

CAST OFFS – PETER

SERIES INTRO

Have you ever felt like you weren't good enough?

Have you ever wondered what God thinks of you? What potential he sees in you?

Have you ever wondered how God could possibly use you?

These are critical questions that we will work hard to answer over the next three weeks with our new series we are launching today called Cast-Offs.

Sometimes because of screw-ups in our life we can develop an identity of inferiority.

- We can begin to believe things about ourselves that aren't true:
 - Like I'm not valuable
 - I'm not worthy to be used by God
 - I'm hopeless

LEAD OFF

Sometimes I feel like a royal screw up. I just can't escape making a fool out of myself.

Before I went into ministry I spent a decade in the banking industry on the technology end of things.

- One time I was sent to a conference in Kansas City for a couple of days by myself.
- I was there with about 2000 other people.
- During one of the afternoon sessions... I was bored out of my mind.
 - The presenter guy was boring me to death
 - It was hot in the room
 - And I had to go to the bathroom after blowing through 3 bottles of water out of boredom
 - The session was almost over, but I wanted to beat the crowd, so I cut out early.
- So, I leave the room and I'm struggling to find the closest bathroom...
 - Getting more desperate by the minute (especially after walking by a water fountain) I finally find them and walk in.
 - I walk in and there are no urinals... which should have struck me as strange, but it didn't.
 - I went into a stall began to do my business when all the sudden I heard the clack of heels walking along the floor.
 - Yep... I was in the women's restroom.

At this point I have two choices...

1. Walk out proudly as if nothing is wrong with the fact I'm in there
2. Or, stay in the stall until the coast is clear.

#2 was my best option, but it became incredibly challenging when all of the sudden the session let out and the ladies room was hopping.

And then in a restroom with tons of stalls, one actually gets in the stall next to me.

- 25 stalls and the lady has to get in the one next to me... does she not understand the men's restroom stall rule?
 - Always place one empty stall in between you and other said dude when possible.
- "Oh sweet baby Moses, please let it be #1." — TOO MUCH?

Finally it sounded like the room cleared out, so I started peaking through the stall cracks to see if I could see anyone, and of course there was a lingerer putting on makeup.

Once she cleared, I opened the door and made a b-line.... YES I didn't wash my hands. I didn't care.

As I was walking out a dude was walking by me. I recognized him. The presenter.

- He didn't look at the sign and assumed since I was walking out of this one it was safe, and he walked right into the women's restroom! 😏
- That's what he gets for being boring

SIMON PETER

There is a guy in the Bible named Simon Peter that is notorious for being a screw-up. Today we are going to be looking at the progression of his experience in serving Jesus from his CALL, to his FALL, to his REINSTATEMENT.

Simon Peter's life will show us that God can use anybody that has made mistakes in their life, and that even the big one's do not disqualify us from serving God.

Simon Peter, originally known just as Simon... that's his name on his birth certificate... **(CAN YOU JUST PUT SIMON PETER ON THE SCREEN WITH A BOX HIGHLIGHTING SIMON)**

- Was an out-spoken, loud, aggressive, and mistake prone individual.
- Simon Peter represented all of us in the sense that he had an issue that he couldn't get out of his own way.
 - His favorite Britney Spears song is "Oops, I did it again."
- Everytime this guy turned around he was saying or doing something dumb
 - He often did not employ the wise strategy to think before you talk
 - The only time he opened his mouth was to exchange which foot was inside
- He messed up so bad one time that Jesus literally called him Satan

Now Simon Peter's profession was a fisherman.

- This was a hard labored blue collar job, but he was not working an entry level position.
- He owned his own boat and crew, so he was a successful business owner.

Peter had heard about this guy named Jesus through his brother Andrew that was a follower of John the Baptist and one day that had an incredible encounter.

1. PETER'S CALL

Setup the scene: Simon Peter not able to catch any fish. Jesus bringing a crowd over to preach...

Luke 5:4-11 NLT

4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish." 5 "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again." 6 And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear! 7 A shout for help brought their partners in the other boat, and soon both boats were filled with fish and on the verge of sinking. 8 When Simon Peter realized what had happened, he fell to his knees before Jesus and said, "Oh, Lord, please leave me—I'm such a sinful man." 9 For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him.

Luke 5:10-11 NLT

10 His partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were also amazed. Jesus replied to Simon, "Don't be afraid! From now on you'll be fishing for people!" 11 And as soon as they landed, they left everything and followed Jesus.

Why would Jesus give Simon Peter the time of day?

- Because Jesus saw something in him that was put there by himself... he saw greatness.
- Jesus didn't see him as Simon the guy who couldn't get out of his own way... He was something entirely different.
 - He saw someone that used to fish for fish... to kill them for food.
 - He saw someone that will now fish for people... not to kill them put to point them to life.
- Jesus didn't see this loud and aggressive personality as something to be ashamed of, he saw it as a tool that could be used to boldly reach people for the Gospel.

Later on, Jesus secures Simon Peter's call by giving him a new identity.

Matthew 16:13-18 NIV

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" 14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Jesus literally renames Simon to Peter.

- Peter in the Greek means “Petra” which means rock. **(SIMON PETER AGAIN THIS TIME BOX AROUND PETER THE UNDERNEATH = PETRA WHICH MEANS ROCK)**
 - Simon was anything but a rock.
 - A rock is stable
 - It’s something you can build on
 - It’s something you can rely on.

