

LESSON 3

NO OTHER NAME

Read Acts 3-4 & Study Note: Covenants

FACT QUESTIONS

1. Who was sitting at the temple gate when Peter and John arrived and what did he want? Did he get what he was expecting? Have you ever prayed and asked God for something but received something other than what you were expecting? Share with your group.
2. By what power was this man healed and what was his response to the miracle? How did the people who recognized him respond to this miracle? What is your response to God's mighty work in your life?
3. What did Peter mean when he said that they "acted in ignorance?" What did he tell them to do so that their sins would be blotted out? Have your sins been blotted out (**Acts 3:17-19**)?

LESSON QUESTIONS

4. **Chapter 4** - Why were Peter and John seized and put in jail? What was the result of their obedience in the teaching of Jesus? What was Peter and John's response when they were commanded not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus? How would you have responded? (Take some time to think about your answer.)

5. After their release, Peter and John reported back to their friends. How did their friends react to what they heard? Did they pray for power or protection from persecution? How does this encourage you to pray for boldness?

6. Describe the sharing of possessions in the early church. Are you holding tightly to your possessions or living with open hands?

7. **CHALLENGE QUESTION:** Who is Abraham, and what is the covenant that God made with him and with his descendants (**Acts 3:25**)? Why is this covenant so important for us today (**Refer to Genesis 15**)?

HEART APPLICATION QUESTIONS

8. God alone deserves the glory. Are there areas of your life you secretly enjoy receiving praise that only belongs to God?
9. It was evident that Peter & John had been with Jesus. Would those around you say the same is true for you? Do your thoughts, words and actions point to spending time with Jesus through the Word of God, prayer or private worship or a lack of time with Him?
10. Where does fear of man or what people think of you, keep you from being fully obedient to Jesus?

Memory Verse - Acts 4:12

“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

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(REFER TO STUDY NOTE ON ASSURANCE OF SALVATION IN LESSON 1)

LESSON 3

STUDY NOTES

COVENANTS

In the Bible there are two types of covenants or promises.

1 The first type of covenant is an unconditional or unilateral covenant.

Under this type of covenant, one party takes all of the responsibility for fulfilling the covenant. This is the type of covenant that the Lord entered into with Abraham. The Lord did it all. He promised blessing to Abraham and his descendants regardless of what they did or failed to do.

The Abrahamic Covenant is found in **Genesis 12:2-3**. The Lord promised to make Abram into a great nation, to bless him, to make his name great. But the greatest blessing of all, He said that “all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

This blessing refers to Abraham’s greater descendant, the Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him all peoples on earth would be blessed. (See Matthew 1)

In **Genesis 15**, we find the ceremony confirming the covenant.

Genesis 15:1 - “The Word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision.”

The Lord promised Abram that He would be his shield and his great reward. Yet Abram had no children, no heir. Who would inherit this great reward?

The Lord told Abram that his heir would be a son from his own body and his descendants would be as numerous as the dust of the earth and the stars in the sky.

Genesis 15:6 - “Abraham believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.”

This verse is quoted three times in the New Testament epistles. Paul points to Abraham as the supreme example of justification by faith.

Abram leaned wholly on the promise of God and the God of the promise. The word translated “believed” means “to lean your whole weight upon.” It was not the greatness of Abraham’s faith that saved him, but the greatness of the God in whom he placed his faith.

For the ceremony to confirm His covenant (promise), the Lord gave Abram very specific instructions (**Genesis 15:12-18**).

In that day instead of meeting together in the presence of witnesses to sign a formal contract, the people of Abraham's day performed this solemn, symbolic ceremony called "cutting a contract."

Animals were brought and cut in two and arranged in such a way that there was room to walk between the halves. Then the two parties making the covenant would walk between the dead animals and would be declaring in effect, "may it happen to me, what has happened to these animals if I do not keep this covenant."

But God's covenant with Abram was unilateral and unconditional. Abram slept and only God "walked" between the animal halves symbolized by the "smoking fire pot and a flaming torch."

2

The second type is a conditional or bilateral covenant.

This is the type of covenant that God made with Moses at Mount Sinai. This covenant had conditions placed on those entering the covenant. You can recognize a conditional covenant by the words, "if" and "then." If you obey, then there will be blessing, but if you do not obey, then there will be punishment. Under the Mosaic covenant God promised to bless obedience and punish disobedience.

We can be so thankful that God's covenant with Abraham was unconditional, because we know that Abraham and his descendants failed in all sorts of ways but God never fails.

God would keep His promise to bless all nations through Abraham's seed regardless of what they did or failed to do. God's promise to Abraham was unconditional and ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

In the Upper Room, on the night He was betrayed, Jesus spoke of the New Covenant (**Jeremiah 31:31-34; Luke 22:20**). This New Covenant would be sealed with His blood that Jesus said: "is poured out for you." Jesus ratified the covenant with His own blood on the Cross. He invites you to enter into this covenant with Him. He has done it all.

LESSON 3: MESSAGE NOTES

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PRAISES & PRAYER REQUESTS