

Everyday Miracles  
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Who here would enjoy a nice cold can of 7up on a hot day? of course you would, it's so refreshing. They have those commercials where it looks like it hydrates better than water, it's amazing. When I was a kid I drank a lot of pop, and 7up was one of my favorites, especially in the summer I would just go non stop I would probably drink at least 3 cans a day. One day when I was 15 or so I went to the fridge and there were probably 40 cans of 7up in there I saw this sea of green pop cans so I grabbed one and opened it up. and when I drink pop I don't sip it I lean back and I start gulping it. The problem with gulping is once the liquid reaches your tongue there is like half the can coming down and there's nothing you can do to stop it. So as I was doing this it quickly became known to me that this was not a can of 7up but it was a can of V8 tomato juice. Which is already terrible, but if you are expecting a 7up and you get a v8, it instantly tastes like Vomit. So sure enough I sprayed this can of v8 all over the kitchen and dropped the can of Vomit, I mean v8. I've eaten pretty gross stuff in life, but that was probably the most disgusted I've been with food in my life.

I was just expecting the average but I got something much different. Sometimes you expect the average and you get something much better. Like when I first went to the pier for Ice cream when I first moved into town and asked for one scoop of Ice cream, and to my amazement the girl continued to put 17 scoops of Ice cream into this cone, I wasn't expecting 17 scoops of Ice cream, but that's what I got.

And In the same way when we're just doing our regular routine in life God comes in and does something way better than we could have ever expected. I'm going to read to you one of my favourite passages, it's in Acts chapter 3:1-11 and this is what it says.

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***<sup>1</sup>One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. <sup>2</sup>Now a man crippled 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. <sup>3</sup>When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. <sup>4</sup>Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” <sup>5</sup>So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.***

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***<sup>6</sup>Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” <sup>7</sup>Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. <sup>8</sup>He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.***

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***<sup>9</sup>When all the people saw him walking and praising God, <sup>10</sup>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.***

***<sup>11</sup>While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade."***

So there's a couple different stories that I want to pull out of this and the first is the story of the cripple. The man was crippled from birth, he had always been this way and every day he would beg at this one temple gate, the gate called beautiful. So the Temple was amazing, King Herod had recently expanded it so it was huge. Now we're not exactly sure which gate this was, but the temple was massive, and it had ten gates, and all of them were stunning, they were all adorned with gold and silver. Well, all of them except this one. This one was made of corinthian bronze which was considered even more valuable than gold or silver, if they wanted to build a really valuable statue back then they wouldn't use gold or silver, because corinthian bronze was considered more valuable, it was beautiful. And this man was carried to this gate every single day. He got there at 3pm this day which is quite a late start to the day. I don't know what took him so long to get there, maybe he was a teenager sleeping in. I kid you not once I went to pick up a teen from his house at 3pm and I knocked on the door and his mom came in and I asked for him and she said he was still sleeping. So maybe that's the case here, I don't know. Maybe he just knew that this is the prime time because it's the hour of prayer so there is a lot of traffic right at that time.

So he's there and he is relying on the welfare of the people passing by, and he knows that the Rabbi's have three pillars of faith, 1. the Torah, which is the bible for them, 2. worship, and 3. showing kindness or charity. So he's counting on that third pillar coming through for him that he will receive kindness or charity. And I'm sure regularly he would get what he was asking for. Every day he would beg for money and I'm sure that Rabbi's as they went in to the temple would occasionally give him money. And that's good, he would get money and they would fulfil their religious duty. And that would be an average day. That was so average for him, he was doing the exact same thing he did every other day. And I'm sure he was probably expecting an average day, but instead something else happened. These two men were walking into the temple and he asks them for money, just like had been asking everyone else. But both of the men look straight at him, and one of them says "look at us." I don't know about you, I would be scared someone is getting in my space, glaring right at me and he just says look at us. But this man is so desperate that doesn't enter into his mind, so he gave these two men his attention expecting to get something from them."

