

BORN TO GIVE

PART 3: BORN Imperative

Acts 3:1-3

im•per•a•tive: of vital importance, crucial, critical, urgent, essential, necessary

We have been born to give and it is imperative that we take what God has given to us and that we give it away

What has God placed on the inside of us

It's crucial that we take what God has planted within us and we give it to other people around us

Gifts are meant to be given and when they are given, it is to meet and supply to someone's needs

It's of the highest importance that we are givers and that we think giving and we think blessing.

Acts 3:1-3 (NIV)

1 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer — at three in the afternoon. 2 Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. 3 When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money.

What we're reading is not really that much different than what we experience in our society or culture today.

But then it says...

4 Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" 5 So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

Watch the heart of Peter and John.

They embrace the situation.

They didn't ignore that this man was in dire straights.

They didn't ignore the problem that was there. They looked at it.

And it says that the man kind of went... HUH? He's looking at me. They're going to give me something!

And here's what happened, Peter and John triggered faith in that man and they didn't even realize it.

They triggered faith in him because what is faith? It's expecting, it's anticipating, it's having that hope, giving substance to hope.

They're going to give me something.

Now I can see it, Peter and John are walking in and this guy has been there day in and day out.

We find out later in the story that he has been crippled from birth. His legs have never worked

He's crippled from birth and he's almost or about 40-years old. For 40-years, everyone knows Jerry.

Jerry sits by the gate called Beautiful. That is his gate. Nobody else gets that. Jerry is there.

Peter and John have gone in to pray before. They have passed by Jerry (I'm making his name up if you're looking for it in the bible it's not there).

They've passed by Jerry, day in and day out, but today something is different, because if you go back just a chapter or two, they've been filled with the Holy Spirit and the power of the Most High.

They have the ability to pray and communicate with God in a heavenly prayer language and to speak in other tongues.

They've been endowed with power and this time they see the lame man at the gate and they go... Hey, do you have anything?

No, I left my wallet in the car. I don't have anything to give Jerry.

And Peter goes... Hey, hey, remember what Jesus said? He said we could do the same things that He did.

He said we have authority in His name.

He said that we could lay hands on the sick and they would recover.

Hey, let's give it a shot. I think that's the way they approached it. Let's keep reading...

6 Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." 7 Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. 8 He jumped to his feet and began to walk.

There was no therapy session there. Now that your muscles are restored, we need to teach you how to walk.

It's a miracle of miracles because his brain is able to communicate with his legs and he has instant balance, he has instant stability.

It says that he wasn't really walking, but he was leaping and he's jumping and he's excited.

He's just like that kid and he's excited about the healing that's been taking place in his life.

9 When all the people saw him walking and praising God, 10 they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

This is pretty cool. Silver and gold I don't have, but what I do have I give to you. Rise up and walk.

Well, let's learn in this BORN TO GIVE lifestyle, what does it look like?

Because see, too many times we assimilate the word giving with money.

And money is a small fraction of a giving lifestyle and a giving attitude of our world and function.

So the first thing we need to do is to...

1. Assess the situation.

What needs to take place? What is the real need?

You see, the guy thought he needed money to get some food and to buy some bread.

What he really needed was the ability to go and get a job and he needed his legs to function so he could go work and earn a living.

And so too many times we just do a quick assessment and go... Oh, here's what you need.

And it's not really the answer to their problem.

Men, can I coach you? When you come home and your wife is crying... "I'm just so frustrated, I don't know what to do! I just don't know what the answer is." We as men go... "Give me the facts, Ma'am, and I will fix this." We are fixers. And so when our wives are upset and frustrated and going through something we just say "Give uu the facts, Ma'am. Tell me what happened? What did they say? What did the kids say?"

"I don't know, I love him but I just don't like that kid now." You know, they're going through all this emotion and can I help you husbands out? She's saying she doesn't know what to do. We assess and say "She needs my wisdom. I'm going to give her the answer and solution." But that's not her need. Her need at that moment in time is comfort, understanding and hugs. Close thy mouth, husband. Don't say a word. Sympathy... "I understand. I don't really understand but I know you're frustrated. Come here. Let me hold you." That's it! Men are going... "Really, that fixes it?" That fixes it! That's what the need is! And so many times we assess a situation and we don't look at what is the real need. And so we have to learn what is the problem? How can we assist?

Secondly...

2. Take an inventory of what you have.

Take inventory of what you have or what others have.

Do you know somebody who can help in this situation?

How can you help in this situation?

If you don't have the gifting, the talent or the ability to assist, do you know somebody that can?

But what you see is verse 6...

6 Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you..."

