

# (People God Uses) 01 the People Used by God

by Chuck Smith

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being used by God in accomplishing His purposes, and the need for preparation and obedience to His will.*

**Duration:** 1:01:14

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 3:6

**Topics:** "People God Uses"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of recognizing that it is God who brings increase and success in our lives, not our own efforts. He shares how the Apostle Paul understood the danger of being used by God but then being put on the shelf if he did not keep his body under control. The speaker also highlights the significance of living a life that aligns with our words, as our words can be negated if our actions do not back them up. He contrasts the impact of smooth talkers with no lasting impact to a guest speaker who lacked proper grammar but had a powerful anointing of the Holy Spirit.

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## Transcript

Let's turn now to Acts chapter 3. Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour, and a certain man laying from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple, which is called beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple. Who, when he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, look at us.

And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.

And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and his ankle bones received strength. And he leaping, stood and walked and entered in with them into the temple, walking, leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God.

I am certain that the majority of us here tonight seek to know God better. That's why we're here. And I believe that we have a desire to be used of God in the accomplishing of his purposes.

I believe that it is a common desire in all of us to know what God's will is for our lives, and to be used of God as he desires to use us. God for his own reason has chosen and ordained to use men and women in

the accomplishing of his eternal purposes. God not only has chosen to use man in the accomplishing of his purposes, but God also prepares those that he uses for their ministry or their use.

The very purpose of our existence is to please God. That's why we do exist. And we are told in Hebrews, without faith it's impossible to please God.

We know that God is pleased by our obedience, complete obedience to his will. So there is that desire within us as the children of God, to know the will of God and to do the will of God, to be faithful in accomplishing all that God has purposed for me. God said to Jeremiah, before I formed you in your mother's womb, I knew you.

And before you came forth from her womb, I set you apart and I ordained you as a prophet unto the nations. And that could be said of each of us. While we were still in our mother's womb, God knew us.

And God had a plan for each of our lives. The purposes that he created us for. And God is working in us as we are yielded to him to prepare us to accomplish those things that he desires that we should accomplish for his kingdom's sake.

When Paul was writing to the Ephesians, he said, God is working in you in order to prepare you for the good works that he has already ordained that you should accomplish for his glory. And so God prepares the instrument that he has chosen to accomplish the work that he has ordained that we should accomplish for him. God must first work in us before he can work through us.

The Bible tells us that the husbandman must be first partaker of the fruits. Sometimes we have great ambitions of things that we would like to do for God. And we feel like we need to go out and start our own great crusades.

After all, Billy Graham is getting old and he's not able to get out as he once did. He is not able to have as many meetings as he did before. And he has to be helped into the pulpit.

And it's only a matter of time until he's going to have to cease his campaigns. And someone's got to take over for Billy Graham. And I'm just waiting for the opportunity to step into his shoes.

And so many people are just waiting for God to place them into some great position of prominence and ministry. Chuck Smith, after all, is getting old. He can't go on forever.

And someone's got to step into the gap and be in position to minister to his flock when he's gone. There have been people who have started ministries in this very area with the expressed purpose of being able to draw our congregation unto them as soon as I die. And they've already started their fellowships in hopes of being able to pick up the slack when I die.

But I'm going to fool them. I'm going to live till the Lord comes. And because some people are just waiting to take over somebody else's ministry, they never get out of the gate.

They despise and drop out of the days of preparation. They don't like that. That's beneath them.

They have great ambitions for great things for God. But you know, God usually starts us off in small things. And when we are faithful in the small things, then he gives us more.

If we continue to be faithful, he will give us yet more. Zechariah received a vision that he might encourage Zerubbabel in the building of the temple that Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed. It seemed like an insurmountable task because when they returned from the Babylonian captivity for the purpose of rebuilding the temple, they were really not mentally prepared for what they found.

The temple had been so thoroughly destroyed that there was just a huge mountain of huge rocks. The stones that Solomon had used in the building of the temple were now just a huge mound of stones, rubble. So the first part of the project was the clearing of the rubble, the mountain of rubble.

And these stones weighed five hundred to a thousand pounds and thus it was not an easy task to remove all of the rubble. But it had to be done. You really couldn't start the building project until, first of all, the rubble was removed.

Now, removing rubble doesn't give you a lot of excitement. You know, in building, there is first of all the site preparation. And sometimes that's not easy.

