

THE BEGGAR - - who asked for alms and was given legs
THE BEGGAR - - who asked for alms and was given legs
(Acts 3:2)

"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 of them that entered into the temple." A poor frustrated man, he lay on his couch at the side of the street, and all who visited the temple saw him as he stretched out his hand for gifts. He was alive, but he was not healthy. His heart beat fast, but his feet never moved. He had been lame from his birth. There were days when he heard the chanting of the psalms in the nearby temple, and watched the priests as they walked to and fro. He was very near to the place of blessing, but he never reached it. He knew all the details of the service schedule, and could have given precise information concerning the ritual of the house of God. He had many friends who frequented the sanctuary, yet he remained on his couch in the street. He begged before and after services, and constantly hoped that devotion would loosen the strings of purses. Poor man: he lay within reach of a gold mine, yet he only gathered pennies!

Sitting by the Street

He seems singularly interesting to us, for we are confronted by a great question: "Can a Christian be lame from his birth?" Is it possible to be spiritually alive and not to be healthy? Is it possible to have a warm heart, and at the same time to possess Paralysed feet? Both the Bible and human experience answer yes." A man may believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and subscribe to all the doctrines of grace, yet not be useful in the kingdom of God. The apostle Paul continually urged his converts to walk worthily of their high calling, but it was impossible to do this on feet that would not respond. The ancient beggar seems very modern. There are many people who know a great deal about life in the holy place; they can even describe its details; but theirs is only an intellectual apprehension, for in actual experience they listen from a distance. Their real interest lies in the street, where materialistic delights exercise a strangle-hold upon every spiritual inclination.

Standing through the Saviour

Probably the beggar had more money than Peter, for the apostle confessed, "Silver and gold have I none." Yet the follower of Christ possessed something unobtainable in the markets of the world. These two men are best appreciated together. The outstretched hand of the beggar contrasts with the overflowing soul of the great preacher. "Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength." In the following moments the old desires fell away as though they had been a mantle, and rising above the limitations of his couch, he walked in newness of life. He had been alive for years, but suddenly with refreshing power, abundant life came to flood his being. The story perfectly illustrates the transformation which takes place when the Holy Spirit comes to heal and restore and control the child of God.

THE BEGGAR - - who asked for alms and was given legs
Singing in the Sanctuary

"And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God." As the crowd hurried to see the man who had been so wonderfully healed, and as the man himself stayed close by his new friends, Peter said, "Why look ye so earnestly upon us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham . . . hath glorified his Son Jesus . . . and hath made this man strong." And from that day the beggar's couch disappeared from the gateway of the temple. Radiant activity removed for ever the necessity to lie in the dust begging. The songs of the sanctuary re-echoed the music of his heart, as the power of a risen Saviour became a reality in his experience. We see again the carnal Christian who sits in his lameness seeking the things of earth; we see also the Spirit-filled saint. There is all the difference in the world between these two men; but it is not difficult to decide which is the more pleasing to his Lord. The man who sits with his back to the altar will always have trouble with his feet. It is grand to be alive, but it is better to be healthy.

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.