So he was asking for money, so what do you think he was expecting? money. That would make sense. But here's a question, why was he asking for money? that may sound like a stupid question, but I don't think it is. I think he was asking for money because that's probably what he saw all around him. The cripples couldn't work so they asked for money. He knew that he couldn't work to make money so he needed it somehow, so he asked for it. And finally he probably asked for money because it was working, at least to some degree I'm sure he got some money, you don't just do

something every day for no reason, it probably worked for him. He was expecting some money just like he would always get. But God didn't have something average in store for him. God had something much better. And the man had got into a habit of asking for the wrong thing. Asking for money wasn't a terrible thing to ask for, but what he should have been asking for was healing. He was asking for bandaids instead of a cure. And I don't know about you but I get blinded by the symptoms of my problems instead of the source. in his case the source of his problem was that he was a cripple, and the symptom of that was that he had no money.

You may think that your problem is that you don't have any money but the real problem is that you're actually a cripple. your problem isn't that you're an alcoholic, your problem is that you haven't given your life to Christ. Your problem isn't that your marriage is falling apart, your problem is that you haven't given your life to Christ and your spouse. You get stuck in the every day things. the Symptoms of your sin will show up every day, where the source of your sin can hide. God wants to heal you from the inside out. But even though this man wasn't asking for what he really needed he was still asking for help. He knew there was a problem and that he needed help. If he never approached Peter and John and asked for something, maybe he never would have been healed. So even if you don't know exactly what you need it's ok to just say "God help!" You may not know what the source of your problem is but even if you ask God to help with the symptoms that are obvious to you God will reveal the source and he wants to heal you, and see how God heals the cripple.

Peter and John respond to the Cripple saying this:

"Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

I think that is one of the most powerful verses in the bible. Here are two guys that don't have anything, If you read Acts 2 right before this it will say that the people in the church sold everything they had and gave it to those in need, so Peter and John had nothing left. What would your response be? "oh sorry I don't have any change." or "oh I'm in a rush right now, I'll get ya next time." No, you see those excuses don't hold up. So he say's I don't have any money, but actually I have something for you, and his name is Jesus, and in his name, get up and walk...wow. He asked for money, expecting some spare change, but he received Jesus Christ. Look how God shows up in everyday life. This was a day just like every other day when he was placed at the temple gate. He remained faithful, and he was doing what he thought was all he could do living his regular life and Jesus showed up. And Just like the gate that he was sitting by Jesus gave him something better than Gold or silver, he was given Jesus, which gave him the strength to walk, but also so much more. He began to jump and praise God, he entered into the temple that he had sat at the gate of for years and the people saw what God had done in him. That he healed him, that he filled him with joy. He was doing the same thing he had been doing every day, and then God shows up.

Do you believe that God will do something amazing today? you probably don't because it's just an average day. you have a plan, you woke up had your coffee, got the family ready for church, you came here, you've already planned to have grilled cheese

for lunch, you have a couple shows recorded, you've already set up your day to be average. And not just you I am preaching to myself right now, I set my day up to be average. I don't expect God to do something crazy a lot of the time, and that's my sin. It's not everybody though. I remember when I was in New York with the youth group we just had youth group with the youth group in New York and it was so cool. And we were walking back to where we were staying and we were talking to the band and that same band that played for youth group was also going to be playing on Saturday for the weekly kids program and they were so excited for Saturday, this Saturday was going to be just like every other Saturday for them but they were excited. They knew that God was going to show up on just an average Saturday.

Peter and John were also doing something very average, they were going to the temple during the hour of prayer, that's pretty standard. And these guys are busy, they're starting the church, Peter just had a sermon where 3000 people came to Christ, that's got to be a lot of work, you got 3,000 new Christians in your church, you're probably going through some stuff. But he's going to pray, which is obviously a good thing, nobody is going to say he shouldn't be doing that. But as he goes to pray, he's almost in the temple and someone asks him for money. He checks his pockets, and there's nothing there. He had the perfect excuse to keep moving but he realized he does have something the same that you and I have something, we have Jesus Christ. He says, "what I have I give you, in the name of Jesus Christ, walk."

Here are some average responses that Peter could have had:

Sorry I don't have any money

No, sorry I'm really busy right now

If he had some change he could have handed him some and kept going

He could have ignored him entirely

Those are all completely average everyday things to say, but God had something special ready. God gave Peter the wisdom to know that even though he didn't have money he had something of infinite value which is a relationship with Jesus Christ. That relationship does not do average things it does crazy things. If anybody know that it's Peter. This guy not too long ago denied that he even knew Christ, but after he saw the resurrected Jesus He became a new person, he was no longer average Peter, he was the rock that Jesus built his church on he was able to preach and have 3,000 people come to know Jesus. That's the transformation that Jesus had done in him, so he gave Jesus to this cripple. And Jesus transformed the cripple from a man sitting at the gates to jumping and praising God in the temple.