Of course, the hardest thing in building is getting a permit. If they would only make getting welfare as difficult as getting a permit, I think we'd be much better off in our society. But then the site preparation, the soils test, get an analysis of the soils in order to know what kind of a footing is going to be necessary.

I know that down there at Murrieta, when we built the sanctuary, the soils test showed that there was a lot of tule mud underneath, at least 12 feet. And so we got our equipment in there and we excavated down 12 feet into the tule mud. And we had to, well, we got our equipment stuck a lot of times in that tule mud.

I don't know why people like to cover themselves with that and bake in the sun, but that's what used to be at Murrieta. People would take that black tule mud and cover themselves and think they were getting healthy as they would wash it off in the hot pools. But after we got down 12 feet, it was still oozy.

So we then dumped in tons and tons of rubble, concrete. And we tried to compress the concrete to make a strong base. And still we couldn't get the compaction that we needed.

We built our pad, but we couldn't get the compaction necessary. And so we then had to drive these huge 38 foot long concrete pilings down into the earth. And then sort of build the building on top of the pilings.

And it seemed like we were forever in the project of just preparing the site. People would go by and instead of seeing something going up, they saw things going down. They saw the hole getting deeper and deeper.

And then when we finally were able to level the pad, they're expecting the building to go up. And the next thing we have a pile driver in there driving down. And it seemed like forever getting the site prepared.

Those could be called days of small things. And we don't like them. But they're necessary.

You've got to have a strong base to build or to put your foundation on. And so the Prophet Zechariah was talking to Zerubbabel, giving him the word of the Lord. This mountain will become a plain before Zerubbabel.

But he talked about the people despising the days of small things. And that's dangerous. When we despise the days of small things, because those days are necessary as God prepares us to accomplish the things that he has purposed for us to accomplish for him.

Paul with his strong biblical background, a student of Gamaliel, years in school studying the scriptures. When he was converted, rather than beginning his ministry immediately, he went away into the desert to Arabia. And there for three years he was homeschooled by the Lord who taught Paul the glorious gospel of grace.

When he came back to Jerusalem, there wasn't really a warm reception for him in the church. There was a fear because they knew how Paul had persecuted the church. And they were reluctant to accept him.

Barnabas interceded, but they weren't really comfortable. And so Paul took off and he headed back to his home in Tarsus. And he was there in Tarsus for seven more years.

No doubt still studying the scriptures and sort of adjusting to the realization that Jesus is the Messiah and seeing the scriptures in a whole new light. But he was ten years from conversion to the beginning of his ministry in Antioch of Syria. When Barnabas came to Antioch, because they heard that many Gentiles were coming to the faith.

So Barnabas went up to check out the church in Antioch and he saw the believers, the Gentile believers. And in his mind he thought, you know, the perfect man for this would be Saul. And so he went to Tarsus and he searched for Saul.

And he encouraged him to come back to Antioch. And it was then that Saul began his ministry. But it was ten years from his conversion.

And remember he already had a strong biblical background. And so it's important that God prepare the vessel for the work that God has already ordained that should be accomplished for him. Now as we come to the third chapter of the book of Acts, we look at the characteristics of these men that God used in the accomplishing of his purposes.

And here in the third chapter we look at two of the men, Peter and John. Men that God had prepared because God had a ministry that he desired that they should fulfill. And as we look at these two men, we realize first of all that they were men of prayer.

Now should that surprise us? They were going into the temple at the hour of prayer, which was three o'clock in the afternoon. Prayer is having a conversation with God. And it is the greatest outlet of spiritual power that we have.

There are perhaps five outlets of spiritual power. There is one inlet. That's the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. One inlet. But there are five outlets of power.

And the first of all, the first of them is your life. When you are walking in the Spirit, walking with the Lord, as John said, as we walk in the light, as he is in the light, there is something that goes forth from you, the outlet of spiritual power that emanates from you, that affects people around you. You may not even be conscious of it, but people recognize that there is a difference between you and the normal person.

That there is that influence that goes out from you that touches those where you go. Conversations clean up. People recognize and feel the difference of your life when you are walking close to the Lord.

The second outlet of spiritual power is found in your words. The Spirit of God can use your words to minister comfort, to minister hope, to minister encouragement, to minister healing, to minister love and to minister strength. And as our words anointed by the Spirit go forth, there is a power, there is a dynamic.

