

ImPerfect Examples: Peter
Acts 3:1-10 (NIV)—VBS Wrap Up
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In 1908 Anna Jarvis held a memorial ceremony to honor her mother and all mothers at Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church marking the first official observance of Mother's Day.

The first observance of a "Father's Day" was held on July 5, 1908, in Fairmont, West Virginia, in the Williams Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church South, now known as Central United Methodist Church.

It's possible to trace the roots of Vacation Bible School as far back as the 1870s, when the Methodist Episcopal Church offered summer Sunday school institutes to the general public near Lake Chautauqua, New York. (Christianity Today, June 1, 2003)

Hmm...first Mother's Day in Methodist Church. First observance of Father's Day in Methodist Church. Unofficially can trace roots of Vacation Bible School back to Methodist Church.

Something in common.... Ah...Methodists...and I'm okay with that.

We honored mothers last month as Sarah preached. Today we honor dads, "Just the way God made you." And also, today we have a VBS celebration---all Methodist things.

As we come to an end of our Vacation Bible School week we rejoice in the work that God has allowed to be done in the life of these 545 children that we had the privilege of sharing Jesus with this week. 150 volunteers—home missionaries, if you will. (Volunteers stand)

2 years ago, we had a volunteer in a wheelchair. Last she was not able to be with us because she was ill. She had previously worked well more than 20+ years at PHUMC's Vacation Bible School. She loved children, she loved this church and she loved the Lord. I'm talking about Mrs. Josie Heal. She invested her life in loving children in Jesus' name. You will notice on the platform a Bird of Paradise plant. It has been up here all week during Vacation Bible School. This week that Bird of Paradise will be planted on church grounds with the following plaque. **(image) Planted in Memory of Josie Heal, Vacation Bible School 2018. Rooted in Love, Always in Our Hearts.** Thank you, Josie, for the legacy you left.

Each year we have the children raise money and participate in a Mission Project. The last couple of years it has been Operation Christmas Child and Shoeboxes sent around the world. This year we wanted to do something more local. We are partnered with 2 schools through the Pack a Sack program. We Pack the Sack for food for a weekend and the Social Worker gives it to the child for the weekend. They have extended that so that in the summer these children can also get a Packed Sack.. By Friday the children raised enough money (??\$\$\$) and they each Packed A Sack to be sent to a child right here in Pinellas County that needs food. Yes, they packed 545 Sacks of food (each bag contained recipe and about \$ worth of food.)

You through your mission support help offset the other cost. Thank you, Go Team with Rev. Cathy, Go Minister and we initiated our new Mission Coordinator Rose Bentley.

Certainly, VBS could not have taken place without the volunteers, but the Children's Ministry Staff has done an outstanding job. Robin McFerrin, Nan Robins, Leah Wheeley, and Children's Choir Director Kelly Groves. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

And yes, it is also Father's Day and Dad's we do love you just the way God made you. Maybe we can call you imperfectly perfect. It may be appropriate that on Father's Day we are beginning a sermon series on ImPerfect Examples. Ah, but we know your heart. We will begin our sermon series with the ImPerfect Example of Peter with a story the VBS children learned about on Friday.

However, let's do a recap of what was done this week. The theme was Shipwrecked (**VBS logo slide**). When you are shipwrecked you want to be rescued. So, each day the children learned how Jesus rescues!

Day 1: (Image) When you're lonely---Jesus Rescues!

Key Verse: **"The Lord will hold me close." (Psalm 27:10)**

Day 2: (Image) When you worry---Jesus Rescues!

Key Verse: **"The Lord comes to the rescue each time." Psalm 34:19**

Day 3: (image) When you struggle---Jesus Rescues!

Key Verse: **"Be still and know that I am God!"**

Day 4: (image) When you wrong---Jesus Rescues!

Key Verse: **"Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)**

Day 5: (image) When you're powerless---Jesus Rescues!

Key Verse: **"This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead." (Ephesians 1:19-20)**

As we start the new sermon series ImPerfect Examples we are going to begin with Peter and the story that the children learned on Friday. Peter realized something; *When you're powerless---Jesus Rescues!!!*

Let's examine the story more closely.

Acts 3:1-10 New International Version (NIV)

3 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon.

Jewish people of that day prayed specially 3 times a day. 9 am, 3pm and sunset. And we pray...when???? Asking' for a friend?????

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.

Several observations. This man was lame from the time of his birth. In the next chapter, Acts 4:22, we find that the man was more than 40 years old. We don't know how his lameness has affected him, but he had to be carried to the temp every day. Now I'm not sure he would have been carried there as an infant but think of how many years he might have been carried there---30 or more years. Of course, this begs the question...who carried him? And not just one day, or one year, but for 40 years!!!! What dear friends? Do you have friends that would...never mind?

By the way you might call this a Lame Sermon.

³ When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money.

