a miracle ever happening to him. He knew he couldn't work; therefore, he had no other way of making a living other than begging. So he sees these two guys coming up, (Peter and John) and as usually he holds out his little basket asking for spare change. As you read the story, *Peter said, "Look at us." So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.* And he does with the results of Peter: *took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them--walking, leaping, and praising God. Acts 3:7-8* (underlined for emphasis)

He was willing to settle for some spare change, but God (Love those two words "but GOD") had something far beyond what he could ever hope for or imagine. Because, instead of spare change, God gave him life change.

Now this is not a name it and claim it teaching, because the bible does not teach that. Yet how many times do we get disappointed with God, when we ask Him for spare change and He doesn't give it to us? Why, because He knows that what you need is a life change and not spare change.

Even when we pray for others, we give specific directions to God on how to answer our prayers for someone else.

“Lord, heal this person”

“Lord provide a new job for this person”

“Lord do this or do that.”

But if you really stopped and looked back on your life, how many “no” answers has God given you that you are now thankful that He did say “no” to? But not just the no answers, but also what He did for you instead!

Now, don’t get me wrong, we should be praying for people to be healed, for provision for those in need, as well as other things. But what does each and every person really need? The Sunday School answer would apply here, **Jesus!** Sure, people can get healed and get jobs and get food and clothing etc... But what do all those things mean without Jesus? Nothing!

The man in today’s story wanted spare change, and God gave him a life change. Yes, God healed him, but I believe God also saved him, and not just him, but if you read on, God saved about 5,000 men as well because of this life change.

† ***Acts 4:4*** *However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.*

So, go ahead and pray for others, and yourself. But when you do, tell God that you don’t want to ask for spare change, but a life changing answer to your prayers, for others and yourself.

† ***Colossians 1:6 (NLT2)*** *This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God’s wonderful grace.*