

***Satan Says you Don't Have What it Takes,  
God Says I will Equip You for Service.***

*For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen....*

— 1 Corinthians 1:26-28

As I stand before you today it is clear to me that we are in a very special category or group. There is no other situation quite like ours, men who are seeking to serve the Lord in ministry. If you struggle with your qualifications for ministry, don't let that bother you too much. God has been calling feeble and unskilled people from the beginning of time. Few of those whom God has called have been the **“cream of the crop”** as the world evaluates people. Again and again, God has chosen people who were not much in the eyes of the world when He needed a candidate or a group of people to do a job.

God has always used common people to build His Kingdom. He doesn't primarily choose famous movie stars or the royalty and nobility of the world to fulfill His plans and purposes on this earth. God's standards are different from the world. As Isa 55:8 says, **“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.”**

When God chose **Samuel** to lead the nation, Samuel was just a young boy. When God looked for someone to kill a giant, He chose a young shepherd boy named **David**. When it was time for Jesus to choose disciples, He didn't go to the theological institutes or seminaries of the day. Rather, Jesus chose disciples who knew **more about fishing and tax-collecting than about the Scriptures**. And when God searched for someone He could use to write the majority of the New Testament, He chose the apostle Paul, the chief of sinners at the time, who devastated the early church!

God has always shown up in places where He wasn't expected. Just consider the location where Jesus was born — *in a lowly stable*. This was certainly not the place anyone would have expected the King of kings to be born. Wouldn't it have been better for the King of kings to be born in the temple where His birth could have been given a proper reception?

So if you have ever thought you weren't good enough for God to use, it's time for you to change your thinking! God is looking for people no one else wants or thinks is valuable. When great victories are won through ordinary people, there's no question who should receive the glory! As 1 Corinthians 1:29 says, **“That no flesh should glory in his presence.”**

The Old and New Testaments are filled with illustrations of people whom *God wanted*, but whom *the world rejected*. God's choice is not based on beauty or

ugliness, talent or lack of talent, education or lack of education, a diploma or lack of a diploma. If a person has a **right heart toward God**, he is qualified to be used by God.

In [1 Corinthians 1:26-28](#), Paul wrote, “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen....”

As Paul writes his list of those whom God *does* and *doesn't* call, he begins by stating that God **doesn't call many** who are considered “wise” by the world. The word “wise” is from the Greek word *sophos*. It refers to a person who possesses **special enlightenment** or *special insight*.

The word *sophos* was usually used to identify highly educated people, such as scientists, philosophers, doctors, teachers, and others who were considered to be the *super-intelligentsia* of the world. These belong to a class of individuals whom the world would call *clever, astute, smart, or intellectually brilliant*. This term was reserved only for those considered to be *super-impressive* or a *cut above* the rest of society.

But Paul says, “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh....” Paul says that most of the people God calls don't fit into this category of the *super-intelligentsia*. In other words, God doesn't specialize in calling people who are *especially bright, educated, astute, smart, or eminently enlightened*.

I am not ignoring the fact that over the years, many intelligent men and women who loved God have made a great impact on the world. Paul himself was a part of this elite group before he came to Christ. Apollos, Paul's friend who later pastored the church of Corinth, also came from this intellectual “upper echelon” of society. But Paul and Apollos were not typical of the first-century Church.

It was the educated upper class who scorned and ridiculed Paul when he preached in Athens. The philosophers of Athens, the Epicureans, and the Stoics derided him and made him a laughingstock. Paul said that “not many” are called who fit into this *sophos* category.

When we look at the Early Church we see that it was primarily made up of servants, slaves, and poor people who responded to the Good News of the Gospel and believed. *It was an army of common people*. Although there were a few elite in the Church, these were the exception rather than the rule. In fact, as you study Church history, you will see that God specializes in calling people from a much lower class. And if you take a close look at the Church today, you'll see that God still specializes in calling common people.

