

Peter: The Perfect Imperfect Disciple

If you've ever wondered about the power of salvation and the enormous change it can work in the life of a man or woman like you, you need only to look at Peter. You've probably heard sermons that highlighted Peter's failures, impulsiveness, and overly active mouth. I like to refer to him as the apostle with the foot-shaped mouth. He certainly earned the title! But if we walked away from Scriptures and had only a negative, somewhat condescending attitude toward Peter, we would have missed what may be the Bible's most encouraging example of a man who followed Jesus. True, Peter had an impulsive, unsubmitive personality. True, the Lord rebuked him with the words "Get behind Me, Satan!" (Matthew 16:23). True, Peter denied the Lord with curses before He was crucified (Matthew 26:69-75).

Yet God took Peter with his many faults and failures and shaped him into a rocklike leader – the greatest preacher among the apostles and every sense the dominate figure in the first twelve chapters of Acts. Before you're too hard on Peter, remember he was also the apostle who walked on water (Matthew 14:29), preached a sermon that God used to save three thousand souls (Acts 2:14-41), healed a lame beggar (Acts 3:1-10), and even raised a woman from the dead (Acts 9:36-42).

What does that have to do with you? Only this – that the same God who overcame Peter's failures is the same God who can overcome your failures and use you as a mighty instrument for the building of His kingdom. God know all your failures and weaknesses, but He is able to overcome them and perfect you so that you can fulfill the purpose for which He called you to Christ (Philippians 1:6). The life of Peter assures us that God can still use us despite our most bitter defeats.

God will use you differently from how He used Peter. The miracles that Peter performed were limited to the apostolic age to authenticate the apostles' message. But he will use you nonetheless to be His witness and to accomplish the unique contribution that only you can make to further His purposes. God will enable you to serve despite the faults that tend to discourage you.

ARE YOU READY TO RESPOND IN FAITH?

Donald