

INTRO // NEW ERA COMES WITH A NEW PURPOSE

- God has created us ON purpose WITH a purpose, and FOR a purpose and wants to use us to be a WITNESS to the world around us.
- It's our job description!

SCRIPTURE // MATTHEW 28 – OUR JOB DESCRIPTION

Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

TENSION // WHY NOT NOW: OUR REALITIES BECOME OUR EXCUSES

1. You've seen the brokenness in your family or in your community and your reality becomes ***“GOD CAN'T MOVE HERE.”***
2. You've tried and failed over and over again or you've made one mistake after another and your reality becomes ***“GOD CAN'T USE ME.”***
3. You look around and don't see God changing lives, you feel like you are not ready or mature enough to be a WITNESS so your reality becomes ***“GOD CAN'T MOVE NOW”***

PREFACE TEXT //

- Jesus is in Heaven.
- Holy Spirit has come and is equipping people to fulfill this crazy job description
- A new reality is being realized in the lives of the apostles
- But they come across a man with a reality much different than their own...

Acts 3 New Living Translation (NLT)

Peter and John went to the Temple one afternoon to take part in the three o'clock prayer service. ² As they approached the Temple, a man lame from birth was being carried in. Each day he was put beside the Temple gate, the one called the Beautiful Gate, so he could beg from the people

going into the Temple. ³ When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for some money.

LAME MAN'S REALITY....

This was his reality. He was lame since birth. He had never known what it was like to walk, to run, to play sports, or even just travel without the help of others. And it wasn't his fault. His reality, his normal was limitations.

It's easier to see ourselves as the lame man than the disciples. It's easier to see our shortcomings

What we know becomes our reality.

⁴ Peter and John looked at him **intently**, and Peter said, "Look at us!" ⁵ The lame man looked at them eagerly, expecting some money. ⁶ But Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold for you. But I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!"

⁷ Then Peter took the lame man by the right hand and helped him up. And as he did, the man's feet and ankles were instantly healed and strengthened. ⁸ He jumped up, stood on his feet, and began to walk! Then, walking, leaping, and praising God, he went into the Temple with them.

Illustration: Gift that you didn't expect / SCRAPBOOK

- That's not what I asked for, but it was what I needed
- The world around us is asking for something but we have what they actually need

KEY 1 // Stop giving the world what it expects, give it what it needs.

HELPING IS GOOD BUT HEALING IS BETTER

- The well intentions do nothing if we don't partner it with actions.
- What if we stopped putting the responsibility on those hurting to tell us they need help, and INSTEAD we took the responsibility to reach out?

‘LATER ON’ RESPONSES TO ‘RIGHT NOW’ MOMENTS

- ☐ “I’ll pray for you / I’ll be praying for you.” “Let me know if there’s anything I can do.”
 - We aren’t confident
 - Aren’t ready to handle it
- In life, we may not do something because we don’t have clarity at the time. So we put it off or wait. Our faith is not like that, though.
- Faith is stepping out and doing something, even when you don’t know what’s going to happen.

When you don’t take advantage of the "right now" moments, they turn into “should have” moments.

- Sometimes our responses to right now moments are later on promises.
- ☐ They don’t have weight

KEY 2 // When you’ve seen it, you’ll expect it.

CONDITIONED RESPONSE: an automatic response established by training to an ordinarily neutral stimulus

ILLUSTRATION // Pavlov’s Dogs vs. DEFENSIVE RESPONSES

- ☐ What you’ve experienced is what you’ll expect.

THE QUESTION IS ... “HOW HAVE YOU BEEN CONDITIONED TO RESPOND?”

TOO MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CONDITIONED TO EXPECT...

- Corrupt politicians
- The ‘church’ to be full of hypocrits
- To be let down by our friends and family

YOU LOOK AROUND THE NATION RIGHT NOW AND SEE PEOPLE ATTACKING EACH OTHER. WE ARE A DIVIDED NATION AND IT IS

BECAUSE SO MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CONDITIONED TO EXPECT HURT INSTEAD OF HOPE. OUR JOB AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST IS TO INJECT HOPE INTO OUR WORLD!

- You have no idea, because you're stuck in your norm (you get "lulled" into your norm and accept it) Once something becomes normal for you, you expect it.

John 9 - disciples wanted to find out who's fault the blindness was

- Once John saw it, he expected that it could happen again.
- ☐ When you see it, you'll expect it again. But maybe YOU need to be the initiator.
 - You be the catapult
 - Peter saw Jesus do it, so he knew that it could be done again. He had the faith for greater things.
 - Peter was around Jesus and knew what could be normal.
- Once you see something happen, you know it's possible.

Jesus interrupts our reality, which changes our norm.

- Peter's life was interrupted by Jesus, so his norm was shifted.
- ☐ He believed in healings / miracles
- ☐ He believed in the impossible
- ☐ People act on their norm.
- We think it can't happen right now, because it's not what happens. It's not the norm.
- ☐ We are content with the pain, brokenness, hopelessness, complacency, etc.

CONCLUSION //

- Why can't God do something now?
- Why not be all in, in your faith, now?
- Let Jesus interrupt your norm
- Be the catapult that shows others what they can expect, what their norm can be.
 - Act in obedience and faith - people will gain a new perspective on what God can do and that they aren't limited by their realities.

- People need an example of what else there is out there (through Christ) - especially since our world isn't offering great, sustainable solutions
- **Your current obedience leads to future opportunities.**
 - Peter obeyed in stepping out to heal the beggar, and later was presented with an opportunity to preach the gospel. (Acts 3:12-25)

RESPONSE //

- **Reiterate: "When you've seen it, you'll expect it."**
 - Give students an opportunity to see it.
- Claim it in the now.
 - Students who want prayer for something NOW (leaders pray for students)
 - ☐ How do you see God move?
 - Students who don't need prayer now, write down 3 things they want to see God do now. (their lives, friends, family)
 - ☐ What do you WANT to see God do.
 - ☐ Name it & claim it. Be bold and specific.