You've all experienced it. When someone who is really walking in the Lord and with the Lord and walking in the Spirit, as they are speaking, there's a dynamic, there's a power, there's something that you can feel of God's Spirit that comes forth and touches your heart. It's an outlet of spiritual power, your words.

Then there is your service, what you do for the Lord anointed by the Holy Spirit. And this has such a wide variety of service for God. Jesus said if you'll just give a cup of cold water in the name of the Lord unto a prophet, you'll receive a prophet's reward.

And thus, as we serve the Lord, it becomes an outlet of spiritual power, ministering to people. There is your money, and it can become an outlet of spiritual power. Money is the closest thing to omnipotence that you possess, but it is also the most impotent thing that many people possess.

It isn't the money that you spend on yourself, it's the money that you release for the purposes of God that can become an outlet of spiritual power. When Paul wrote to the church in Philippi, who had supported his ministry, wherever he would go they would send support. He thanked them for that support, for the gift that they sent.

He said, but I am grateful for your gift that fruit might abound to your account. And so Paul saw their giving as investing in the things of the kingdom, and from their giving, fruit would abound to their account. To the Romans, Paul wrote, how can they hear, unless they have a preacher? How can they preach, unless they have been sent? And so there is that whole line, those that have gone out, but those who are supporting those that have gone out.

And it becomes an outlet of spiritual power, as we support those that have gone out. I'm certain that when we get to heaven, we're going to find that God has a very interesting system of bookkeeping. And I wouldn't be a bit surprised when you get to heaven, that you'll have people come up to you that you've never seen before.

Total strangers to you. And they'll be hugging you, and all excited to see you. For they'll say, when we got here and we looked at the books, we realized that you were the one that supported the person that came and brought us the gospel.

And it's because of your support for that person that I'm here in heaven today. It's going to be interesting when we see God's total plan, how he operated things. Several years ago in Biola College, there was a young girl who was in school training to be a missionary.

That was her goal, she felt called to God, to go to China as a medical missionary. So she was taking the nursing course to prepare her to be a medical missionary in China. And after seven years of schooling, that is in college level, having graduated, she then went to the mission board and made her application.

And as a part of the process, she had to have a physical examination. Upon which they discovered that she had a heart condition. And the doctors recommended that she not try to go to China with that heart condition.

And the missionary board summarily rejected her application. She was devastated. She had spent seven years preparing to be a medical missionary and then find out that this physical condition prevented her from fulfilling what she felt was the call of God upon her heart.

They used to have an annual missionary conference at the Open Bible Church in Los Angeles. And because she was so interested in missions, she went to this missionary conference. And she happened to be seated next to a young lady.

And as they got to talking, this young lady expressed her call of God to go to China as a medical missionary. And she was saying, all I need is the support to go. So this girl said to her, she had actually gone to work in one of the major hospitals in Los Angeles, she said, I'll tell you what, make a covenant with you.

You go and I'll support you. Because I felt called of God to go and you can go for me, I'll support you to go. And so she lived in a very inexpensive apartment, didn't spend much on herself in order that she might take half of her wages and support this girl in China as a medical missionary.

Because of her sacrifices, God blessed her and she received some great advancements. They're on her job. And by the next year when she went to the missionary conference again, again she was seated next to a young girl who had finished her graduate work and wanted to go to China as a missionary.

She said, all I need is support. She said, well, God has blessed me, tell you what, you go and I'll support you. God continued to bless her.

She finally had a very excellent executive position. And the last I heard of that, she was supporting five girls in China as medical missionaries. Now when she gets to heaven and the books are opened, I am certain that God will put to her account missionary work in China.

And those people whose lives were affected by those that she supported, she'll be rewarded along with those that went. As you remember, when David was pursuing after the enemy and the men, some of them were so weary, they couldn't go on. It was evening and David wanted to pursue them all night so he could wipe them out completely.

And some of the fellows said, oh, we're too tired, we can't go. And so David said, well, which guys will go with me? And some guys went with him and they went down, they caught the enemy, they caught him by surprise, they wiped him out and they brought back all of the loot that these marauders had taken. And so as these guys were coming back, they said, those sissies didn't go with us, they can't have the loot, you know, it's all ours.

And David said, no, they that stay by the stuff share equally with those that go into battle. He saw the necessity of people staying by the stuff. And so we who sort of stay by the stuff, but yet help those that go will receive, I'm certain, from the Lord, the rewards as though we had gone ourselves.