Peter and John said... we don't have what you're requesting, but what we do have we're going to freely give it away and we're going to help and assist you.

So let me help you identify what are some of the giftings, talents and abilities that God has placed on the inside of you. So here are a few questions...

What comes natural to you that others struggle with?

When you look at the forest of your life, what tree stands the tallest?

What comes natural for you might be awkward for others.

When you receive compliments, is there a general theme or repetitiveness of things that people continue to compliment you on, that there's a gifting there, there's something on the inside.

Make note of this... What God has birthed in you, what is it that God has birthed within you that keeps resurfacing over and over again?

Romans 11:29... *for God's gift and his call are irrevocable. (NIV)*

God has given us gifts. And then you see the other translations...

God doesn't take back the gifts He has given or forget about people He has chosen. (CEV)

God never changes His mind about the people He calls. He never decides to take back the blessings He has given them. (NCV)

For God's gifts and His call can never be withdrawn. He will never go back on His promises. (TLB)

God's gifts and God's call are under full warranty – never cancelled, never rescinded. (MSG)

As I was praying this week and putting these thoughts and words together, the Holy Spirit spoke this to my heart, He said...

There are some here that you think you've gone too far, you're too late, you pushed it aside too far and you've got to just ride out the rest of your life and do your time until you die.

And what God is saying is the gifts and the callings that I placed on the inside of you, I've never taking them back, they're still there.

Operate in them, function in them, walk in them. God's favor and God's hands and His giftings are still upon you.

2 Corinthians 8:11-12 – *11 Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. 12 For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.*

Do you know what shuts down our gift? It's the sin of comparison.

I'm a public speaker, I'm a Pastor, I'm a communicator of God's word."

What is God saying? Take what you have. Take what God has given you.
Don't compare to what others have or don't have. Take what you have and give it.

2 Corinthians 8:12 – It doesn't matter how much you have. What matters is how much are you willing to give from what you do have.

Just be willing to share.

And see, we tend to look at our inabilities, our insecurities and things we can't do.

And God is saying... Take what I've placed on the inside of you and begin to plant, bless and help others.

Romans 12:4-8 – 4 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; 7 if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; 8 if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

a. Cultivate your gift.

How do we cultivate our gift?

We've got to plow the ground, we've got to plant the seed, we've got to fertilize, we've got to cultivate that gift so it bears the highest yield or the most fruit. Paul wrote to Timothy...

1 Timothy 4:13-16 – 13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. 14 Do not neglect your gift,...

What was Timothy doing? Well, I'm not as good a preacher as Paul and if Paul would be here, he'd preach to you.

And Paul said... No Tim, you're gifted of public reading of scripture, you're gifted to teach, you're gifted to preach, don't neglect the gift that is placed on the inside of you.

... which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. 15 Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. 16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Do you know what frustrates me as a people person?

I look at people and I see the raw talent, the raw gift that is there and they never take what God has given them and they never cultivate it, they never develop it, they never grow it, they never expand it.

Look what it says in Acts 4:13.

They've been brought before the Sanhedrin, they are criticized for doing miracles and here's what the religious folks said...

Acts 4:13 – When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

Do you want to know how you cultivate your gift? Spend time with the giver.

Spend time with Jesus and let Him grow those things on the inside of you.

b. Never allow fear to hinder the effectiveness your gift.

Never allow fear to stop your gift.

There are so many people, they're about to give, they're about to witness, they're about to pray for someone.

They're about to take their gift and plant it and invest it and help somebody else.

And then fear says...

You're not good enough. Fear says...

You're not qualified. Fear says...

There's somebody who can do it better than you. Fear says...

Just pray a prayer for them back here, don't get involved in that situation.

2 Timothy 1:5-7 – 5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. 6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

Now we're always good at quoting verse 7. But you've got to read verse 7 in the context of the passage of scripture.

7 For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and of love and a sound mind in other translations.

We always pull that scripture out, we're like... "WOO HOO! Yeah! I don't have the spirit of fear."

It's written in the context of your gift.

Don't be afraid to use your gift. Don't be afraid to give your gift away.

3. It's imperative you take action and give it away.

A gift is useless unless it's given.

And realize this, God's gift that He has placed within you is the answer to someone's needs, problems, hurts or wounds.

Take a person who's a plumber. They don't have a job and they aren't needed in life unless you or I have frozen pipes, clogged drains and we want to use the restroom inside our homes and not outside in an outhouse. They are an answer to a problem we have.

A doctor is an answer to a problem we have. We're sick, we have the flu, we have an attack on our body. The doctors gifting is an answer to our problem.

