**Live in Community**

 Small Group Study

**Volume Overview**

**Expect the Unexpected**

Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. ([Proverbs 3:5–6](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Pr3.5-6))

*We all make plans—plans for where we’re going and what we want to do. But life is more often a story of unexpected interruptions. Our faith helps us to recognize God’s hand at work in unanticipated ways. By faith we learn to embrace life’s interruptions as the place God so often does miraculous things. We learn to respond with compassion and faith when things seem impossible.*

**Session Overview**

**Welcome Interruptions**

**Biblical Encounter:** Peter and John Encounter a Beggar ([Acts 3:1–16](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ac3.1-16))

**Outcome:** Make time for the interruptions God puts in your path.

*In this session, Peter and John encountered a man at the temple gate who couldn’t walk. As the two disciples were heading to prayer, this man asked them for money. Peter and John nor the man anticipated the outcome of this interruption. The same can hold true for us. We, too, encounter interruptions in our daily life. These interruptions sometimes offer an opportunity to encourage, serve, or pray for someone. Welcoming these encounters can position us to be a part of God doing something miraculous.*

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| ***You Will Need*** *• Large area for students to form a circle****Getting Ready*** *•* ***First time leading* Live *for Youth? Look here for the*** [**Facilitator Guide**](https://0b769b0ed3569ef9d18b-f88d8272f61086866d50d048b43ef630.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/sites/biblengagementproject/Listen_Facilitator_Guide.pdf)**.** |

*To access session content and videos from a computer, visit:* [***BibleEngagementProject.com/downloads***](https://bibleengagementproject.com/downloads)

**Engage**

**Welcome**

*Take this time to welcome everyone, introduce new students, learn names, and thank everyone for coming. Your friendliness here can create a comfort level that encourages student participation later.*

**Opening Prayer**

*Prayer thoughts: Thank God for the opportunity to be together as a group, and ask that His Spirit’s presence be recognizable. Pray that those who have gathered will learn to be aware of interruptions He brings into their life. Ask for the Holy Spirit to illuminate God’s Word so that everyone can learn how to live expecting His intervention.*

**Introduction**

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| **QUESTION**Have you ever been interrupted while doing something important? What happened? |

Today’s Bible story primarily involved three people and an interruption. Two of them were Jesus’ disciples, and one was a guy asking for money. This guy had been asking people for money for most of his life as they went to the temple to pray. He lived that way because he couldn’t walk. The temple probably seemed like a good spot to receive charity. When he interrupted Peter and John’s trip to the temple, it didn’t bring him any money. But the two disciples stopped to talk to the guy instead of going to prayer. Before we hear more about that story, let’s jump into an activity.

**Group Activity**

**Called Out**

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| ***You Will Need*** *• Large area for students to form a circle**No prep is needed for this activity.* |

Let’s start with a fun group activity! This game is named Called Out. I’ll call out different scenarios. If you’ve done what I say, move to the center of the circle. Then, find a new spot in a different part of the circle. If you’re in the circle, but haven’t done what I read just step out of the circle. Keep track of how many times you move into the center throughout the game. Let’s see who has moved to a new spot the most by the end of the activity.

These scenarios will be straightforward, and you’ll know if you’ve done them or not. Let’s see all the different things everyone has experienced. Remember, keep track of how many times you move.

• *As you read scenarios, make sure students move if they’ve done them.*

• *Consider asking follow-up questions to learn more about the group in the middle of the circle before they find new spots.*

• *Read as many scenarios as you have time for.*

 1. *Eaten a bug*

 2. *Cried from laughing so hard*

 3. *Visited another country*

 4. *Thought a stranger was someone you knew*

 5. *Had a stranger think you were someone they knew*

 6. *Stayed up all night*

 7. *Rode a motorcycle*

 8. *Broken a bone*

 9. *Been on TV*

 10. *Slept outside all night under the stars (not in a tent)*

 11. *Swam in an ocean*

 12. *Met someone famous*

 13. *Had surgery*

 14. *Wrote or received a love letter*

 15. *Read through the entire Bible*

Well done, everyone. Let’s find out how many times you moved.

• *Start with five or fewer moves, and then count up to find out who moved the most.*

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| **QUESTION**What scenario was your favorite one? |

In this game, when you were called out, you moved. Even though this moving around was for lighthearted reasons, sometimes we get called out by God to move for purposeful reasons. God may call us to make bigger moves or smaller ones. Sometimes God uses interruptions to get our attention so we can move as a part of His plan.

