**Healing? Priceless!**

A typical credit card ad goes something like this: “Two tickets, $28; Two hotdogs, two popcorns, two sodas, $18; One autographed baseball, $45; Real conversation with 11 year-old son? *priceless!*” The value of the material things of this life can be quantified with price tags. But the message behind the ad is that there are some things that money simply cannot buy. These ads remind me of an incident recounted in Acts 3:1-10. A 40 year-old man who had been born lame was being carried to the Beautiful Gate to beg for alms as on any other day, when he encountered Peter and John entering the temple. He requested assistance from them, no doubt expecting a few mites, but the response Peter gave was totally unexpected. Peter told him, “I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene – walk!” The man’s atrophied legs immediately were strengthened and he began to walk and leap and praise God! The man was accustomed to receiving donations from generous pedestrians, but now he had been given something money simply could not buy.

This miraculous, immediate healing was ***priceless!***

Jesus and His disciples felt compassion for the unfortunate souls they encountered during their travels, but I would suggest that their miraculous healings were prompted by a much more noble and far-reaching motive. Jesus had the power to heal every person on the planet with a single word, had His compassion for their suffering been His primary motivation. While physical healing was Peter’s immediate gift to the man, the spiritual healing offered in the sermon beginning in verse 11 was his true gift, not only to the lame man, but to the thousands who responded to the gospel that day.

I won’t be involved in any miraculous healings this week and neither will anyone else in the world. However, when I encounter others in physical need, I too can respond in similar fashion to the way Peter did. “I have a little silver and gold, and I’ll be glad to help anyway I can, but I have something even greater to offer you that money simply cannot buy” should be my response. Like Jesus and like Peter and John, my ultimate motivation, beyond empathy and compassion for their immediate suffering, should be a deep and profound love for their soul. It may be that you will be approached by a person seeking some limited and immediate financial relief, and they will find themselves introduced to the One who can offer them abundant life, both in this world and in the world that is to come (Luke 18:29-30). While they initially may have been expecting a few dollars to tie them over, they may discover a world they never new could exist: Adoption into the family of the God who created them and loves them enough to pay the price for their sins. An occasion for some short-term assistance could become an opportunity for the spiritual healing that they so desperately need: ***Priceless!***

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