



January 19, 2025

*Sanctity of Life*

## **THE AUTHOR OF LIFE**

Acts 3:11-21

### **1. Opening Discussion Questions:** (in a group setting you may not want to use all of these)

- a. Have you ever been a witness to an event, perhaps an accident, after which you were required to explain in detail what you had seen? Was it an easy task or did you struggle to include all the details in the correct order? How much more difficult would it have been if you had been required to explain why the event happened?
- b. How do you feel about speaking to a large group of people? Many people are so afraid of speaking in public that being required to unexpectedly talk to a huge crowd is debilitating. How would you respond if you were asked unexpectedly to speak to hundreds of people with no advance preparation?
- c. What is the greatest act of kindness that you have ever witnessed? How did the recipient respond? How did those who witnessed the act respond?

### **2. Sermon Outline/Key Points**

- a. Life Is An Intentional Gift from Lord Jesus
  - i. Jesus is the Author of Life
  - ii. When does life begin?
  - iii. When should life end?
- b. Honor that Gift by Embracing a Mindset of Life
  - i. Invite the Spirit to give you a mindset of life.
  - ii. Pray for a time of refreshing.
- c. Three Keys to Creating a Culture of Life
  - i. Laws matter.
  - ii. Hearts matter more.
  - iii. Hope is essential.

### **3. Study/Discussion Points:**

- a. ***Sunday Afternoon*** – As soon as possible after listening to the sermon set aside some time to ponder these questions prayerfully:
  - i. What one thing most stood out to you in this sermon?
  - ii. What new truth did you learn or of what truth were you reminded?
  - iii. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?

- iv. What is one thing you feel God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
- v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

**b. Monday:**

- i. Last week the sermon considered a passage in which we are told of Jesus healing an invalid at the Pool of Bethesda. This week the focus passage is about Peter healing a lame beggar at the Beautiful Gate to the Temple. Read both passages, John 5:1-18 and Acts 3:1-4:4 comparing how the events unfolded and what the results were.
  - 1. What similarities do you note?
  - 2. In what ways are the stories different?
  - 3. Who performed each miracle (consider Acts 3:16)?
- ii. How do these miracles produce the same results (compare John 5:16 & 18 and Acts 4:1-3)? In what way are the results vastly different (Acts 4:4)?
- iii. What has occurred between the two miracles that account for the different results and the boldness of Peter and John in Acts 3 (consider what Peter says in verse 15 and Acts 2:1-4)?
  - 1. How does John 16:7 describe the relationship between these two events?
  - 2. How should these two facts influence the manner in which we respond to Matthew 28:18-20?

**c. Tuesday:**

- i. Read Acts 3:1-10 as an introduction. How does the crowd respond to this miracle? How does the beggar respond (vv. 8, 11)?
- ii. Now read and meditate on this week's focal passage, Acts 3:11-21.
  - 1. What truth from these verses seems most significant? Which is most likely to influence you and the way you live your life?
  - 2. Which parts of Peter's message could you incorporate into an explanation of your faith to your unbelieving friends?
  - 3. Are there any parts of Peter's message that you do not understand or have trouble accepting?
- iii. How do Peter and John respond to the crowd's amazement?
  - 1. What practical lesson can we learn from Peter's example which should apply to our behavior as His disciples?
  - 2. What two possible explanations for the miracle does Peter immediately deny (verse 12)? Why was it important for Peter to confirm that the apostles did not do this on their own power or exceptional godliness immediately?

Compare this with Paul and Barnabas' actions in Lystra found in Act 14:8-18.