The calling out probably won’t be the audible voice of God. It could be a feeling or God speaking through another person or situation. Sometimes, it’s just being aware in the moment of how God could use us to impact the lives of those around us. It’s about living with God’s agenda at the center of our life instead of our own. Before we go further into today’s session, we have an interruption. Let’s check out this video!

**Watch**

**Consider What the Bible Says**

*Ensure each student has access to a Bible, preferably the same version.*

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| **QUESTION**Have you ever had to rely on someone else to do something you can normally do on your own? How did that make you feel? |

* *Be sensitive to anyone in your group who has a disability.*

Today, we’ll unpack a story about a man who couldn’t walk. Peter and John, disciples of Jesus, encountered this man outside the temple. His interruption of their routine changed everything for him. As we read the Bible story, put yourself in the sandals of the two disciples. Ask yourself: *What is God speaking to me through this story?*

**Peter and John Were Interrupted**

Read [Acts 3:1–5](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ac3.1-5).

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| **QUESTION**What does the Bible tell us about the man Peter and John encountered? |

We know that this man hadn’t been able to walk since birth. In Bible times that meant he had probably never been able to take care of himself in many ways. Being carried in by others supports that. So, his daily form of work was to beg for money to be able to survive.

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| **QUESTION**How do you feel when you see someone begging on a street corner? |

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| **QUESTION**Do you think Peter and John were bothered when the man asked them for money that day? Why or why not? |

**Did You Know?**

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| In the ancient world, begging was the common profession for those who were destitute and unable to work for themselves. Unlike the pagan world, which looked down upon begging, the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) accounted for the reality in life that some people would always be in severe need. As a result, the call for mercy and giving is so deeply engrained in Judaism that the terminology used for giving alms to the poor is the same word for *righteousness* in Hebrew: *tsedeq*. |
| **QUESTION**Do you think Peter and John wanted to rush on to prayer that day? Why or why not? |

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| **QUESTION**How do you view interruptions in your life? |

It’s amazing that God invites us to participate in His plans. That creates some responsibility for us. God may want to use us in His plan each day. What if we don’t see what’s happening and miss an opportunity? What if we’re too focused on our plans? Like Peter and John’s situation, God can use interruptions in our life as a part of His plan. But if we aren’t careful, our schedules, even if they’re purpose filled, can keep us from seeing ways that God wants to use us to help others.

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| **QUESTION**Think of an interruption that turned out to be something positive for someone. Then share it with us. |

* *You may want to have a personal story ready to share as students think.*

**Peter and John Chose to Respond**

While we may have good intentions with our scheduled responsibilities, we can’t let our schedules keep us from seeing the interruptions God wants to use. A miracle happened because Peter and John were willing to be interrupted on their way to the prayer service. Going to the prayer service was God honoring, but honoring God’s opportunity in the interruption was just as important. A man’s life was forever changed because of Peter and John’s encounter.

Read [Acts 3:6–8](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ac3.6-8).

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| **QUESTION**What does Peter’s response to the man tell us about helping others? |

Peter and John seemed to welcome the interruption. They didn’t hurry past the moment. They didn’t make an excuse as to why they couldn’t give him money. They helped the man with what they had rather than what he asked for. Note how Peter also helped the man up after praying. This suggests there are times when we must do more than simply pray for someone as God works.

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| **QUESTION**How did the man respond when he realized he could walk? |

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| **QUESTION**What do you think your response would have been if you were this man? |

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| **QUESTION**How do you think this miracle impacted Peter and John’s willingness to welcome interruptions? |

**Peter and John’s Response Impacted Others**

There is often a ripple effect when we’re willing to be interrupted. Others’ lives can be impacted or even changed. We may not get to see the full impact that results from our help. But that day, the two disciples got to see others respond because they had spent a few moments helping the man. When the man was healed, others noticed. Of course, Peter and John didn’t respond just for that reason. The crowd’s response was a positive effect, though. Like the crowd’s response we’re about to read about, being available to God can make a difference beyond what we initially see or do.

Read [Acts 3:9–11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ac3.9-11).

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| **QUESTION**What was the response of the crowd of people who saw the man healed? |

Remember, many of these people had probably passed by this man before. After all, he had been sitting at the temple for years, begging. Now, they got to see him after he was healed.

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| **QUESTION**Why do you think the crowd ran toward the disciples after seeing the man healed? |

Peter and John’s willingness to pray for this man who couldn’t walk led to others seeing the healing in his life. This led the crowd to want to know more about the disciples, which opened the door for Peter to preach.

**Peter and John’s Interruption Led to Opportunity**

Imagine God using you to pray for someone to be healed like the man in this account. Suddenly crowds gather to see what happened. You recognize that God is calling you to share the gospel message with an astonished crowd who has just witnessed a miracle.