A teacher is an answer to our problem of ignorance. We need someone to educate us, to teach us, to help us.

Your gifting that God has placed on the inside of you is to help, to bless and to assist others.

1 Peter 4:10-11 - 10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in it's various forms. 11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Too many people hold on to their gift. And here's what it's saying...

Whatever you do, do it with the ability of God. Do it with the favor of God. Do it with the anointing of God. Don't do it in your own strength, in your own ability.

Take that gift that God has given you, put God's power, God's grace, God's favor upon it and do exceptional things.

4. Your gift will multiply once you plant it.

What happened? Peter and John said... Hey, let's take a risk.

What do you think? Do you think God would do a miracle?

What would happen if we put some action to our faith? Do we believe? Did we see Jesus heal people?

Yes, we did! Did we see the lame walk when Jesus was here? Yes, we did! Did we see demons cast out?

Dude, did we see the dead raised? Yes, we did!

Didn't Jesus say... 'We could do that?' Let's go. Let's go for it! You want to go? Yeah, let's go!

Hey, dude... rise up and walk.

They gave their gift away and it multiplied.

Acts 4:3-4 - 3 They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. 4 But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

In Acts 2, Peter stands up, preaches and three thousand get saved.

Now we see by a second action of faith that because they planted their gift the kingdom of heaven expanded by two thousand more people, through ordinary, uneducated men.

Guess what? You don't need to have that next upper, upper level degree to give your gift away.

Degrees are great! Degrees are awesome! They give you entrance where other people can't go.

Don't want to discredit it, but I don't want you to think that you can't fulfill your gift until you have a degree.

You just need to know Jesus and spend time with him.

***Whatever you want in life, you have to give it away.** Whatever you want.

You want respect? Sow respect. It'll come back to you. Whatever you want in life, give it away.

See, the world says... Hold on tight to it. Don't share it. Don't give it away. Don't help. Don't bless.

If you want people that will serve and help you when you're going through difficult times of life?

Then you become the biggest servant, on the face of the planet and it will come back to you.

5. Don't be shocked when everyone doesn't like or accept your gift.

Don't be surprised. Peter and John, they're celebrating... Look, miracles! Jesus is the way! They're having revival and then the guards come and throw them in jail.

I'm going to be blunt, if I were them I wouldn't have responded so well...

I don't understand, I was just doing what Jesus told me to do. How did we get here?

It's your fault, Peter! No, it's your fault, John!

I don't know about you, but I wouldn't have handled it as well.

Not everyone is going to like and value and accept your gift.

But know this, the acceptance or affirmation or rejection of your gift does not validate or qualify your gift.

Whether people accept it or reject it doesn't mean that your gift is good or bad.

I read this once and I think it applies here, write down 25, 25, 25, 25. Here's what you need to know about life...

25% of people won't like you. Never will. They won't like you.

25% of people won't like you but could be persuaded to like you.

25% of people will like you but could be persuaded not to like you.

25% of people will like you and will stand by you no matter what.

You can't please everybody. You've got to please the audience of one.
God, I give you my gift. Help me to plant it here in this world.

Acts 4:1-4 – 1 The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. 2 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. 3 They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. 4 But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

Will you stand to your feet with me? I want to pray for you and then I want to challenge you.

What is your gift? Where can you give it? Where can you plant it? Where can you invest it?

Who can you bless this week? Who can you help? Who can you aid? Who can you assist?

Who can you comfort? Who can you encourage? What are the giftings that God has placed in you that you can use to bless others?

*So now its time to put our faith where our calling is..... Its imperative that FFM gives!!!!!!!

I would like for everyone who has accepted the call to Kzoo to come up front with our Eldership team
Commissioning.....

Let's pray. God, you see each and everyone here. They're a bright, shining star in your universe. Everyone of them unique, everyone of them with talents, gifts and abilities that you have placed within them. Never recalled, never rescinded. You've given it to them. Now Lord, help each and every one of us to take what you have given to us and use our gift to help, aid, assist and bless others. Help us to take our lives and plant it into this community, plant it into this city, plant it into our families, plant it into our place of employment and give our gifts wholeheartedly. Not grudgingly, not out of necessity, but to give of ourselves 100, 200%. That we'd all walk and go the extra mile. Not do what is the least expected, but to blow everybody away and do beyond what any one anticipated or expected. And Lord, there are those here that have been intimidated by fear. But you have not given them that spirit of fear but you've given them love, power and a sound mind. So Lord, help people to be bold. I pray for boldness in the name of Jesus. To communicate and to share their gift, in Jesus' name. AMEN.