This was his job. The only way he could get money. Couldn't walk, not job. No control. Oh, but *WHEN YOUR'E POWERLESS.... JESUS RECUES.*

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.

Maybe as the man was begging he was caught up in the "ritual" of it and was just leaning back yelling at whoever came by. Perhaps he even had low expectations. He would take what he would get. But Peter want the man to look at him. Ever heard a child rambling or not paying attention and say "Look at me! Look AT me!" Evidently the man does expecting to get some money. Oh, but power is not in money. Let me repeat that, because I think we get that confused today. Power is not in money. Or maybe I should say...power should not be in money. *WHEN YOUR'E POWERLESS.... JESUS RESCUES.*

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."

You see power is not in money. It wouldn't have mattered if Peter and John would have gone to the ATM and given him all they could---that wouldn't have healed him. That was not what the man needed. He needed Jesus. For more than 40 years he had waited for someone to give him Jesus. (Oh, the need for us to Go Fish and share our witness.) Not going to give you silver and gold. I bet the man was disappointed, after all that what he was wanting. But he got not what he wanted but what he needed. Peter, said, "What I do have I give you. I have Jesus. "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Not in Peter's power, but only in the name of Jesus Christ. For you see...*WHEN YOU'RE POWERLESS...JESUS RESCUES.*

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. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

An amazing verse. Born that way, was over 40 years and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. Muscle atrophy be gone. Weakness disappeared. Arthritis away.

This man who had never ever walked jumped to his feet and not only walked but jumped. Woo-hoo!!!! He had the power! The power of the touch of a hand extending in grace to help him out of his shipwrecked state. *WHEN YOU'RE POWERLESS...JESUS RESCUES!*

It was a God sighting. Oh, we have little lights when a leader this week saw a God sighting. When a child did something to praise God. Oh, this lame man is himself a God sighting.

And notice he was praising God. Not Peter...but God. This power, this rescue came in the form of Jesus. Jesus Rescues!!!! We talk about being the hands and feet of Jesus. Peter was actually the hand of Jesus pulling him up.

And the man went with the disciples and went to church!!! He had already had church, if you know what I mean so he went to Praise God.

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.

I would have loved to see people's faces. "Isn't that the guy we pass every day?" "Hey wasn't he lame all of his life?" "What happened to him?"

I'll tell you what happened to him. Jesus happened. *WHEN YOUR POWERLESS...JESUS RESCUES!*

Yes, the lame man gave a major thumbs up (**image**) to Jesus! You will notice some crosses on the platform (**Image**) where our rising kindergarten and 1st graders of VBS were asked to give a "thumb's up to Jesus." They were asked if they wanted to say "YES!" to Jesus. They put their thumb in some ink and their thumbprint is on that cross. They said YES to Jesus. Their unique one of a kind fingerprints on the cross of the one of a kind Savior.

What about you? Have you said yes to Jesus? Oh, you may say I can't be like that. I can't be like Peter who offered the lame man his hand in the name of Jesus. I'm too imperfect.

Well let's look at this ImPerfect example of Peter.

Matthew 14:22---He fails to continue to walk on water. Peter's imperfect.

(**image—lego**)

Mark 9:5---Mount of Transfiguration. He wants to build 3 temples to Moses, Elijah and Jesus. He missed the point. Peter's imperfect.

Matthew 26:40---Garden of Gethsemane. He is supposed to be praying. He fell asleep. Peter's imperfect.

Luke 22:54-62---He denies Jesus 3 times. Peter's Imperfect.

John 21:15-19---He was asked 3 times if he really loves Jesus. Peter's Imperfect.

Let's see now. A lack of faith (**image of Peter and floatie**)

The Mount of Transfiguration and Pride.

Falling asleep instead of praying---spirit is willing, flesh is weak.

Denied Jesus.

His love for Jesus questioned.

What an Imperfect example.

Hold it---it's kind of like looking in a mirror----do I have a lack of faith like Peter, pride like Peter, spirit willing/flesh weak like Peter. Have I denied Jesus by what I've done---or said? Can my love for Jesus be questioned?

And yet this Imperfect Example gave one in need the best he had to offer---Jesus.

There is a famous phrase of John Wesley the founder of Methodism that is appropriate here. He was preparing to send Thomas Coke from England to America to ordain Francis Asbury and thus begin the Methodist denomination in the United States. The last words that John Wesley said as Thomas Coke left England for America were these: "Offer them Christ."

Silver or gold I do not have. But even in all my imperfection I can offer you Christ---the perfecter of our faith. Jesus. And in the name of Jesus we are made strong.

---8:05---You may be shipwrecked, you may feel the water rising. Remember: *WHEN YOU'RE POWERLESS---JESUS RESCUES!*

9:30----As our littlest VBS students come forward. Remember to trust in Jesus. He is the One. *WHEN YOU ARE POWERLESS----JESUS RESCUES!*

11:05----*WHEN YOU ARE POWERLESS---JESUS RESCUES!!!*