*d. Wednesday:*

- i. Read Acts 2:11-26 and highlight, underline, or list the different names and titles that Peter uses for Jesus in his sermon.
  1. Read Psalm 16:10, Isaiah 41:14, 16, & 20, Mark 1:24, Luke 1:35, John 6:69, and 1 John 2:20. Where is this title found in Peter's sermon?
  2. Read Proverb 21:12, Isaiah 24:16, Acts 7:52, 22:14, and 1 John 2:1. Where is this title found in Peter's sermon?
  3. Read Isaiah 42:1-4, 52:13, Acts 4:27, and 4:30. Where is this title found in Peter's sermon?
  4. Read Deuteronomy 18:15, Luke 24:19, and Hebrews 1:1. Where is this title found in Peter's sermon?
  5. Read Matthew 16:16, John 1:41 & 4:25, Acts 2:36, 5:42, Galatians 3:24. Where is this title found in Peter's sermon?
  6. Read Matthew 1:21 & 25, Luke 1:31 and 2:21. Where is this title found in Peter's sermon?
- ii. How does the use of these different titles help us understand Peter's message?
  1. What advantage would a Jew listening to Peter have when it came to understanding the significance of these titles that most Gentiles would not have?
  2. What would this suggest is an important spiritual discipline for us today?

*e. Thursday:*

- i. Read Acts 3:14-15 in as many different translations as you can (the YouVersion and many other apps make this an easy task).
  1. What differences do you see in the various translations?
  2. During Wednesday's look at Jesus' titles there is one title found in these two verses that was not considered. What is it? How is it translated differently and what do you learn about Jesus by considering these different renderings?
- ii. Read John's prologue (John 1:1-14).
  1. How does John set the stage for what Peter declares about Jesus in verse 15?
  2. Read John 5:26, 6:57, Hebrews 7:16, 1 John 1:1-2, 5:20, and Revelation 1:18? How do these passages support Peter's use of the title for Jesus?
  3. Jesus describes Himself with a series of "I am" statements in the Gospel of John. How do John 6:35 & 48, 11:25, and 14:6 support Peter's claim?
  4. When the Bible talks about life it can mean physical or spiritual. John 1:4 tells us He was responsible for our physical lives even before coming to live among us. What does John 10:10, Luke 18:29-30, and 1 John 5:12 tell us He accomplished by coming to earth for us?
- iii. End the day by reading and meditating on 1 Corinthians 15:35-57. Use it to make a list of things for which we owe Jesus praise and thanks – then do so in a closing prayer.

f. *Friday:*

- i. Read Jeremiah 1:4-8, Isaiah 49:1-3, and Psalm 139:7-18.
  1. What do these familiar passages teach us about God's relationship/involvement with our physical life?
  2. When does our relationship with God (not our acceptance of Jesus' spiritual gift but our reliance on God's providence) start?
- ii. Read Genesis 9:1-7.
  1. What explanation does God provide Noah for the importance of human life?
  2. What was Noah commanded to do in this covenant? How does our society categorically reject God's decree?
- iii. Close by meditating on what Paul teaches in Romans 8:1-11. In what way does his message relate to the issues raised on Sanctity of Life Sunday?
  1. What does it teach us about our ability to solve such problems by our own abilities and efforts?
  2. Looking beyond just the Sanctity of Life, how do these teachings affect you personally?

g. *Saturday:*

- i. Read Acts 3:11-26 once more meditating on how Peter's message applies to you.
- ii. Carefully consider Peter's imperative in verse 19. If you have not done that, seek out a Christian you know and have her/him explain how you can.

4. **Application:**

- a. Peter's opportunity to present the gospel message was a direct result of his providing for the needs of a hurting individual. There is nothing in the passage indicating that Peter had any motive other than helping, but nonetheless, it opened up an opportunity to preach. We should never pass up the chance to help others or to preach the word when God provides us the chance to do so.
- b. In this case the result of Peter's sermon was not the salvation of thousands (Acts 2:41) but a night in jail (Acts 4:1). We should not be discouraged when our witnessing does not produce the results we hope for. God may be using it in a manner we cannot foresee or understand (see Acts 4:21-22). We must always remember Jesus' promise: "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out." (John 6:37)

5. **Prayer Points:**

- a. Adoration – Psalms 8:1 and 29:1-2
- b. Confession – Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:8-10
- c. Thanksgiving – Psalms 95:1-2 and 100:4-5
- d. Supplications – Matthew 21:22 and John 16:19