



THE BOOK OF

ACTS

GROUP DISCUSSION | Week 3: Up and Out

SERIES OVERVIEW

In this series, we examine the remarkable spread of the Gospel and the Kingdom of God from Jerusalem, to Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Despite challenges from outside and within, the Kingdom of God continued to advance. The same is true today.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

Think of this discussion guide as a springboard. Use what's helpful to your group and lean into discussion that's sparked from the insight and input of your group.

CONNECTION

Philip began the message with a story about his son "unloading the dishwasher," and while the 5 year old didn't get the dishes completely put away, he did start the process. What's an example of a time you had to take incremental steps to accomplish something? Share with the group.

TRUTH

Acts 3 begins by setting the scene and then quickly tells the account of a healed beggar. Read Acts 3:1-11 and then spend time reading and discussing each of the following:

What does the passage tell you about God?

What does it tell you about the once-crippled, now-healed man? How does he respond?

What does it tell you about the crowd? How do they respond?

What does it tell you about Peter and John? How do they respond - both to the man and to the crowd?

Philip said, "**Jesus is not limited by our expectations.**" The beggar asked for money because that's what he thought he needed. However, he was ambushed with mercy by access to complete healing in the Name of Jesus. Why do we have such a tendency to pray safe prayers and to temper our expectations of the Holy Spirit?

We then shared, in the same way, "**Jesus followers are not limited by others' perceptions.**" Though the crowd saw the man walking, they recognized him as the crippled beggar (vs 9-10). Being known for a past reputation is a challenge for many people who experience life-change. How do we allow our past struggles to fuel our praise and trust in Jesus rather than be a source of shame, regret, or embarrassment? Do you have any examples of that in your life or someone you know?

Read Acts 3:12-26. Consider the number of different names and titles Peter attributes to Jesus in this speech. What are they, and how does that help you understand Peter's message?

Read Acts 4:8-12. Luke now records Peter's third speech in three chapters, this time before the Jewish rulers and elders. As before, Peter emphasizes the resurrection of Jesus, but this marks the first time the apostles experience overt opposition to the gospel from authorities. How do Peter and John respond (Acts 4:19-20)?

APPLICATION + PRAYER

Acts 4:12 is a defining, bold statement of faith in Jesus. Read that aloud again. Philip emphasized, "No other name." What "names" do you tend to hold in high regard? (Think even sports teams or companies) How do those creep onto the throne of Jesus?

Consider this: The hard reality is that many of us tend to pray for safety for ourselves and those close to us more than we pray on behalf of and for the good of those in desperate need of healing in some capacity. Here's a litmus-test question to reflect on: *If God unleashed the power of the Holy Spirit in the Name of Jesus through your prayers, who would be healed?*

Our challenge was simple: **to boldly pray in the Name of Jesus FOR someone else.** Let's spend some time doing just that.

Here's a suggested way to do so: Have each person think of someone in their life they can pray for, and do so silently before one person closes the prayer aloud.