Because how can they go except they be sent? And so our money can be an outlet of spiritual power. But by far the greatest outlet of spiritual power is prayer. Many people emphasize service and service is important.

But one of the problems with serving is that it is limited to locality. I'm not omnipresent. And so while I am here, I am ministering here.

When I go down Friday to teach the Bible school, I'll be ministering there. But I can't be ministering to the Bible school students tonight while I'm here. I might have a split personality, but I have to be in one body.

So you're in the same place. And so you're limited by locality. A lot of people put the emphasis upon witnessing, the importance to witness your words, the power that can go forth from your words.

But we do recognize that your words, as important as they are, can never be greater than your life. Many times what a person says is totally negated because of what they are. And thus you dismiss what they say because their life doesn't back it up.

I've heard some of the smoothest talkers in the world, some of the greatest orators. They were very funny. And they were interesting to listen to.

But I found that there was no lasting impact by what they said. I know that I laughed a lot and I know I enjoyed it. But if you'd asked me, you know, later when I got out, well, what did they say? Well, it was sure funny.

Boy, we really laughed a lot. One good joke, I do remember one of the good jokes. But, you know, it rolled out so smooth, sort of like oil.

Smooth. It just rolled off of me, just as smoothly as it rolled off their mouth, you know. And yet I've heard others.

I'll never forget. Kay and I were on vacation up at Bass Lake. We went over to this little Assembly of God church in North Fork on Sunday.

And they had a guest speaker that Sunday morning from Kentucky. She was a lady, a tall, lanky lady from Kentucky, an older lady. And she talked like she had a mouthful of marbles.

And she butchered the English language. I mean, she didn't know anything about grammar. But, you know, as she spoke, my heart burned.

The Spirit of God was so powerful in that lady's life that it touched my heart. It ministered to my spirit. It's not the eloquence.

Paul, when he wrote to the Corinthians, said that when he came to them, it was not with the enticing words of men's wisdom, but his speech was the demonstration of the power of the Spirit. Because he didn't want their faith to be established in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. And our words can have great spiritual power, but they can't be more than your life.

Money? Well, as I said, it's probably the closest thing to omnipotence that you have. Money is power. There are those that say, I believe in the golden rule.

Whoever has the gold rules. And money is their god. And money is power.

There's no doubt about that. But money can also make you totally impotent. It can bind you.

It can make you so punerous that you can't spend it. But prayer. You know, the interesting thing about prayer is that it isn't bound to locality like service.

You can go around the world tonight when you get home. And you can strengthen the work of missionaries in Hungary. You can encourage the missionaries in the Ukraine.

You can open doors for the missionaries in China. And you can spend an hour of your life tonight around the world as a missionary. As you pray for those on the various mission fields.

And your prayers become a power of force. Influencing. Opening up the hearts of people to stop and listen to the street witnessing.

Or to read the tract that's been handed to them and touch their hearts. Prayer is interesting in that it does take on the nature of a spirit. Now, there are spirit beings.

There is the spirit realm. The spirit world. And those in the spirit world have a decided advantage over us.

In that they are not limited by material obstacles or nor are they limited by space. Now, the Lord has told us that the angels are ministering spirits who have been sent forth to minister to those that are heirs of salvation. And it tells us that the angels desire to look into those things of God's grace and all for his church.

They're sort of amazed that God would do so much for you. And we're told that he would give his angels charge over us to keep us in all of our ways to bear us up lest at any time we dash our foot against a stone. So, there are angels here tonight, very curious as to the work of God's spirit in our midst.

Observing. Now, the angels that are here tonight, when they came in, they came in through the ceiling or through the floor, perhaps coming from China, they decided to take a shortcut and just come straight through. They're not limited by material obstacles.

You had to come in the doors, but not the angels. You had to get in your car and drive here and park and so forth, but they just, as quick as you can think it, they're there. They could have been in Hungary today and decided, well, let's cruise over to Calvary Chapel and see what's going on tonight, you know.

Times, well, space, material obstacles, they're nothing to them. But, you know, prayer in a way takes on the nature of a spirit in that as you pray, you can enter into a spiritual conflict that's going on in, say, China tonight. And through your prayers, you can drive back the forces of darkness.