Now, I'm not against education. People should get as much education as possible. But school-issued pieces of paper are not the way to impress God and get

His attention. There have been many educated people whom God could not use. Even though they were brilliant by man's standards, they were not worthy of being chosen because **their hearts weren't right.** Pride and arrogance are always a stumbling block to Christian service.

Educational degrees may help you get a good job and move the opinion of men in your favor, but Paul makes it very clear that God is not inclined to use people who are *especially bright according to the standards of the flesh.*

In fact, the Bible shows that when God does call people who are intellectually impressive, such as Moses or the apostle Paul, He usually has to remake them before He can use them! When they lean on their own understanding, they are unable to accomplish what God wants. It is only after they learn that it is God who accomplishes things in their life that He is able to perform miracles through their lives. We need to guard against the mindset that says, "**God, watch what I can do for you.**" The fact is simply this; we can do nothing for the Lord, unless we are totally dependent upon the Lord for the results. The worse thing we can say is, **I can handle this,** the fact is we cannot. God will not bless pride or arrogance, He blesses humility and dependence.

**Proverbs 3:5** says, "**Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.**" Certainly natural knowledge and understanding are helpful in the world we live in today. But if our natural understanding rather than our trust in God becomes the basis for our confidence, we put ourselves at a disadvantage. *We have to learn to use what we know while leaning only on the Lord and His might.*

David wrote, "**Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God**" (**Psalms 20:7**). David was saying, "*Some trust in man's mind and his great achievements; others rely on their own natural power and might; but we will rely upon the name of the Lord.*"

There are **two extremes** that we need to guard against. One says, "**God can't use me because I don't have enough gifts or talents.** I haven't even been to college. I don't even have a Bible school degree." If that is you, it's time for you to change the way you're thinking and talking. It's time for you to start seeing yourself the way God does!

In fact, if you **feel inferior to others**, remember that God regularly calls unskilled and uneducated people. Just think of the majority of the apostles whom Jesus hand-picked to serve at His side and to lay the foundation of the Church. Those apostles were fishermen, tax collectors, common people – **not theologians.**

The other extreme is self-reliance, total confidence in my ability to handle whatever comes along. Believe me when I say, **God resists the proud.** The resistance God gives is a back breaker, He will not give His glory to another, nor will He share it.

God is looking to build a strong, powerful army. The soldiers of an army are rarely composed of the intellectually astute. Flavius Vegetius Renatus, who lived

around 380 A.D., was the author of the most influential military book ever written for the Roman Empire. Look at the type of person he says makes the best soldier: **“Peasants are the most fit to carry arms.... They are simple, content with little, inured to fatigue, and prepared in some measure for military life by their continual employment in farm work, in handling the spade, digging trenches and carrying burdens.”**<sup>1</sup>

The truth is, God is looking for people who know how and are willing to pay a price – **to undergo any hardship needed**, to confront the power of hell, and to “dig trenches and carry burdens” until their assignment is completed just as God ordered it. God doesn't necessarily need the super-intelligentsia of the world to get these jobs done. In fact, common people are often God's *first* choice because they are already equipped to a certain degree to face the challenges and difficulties of life.

So if you want to be used by God and serve in His army, quit comparing yourself to others who may have more ability, talent or education. If God has called you to ministry He will equip you for the job He has laid out for you. Where does the Bible ever say God is looking for brains? He's looking for hearts that are willing to follow Him. *If you have that kind of heart, you are exactly the kind of person God wants to use!*

#### MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

*Lord, I am so glad You don't choose only the intellectually brilliant. You are looking for anyone who has a heart to be used by You. Lord. I want You to use me. I offer You everything I have – my good points, my weak points, my gifts, my talents, and everything else that I am. I want You to use me for Your glory! I've told You before, but today I'm telling You again that I want You to take my life and do something wonderful with me!*

*I pray this in Jesus' name!*

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