The interesting thing is that many of us have been in the same scenario as Peter, have you ever been walking around doing an average daily task and have someone ask for money? of course you have, if you haven't been hiding under a rock that has happened to you. Our response is a little different than Peter's though. we often give one of those average responses don't we? I've given some of those average responses

in my life. I've never said what Peter said but I have noticed when I take the time and I love the down and out God does something special.

About 5 years ago I took some kids downtown Victoria to give socks and snacks to the homeless. We gave some socks to one guy named Rick and I rarely ever saw Rick but Rick prayed for one of the kids that I was with, and that kid wasn't a Christian, and I remember Rick called the kid the greatest little warrior. Well, 5 years later, the greatest little warrior is at a club, he goes outside and some guys are offering him some drugs and he hears out from behind him someone shouting "it's the greatest little warrior." Rick had remembered him from 5 years ago. And the kid ended up not doing drugs. I say this story because God has a plan, and that plan is amazing, when we spend our time with the down and out God will do something amazing, every time.

But this is much bigger than just homeless people, this is about not being distracted by the mundane so that you miss out on the miracle that God wants to do. This is about when you're at work and you can tell that a coworker is feeling down, you have the option of talking to that coworker, or just doing your everyday job. This is about when you're at school and you see someone getting bullied and you just keep on doing your assignment. This is about all of the everyday things that we do that stop us from miracles.

Peter and John were going to pray, that's a pretty good thing to do, and if the ignored the cripple and went into the temple to pray nobody would have batted an eye, but a miracle wouldn't have happened and that story wouldn't have made it into the bible. Every day God has something better than average for you. Every day God wants to do something great in you. He wants to transform you more into Christ each and every day. The reason why that doesn't happen is because we settle for average far too often.

This was a typical day, Peter and John doing what they did all the time, and a cripple doing what he did all the time and God stepped in. So I have couple principles that I want to bring out of this passage on how to turn you're average day into a day where God can do a miracle.

### [5]

The first lesson is from the Cripple, even though he wasn't asking for a miracle he was asking for help, and that's a good place to start. I know one prayer that applies to everyone of you here, every one of you can pray "God, help!" that works for every one of you, if you don't think you need help you actually need more help than everybody else. Pray that throughout your day, while you're at work, in your car, whenever, just pray Gd help, if you have something specific that's great, if you don't know the source of your problem, you can just pray for help and welcome God into your day and into your pain.

### [6]

The second lesson is from Peter and John, which is don't get distracted by the everyday things even if they're "good." Praying is good, but if you ignore someone in need so that you can go pray, it's not good, be open to what God is putting in your life,

and this means that you have to be willing to sacrifice your time. It's a lot easier to throw a couple bucks than it is to sit down and talk with someone.

### [7]

The third lesson is that you have something to give, and it's Jesus. This will turn every average day into something amazing. I'm going to throw in a nerdy reference here, just because it's not too often that I get to talk about nerdy things and have people actually listen to me, but since it's church you have to listen. One of the coolest superheroes is Green lantern, and what makes the Green lantern really cool is he has this ring and this ring can do anything that he can imagine, it can turn into a sword, it can turn into a fighter jet, or a roller coaster, it can turn into anything he can imagine. And as you can imagine if you have something that amazing on your finger no day is going to be average. You all have something that powerful in your heart, and that's Jesus, no day should be average. Peter and John didn't have any money to give the man, but they had Jesus to give, and there's no way that's going to be average.

### [8]

The final lesson that I want to bring out is once again from the cripple. The man went into the temple jumping and praising God. When God healed him, he didn't run home, he went into the temple where everyone was and he was jumping and praising God. So when God does the miracle, don't keep it to yourself but go to the crowds telling people about how good God is, share your stories of what God is doing don't keep that to yourself, people want and need to hear them. God is doing something amazing in your life and God wants to share it. As you leave our church today look up and read the verse above the doors that says "let the redeemed of the Lord share their story." and listen to it, share your story.

So everyday, including today God has something for you, I pray that as you go out you are open to hearing what God is placing in your life.