Or perhaps a missionary in Russia is discouraged this evening. Maybe he's having sort of a restless early morning over there as he's facing another difficult day. And your prayers can be as a spirit force.

They can go over there immediately in the house where they are and begin to minister to them encouragement and strength, driving away the powers of darkness, liberating them for a day of serving the Lord. Prayers take on the nature of a spirit in that they become unlimited by time and it is engaging in the spiritual warfare. We can do more than pray after we have prayed, but we can't do any more than pray until we have prayed.

You cannot accomplish any worthwhile work for God apart from prayer. It's the greatest outlet of spiritual power we have. We're always trying to muster the forces for service, but we need to muster them for prayer first.

Jesus said you don't go into a strong man's house and try and spoil his goods. But you first of all bind the strong man of the house and then you go in and spoil his goods. Prayer is binding the strong man of the

house and service is just spoiling the goods, taking the spoil.

As Jesus said, men ought always to pray. Because Jesus taught so much on the subject of prayer, no wonder the disciples said, Lord, teach us to pray. Notice they didn't say teach us how to pray, just teach us to pray.

Teach us the importance of prayer. Help us to grasp and understand the importance of prayer. These men that God used were men of prayer.

They were going into the temple at the hour of prayer. No doubt it was a regular routine in their life. Prayer was a very important part.

In a couple of chapters, when pressure comes on them to take charge of the distribution of the welfare, they said it isn't right that we should leave the word of God and prayer to wait on tables. We will appoint men for that task who are filled with the Holy Spirit, have good reputation, that we might give ourselves continually to the word and to prayer. They were men of prayer.

Secondly, they were men of faith. We read that Peter first of all spoke a word of faith to the men. He said, silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, I will give to you.

In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. He spoke to the man a word of faith, but then he acted and it says he took the man by his right hand and lifted him to his feet. That was an act of faith.

I would like to suggest that both of these showed great faith. To say to a lame man, look at me, no I don't have any coins, but what I have I'll give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise to your feet and walk.

That took faith to say that, but then it took faith to take hold of the man and lift him onto his feet. Now it's important that we recognize that Peter is no different from you or me. He's just a man, not any different from us.

Whenever we read of Elijah, we sort of, ooh, Elijah. But James said, hey, he's a man of like passions just like we are. No different from you.

Peter, a man of like passions just like we are. In fact, I'm glad the Lord chose Peter because he was a bumbler, just like I am. Now because Peter was a man just like we are, he was subject to the same kind of thoughts that we would be subject to.

In the same condition, in the same situation. That is, you speak the word of faith, you act upon it and lift the man to his feet, and Satan is whispering in your ear and saying, what are you going to do if he can't stand up? What if he collapses? And then all these people around here are going to wonder what in the world you were trying to do, lift that lame man to his feet. You're going to make a big fool out of yourself.

I'm sure that Satan was saying that to Peter, because we know from Peter's background that he could hear the voice of the Lord, but he could also hear the voice of Satan, and he often didn't know the difference between the two. And yet he acted in faith. Now he's going to tell us in a moment why he did.

And I think that's an important thing to note. Why Peter did what he did. Peter tells us, or told the people when they were standing there marveling at the miracle, that in the name of Jesus, and through faith in his name, this lame man has been made strong, whom you see and you know.

Yes, the faith which is by him, and there is the key. The faith which is by him. That is, Peter is saying, it wasn't really my faith, it was the faith that was by him.

Now as we get into 1 Corinthians chapter 12, we will discover that one of the gifts of the Spirit is faith. Listed there in the first part of chapter 12. The gift of faith.

And I believe that there are times and situations where the Lord grants to you the gift of faith for a specific issue. And that there is just that moment that God speaks to your heart, and you have the faith to act upon it. And that's where you see the mighty power of God working.

It isn't really your faith, it is that gift of faith that God gives on special occasions to accomplish his work. The third thing that I note about these men, is they were men who were not seeking glory for themselves. But they were men who were only interested in glorifying Jesus Christ.

When the people began to gather and they began to look on Peter and John as though they were some special kind of holy people, Peter immediately turned them away from looking at him, and pointed them to Jesus Christ, to look to the Lord. Why do you look on us, Peter said, as though our own power or holiness have done this good deed to this lame man? Why are you looking at us? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his son Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate when he was determined to let him go. But you denied the holy one and the just, and you desired a murderer to be granted unto you.

