

“The Pretend Line”

Mark 1:40-45

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By Rebecca Enney

Barabas was having a really bad day at school! It was time to hand in their spelling words that they practiced at home last night and his paper looked a mess because his little dog A-Rod tried to eat it.

“He’s a stupid dog anyway.” thought Barabas. “And he has a stupid name too.” He thought this because the real A-Rod who plays for the New York Yankees admitted taking performance enhancing drugs. “Can’t anyone do it right?”

And then this morning as he came into school his shirt got caught on the door handle and it got ripped. And this is his favorite shirt!

At recess Barabas saw Elizabeth and Sam having a really great time playing on the swings and he felt very left out. It was almost like the world had drawn a pretend line and said YOU, Barabas must stay on the OTHER side of that line and WE will all stay on THIS side of the line and have fun without you!



“Why am I so different from everyone else?” thought Barabas. “I’m too tall and I don’t live with my mother OR my father. And I have a big stupid scar on my face. And no one loves me.” Barabas was having a big pity party for himself.

This happens to all of us, some of the time.

AND, unfortunately, it happens to SOME people ALL the time!

That is the way it would be for people who had the dreaded skin disease called leprosy. Today’s Bible lessons talk about lepers. If you had this skin disease, folks ALWAYS avoided you.

THE RULES SAY NO ONE EVER TOUCHES A LEPER, BECAUSE THEN YOU MIGHT GET THAT HIDEOUS DISEASE!

It would be like the world drew a pretend line and said “You stay out of our side, thank you very much.”

THE RULES SAY NO ONE EVER TOUCHES A LEPER!

So, when a leper came right up to Jesus begging to be free of leprosy, people wondered what Jesus would do!

Jesus, knowing that LOVE is always the most important rule we can follow, Jesus stepped OVER the pretend line and touched the leper . . . and the leprosy went away and the man had beautiful new skin.

This morning Aaron Scott has been baptized into the family of God. It's like Jesus stepped across the pretend line and said to Aaron "Hey, you are invited to be a part of my family, forever!"

Elizabeth could see that Barabas was feeling left out, so as they were hanging up their coats after recess, Elizabeth snuck up behind Barabas and teasingly bumped Barabas on his back with her nose. When Barabas turned, Elizabeth said "Wanna come over after school and play in my backyard?"



That simple invitation erased away Barabas's pity party. She stepped over that pretend line!

Jesus teaches us to always step over those pretend lines that keep people out, and to bring them into a place of God's love.

THE END