This was a further delay for the disciples who simply planned to go into the temple to pray. What if they had kept on walking into the temple? We have no idea of the difference we can make in someone’s life by simply allowing ourself to be interrupted and led by God in a different direction.

Read [Acts 3:12–16](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ac3.12-16).

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| **QUESTION**Do you think Peter was prepared to preach that day? Why or why not? |

The right time to be used by God is when God calls you. Peter and John show us that it’s not always on the timetable that we might assume. When you know Jesus, you are also called to make Him known. Instead of attending prayer service at the scheduled time, Peter and John were willing to be interrupted. They got to see God’s miraculous power on display in the life of someone they could have easily passed by. This miracle wasn’t just about the healed man. It was also about the crowd who witnessed the healing. The next chapter reveals that the truth Peter got to share led to many more people believing in Jesus. This was due to two disciples embracing a moment of interruption.

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| **QUESTION**Do you think Peter would have had an opportunity to share the gospel with these people if he had not allowed himself to be interrupted that day? Why or why not? |

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| **QUESTION**What have you learned from this Bible story that you can apply to your own life? |

**Reflect**

**Make time for the interruptions God puts in your path.**

There is nothing wrong with having a schedule to follow. What we don’t want, though, is for our rigid schedule to make us unwilling to be interrupted by God’s plan. God often works in unexpected ways, so we shouldn’t limit Him with our agenda or schedule.

We need to recognize when God wants to use us to impact the lives of other people for His glory. When we walk in obedience, we often get to witness a miraculous ripple effect in others because of God’s plan. When we’re willing to be interrupted, we’re opening ourself up to help someone. God might even let us be a part of someone’s miraculous healing.

**Listen to God**

Let’s take time to consider how our life demonstrates a real trust in the Bible. These questions are meant to serve as a conversation between you and God. Sharing your responses with the group is completely voluntary.

• *Pause for a few moments of silent reflection after reading the questions. Then ask students if they want to share. Sharing your personal response may also be helpful to the students.*

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| **QUESTION**How can you make room in your life for interruptions to be used by God like this? |

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| **QUESTION**Is there a situation or person you have avoided that you believe God wants to get your attention about? What is it or what might He want you to do? |

**Activate**

Sometimes the last thing we want to do is come face-to-face with something that makes us uncomfortable. Being available to help others isn’t always easy. But if it’s God’s plan, you won’t regret being obedient. Perhaps it’s pausing a game you’re playing to help your parents carry in the groceries. Maybe it’s being there for a friend who is hurting rather than streaming the next episode in the series you’re watching. It’s all about being willing to see beyond your own schedule and get into God’s agenda.

It’s time to welcome interruptions. I want to challenge all of us this week. Let’s do our best to look for opportunities to help others, especially if it means being interrupted.

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| **Salvation Opportunity***Include this if you think there may be some in the group who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus.*Being called by God starts with having a relationship with Him. If we want God to include us in His purposes, we have to first give our life to Him. God sent Jesus to save you and me because He loves us so much. He knows everything about us, including the good and bad choices we’ve made in life. Even so, He still wants to have a relationship with us and lead us toward the amazing future He created for us. It all starts with recognizing what Jesus has done for us by dying on the Cross and inviting Him into our life as Savior.**Is anyone here that we can pray for who doesn’t have a relationship with Jesus or wants to renew their relationship with Him?***Take a moment to acknowledge those who respond and thank them for their desire to make things right between themselves and God. Pray with them as you close in prayer or after the group time is over. Following group time, talk more about where they are in their walk with God and how you might be able to help.* |

**Prayer**

Heavenly Father, I thank You for Your amazing love. You call us to know You and to make You known. I pray that You would give us eyes to see what You’re doing. Help us to welcome interruptions when You bring them in our path. Thank You for choosing us to be in Your great plan. In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen.

**Conclusion**

Peter and John had a plan in motion that would please God: going to pray. But they recognized that their plan wasn’t more important than the interruption. They probably never made it to prayer in the temple that day, but they did make a difference in the lives of many.

They were in the right place at the right time to be used for God’s glory. A man who had never been able to walk was healed that day. The crowd was impacted by his healing. This miracle gave people an opportunity to hear the good news about Jesus. It’s amazing what can happen when we welcome interruptions in our life. God will often use us in ways that we don’t expect. It’s time to recognize who or what God might put in our path.

**Dismissal**

Use the Bible Engagement Project app this week to check out the personal devotions. If you’ve not gone through many so far, I challenge you to at least do one or two this week. I look forward to seeing each of you next time.