So why did Jesus change Simon’s name to Peter?

- It’s simple: He saw greatness in him, and that greatness existed because Jesus put it there.

Jesus was looking beyond Simon.

- He was looking beyond the exterior.
- He looked beyond the depravity, the weakness, and the sin.
- He looked past the instability and the mistakes.
- Jesus was able to love Simon so much that he looked past who he was to see who he could become.

Jesus knew everyone knew him by his birth name... but that name formed an identity of instability.

- Jesus has a new name for Simon and it means rock... it means that Jesus has put inside of him the ability to be the foundational piece to the most powerful movement the church has ever seen... the Church.
- In Simon people only saw an instable fisherman, but Jesus saw the very first pastor of his Church.

JESUS MAKES THE SAME COMMITMENT TO YOU

So what’s your identity?

- How does the world know you?
- What does the world think of when they hear your name?
- To many of us our names mean failure.
 - Our names mean we can’t live up to expectations.
 - Our names mean we are a screw-up.

Jesus loves you so much that he sees past what the world sees in you, and sees the greatness lying underneath... because HE’s the one that put that greatness there.

- And he will use your greatest weakness to become HIS greatest strength.
- Jesus sees us as he intends us to be, not for who we currently are.

Often times we trap our own potential inside of us because of our identify of inferiority.

- We don’t deserve to be used
- We don’t deserve to do great things

STORY

When I was a child in elementary school... I hated the dreaded speech day.

- I was terrified of giving a speech in front of my peers to the point I would make myself physically ill.
- The Fear of Public Speaking resides as one of the top fears in every statistical category no matter what you look at.
- Hate doesn't seem to have strong enough connotations regarding how I felt about public speaking.

That's why when I was 16 years old and I felt God called me to be a pastor... this was really troubling for me.

- Why would God want me to pursue a career path that would all but highlight by greatest weakness?
- Because he looked at me and he didn't see the scared elementary student with a shaky voice and trembling hands... he saw the grace that he had already put on the inside of me.

By myself, I'm pretty useless.

- It's only because of the identity that he has subscribed to my life and ability he has put inside of me that puts me in a position to follow his calling.
- This is the epitome of God's grace.
 - God's grace is his ability to do in and through us that which we cannot do ourselves.
 - That he chooses to use us... imperfect vessels to be conduits of his love and Truth.

Why is God obsessed about turning our weaknesses into His strengths? Because He gets all the credit for when we have to rely completely on him.

STOP seeing yourself as the world sees you, and start discovering what God has put on the inside of you... the identity that he gave you.

2. PETER'S FALL

Just because Peter got a new identity in Christ, doesn't mean that Simon doesn't show up every now and again.

Matthew 26:33-35 NIV

33 Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will."

34 "Truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."

35 But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same.

We see later in Luke 22 that Peter denies Jesus three times.

As Jesus was being forced to carry his execution device... Peter was denying that he was even associated with him.

- The very thing he vowed he'd never do.
- This was the ultimate betrayal

- Matthew 10:33 NIV

- 33 But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.
- The reality was that Peter faced possible death himself if he acknowledged his association with Jesus.
 - For all he knew... they could have thrown him up on a cross next to him.
- That wasn't Peter that denied Christ it was Simon.
 - It was his old self centered Simon that only thought about himself

I think Peter gave up. (THIS IS AN ASSUMPTION OF MINE)

- I think Peter saw this denial as something he could never come back from.
- Because after Jesus died he went back to business as usual on the fishing boat.

3. PETER'S REINSTATEMENT

John 21:1-7 NIV

Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. 3 "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

4 Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

5 He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?"

"No," they answered.

6 He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water.

Notice the familiarity of the story.

- The same miracle that Jesus performed when he first called Simon Peter to follow him was the exact same miracle he performed when Jesus returned to remind him that the calling never left.

And then we see Jesus reinstate Peter:

John 21:15-17 NIV

15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

Jesus recommissioned Simon Peter... notice that he refers to him as Simon as if to remind him of the state of human weakness before he met Christ.

- And that the only one that deserves credit is God.

Peter was offended by having to tell Jesus he loved him three times, but only because of the sheer agony as each confession brought back the memory of each denial, and no doubt this was Jesus' intention as he was stressing the most important thing:

- The most important thing to Jesus wasn't his past
- It was his mistakes or his previous identity as Simon
- The most important thing was that Peter loved him.
 - And Jesus is showing him that the way he can show that he loves him is through obedience.

PETER IN ACTS

Peter goes on in Acts to become the leader of the disciples and the very first pastor of the 1st century church.

- He's on record as boldly standing up and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus and 3000 people get saved
- This would only be the beginning.
- Peter would prove that ultimate he really did love Jesus, as according to history, Peter would die for preaching the Gospel by being crucified upside down, because he didn't feel he was worthy to die in the same manner that his Savior did.

YOU

I don't care what you've done, God sees the potential in you that you don't see yourself.

- He sees greatness in you... the very greatness that he put in there from the beginning.
- He doesn't want you to see yourself as the world sees yourself, he wants you to see you as he sees you.
 - You may not feel good enough, but you are more than enough through Him that lives in you.
- He has committed that for the rest of your life If necessary... he will do everything if you allow him to pull that potential... that greatness on the inside of you out and make it become a reality.
- Jesus specializes in using broken people.