You killed the prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses. And his name, through faith in his name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yea, the faith which is by him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

One of the most dangerous times in a person's life who is ministering for the Lord is when God begins to use them through the gifts and the power of the Holy Spirit. Because people who are uninitiated to spiritual things have a tendency to look at what they can see, the instrument that God is using, and they have a tendency and they are prone to glorify the instrument and to begin to praise you and to lift you up and magnify you. And that is the most dangerous time in your whole spiritual experience, when God begins to use you in a supernatural way, you are in real danger.

Because people that don't know any better are going to begin to elevate you, to exalt you, and to lift you up. And the old man, the old nature, the flesh life, enjoys that, desires that. But the moment you reach out and touch the glory, you're in big danger.

Peter was now in great danger. People were looking at him as though he was very righteous and holy, as though he had some great power within himself. They were ready to magnify Peter, but he said, wait a minute, wait a minute.

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has glorified his son Jesus, and he pointed them immediately away from himself and unto Jesus. He had come to the cross in his own life. And in order to be used effectively by God, it is necessary to come to the cross in your own life, where you don't have any ambitions for yourself or for self-glory, but your only desire is to bring glory unto our Lord Jesus Christ.

Because there will be those that will seek to attribute the success to you, to attribute the good work to you. And that subtle danger of sort of intimating, well, I sort of have a part in this, you know. It takes a lot of sacrifice to have this kind of power, you know.

You have to give up a lot of things, and you're just sort of causing people to say, oh, isn't it wonderful he made all those sacrifices. Oh, my glorious sacrifices that he made. Oh, God bless him for his sacrifices.

Don't look at us, Peter said. Look to Jesus. And the successful man who continues is the man who points others to Jesus and doesn't seek to take glory for himself.

Many ministries have become shipwrecked on the shoals of self-life, taking the glory for what God has done. God desires to work, but God wants the glory for the work that he does. And he will not share his glory with man.

We have that classic story of Gideon, who had gathered an army of 32,000 men to face the Midianites who had covered the land like grasshoppers. Over 135,000 of them in the valley. And Gideon, terribly outnumbered with his 32,000, and God looked down and said, Gideon, we've got a problem.

You've got too many men. Lord, don't you think you've made a mistake? Did I understand you correctly? Too many? We're outnumbered. Yes, Gideon, I know the hearts of these people.

And if I would deliver the Midianites into the hands of the 32,000, they'd go around boasting of what they did. Go out and tell all the men that are afraid of this battle to go home. Gideon went out and said, OK, all of you who are afraid to fight against these Midianites, you can go home.

22,000 left. Gideon's left now with 10,000. God looked and said, Gideon, we've got a problem.

You've got too many men. Wait a minute. Yeah, I know the heart of these people.

You see, God wanted to work. But God wanted to make sure that he would get the glory for the work that he did. And if I deliver the Midianites into the hands of the 10,000, they'll boast of what they've done.

Take them down to the little stream by the well of En-Hirad and let them drink the water. Observe how they drink. Those that cup it and bring it up to their mouth, set them aside.

And by these, I'll deliver the Midianites. And there were 300 who cupped the water and Gideon set them aside. God wanted to work, but he wanted the glory for the work that he did.

Paul said, one plants. One waters. But it is God who gives the increase so that he that plants is nothing and he that waters is nothing.

But it is God who gives the increase. Paul the Apostle spoke about how that he beat his own body. To keep the body under.

Less having preached to others. I would be put on the shelf. He recognized the danger.

Of having been used of God in a mighty way. There was still the danger of God setting you on the shelf unless you kept the body under. The moment you began to seek the glory or the credit or the praise.

Paul realized the Lord would put him on the shelf. So it was necessary to keep the body under. Crucified with Christ.

He said, nevertheless, I live that not I, but it is Christ who lives in me. And it is so important. So important.

That if you're to be used of God in doing the work of God, that you first of all come to know what it is. To be crucified with Christ. To reckon that old man to be dead.

Crucified with Christ. That the body of sin will no longer rule over you. But that you'll be ruled by the spirit and your one goal is not glory.

For yourself, but bringing glory to God. God can use those kind of people today. God's looking for those kind of people today that he might use in these days.

We'll look at the other characteristics in our next lesson. Father, we thank you for your grace, your goodness. And Lord, that you do use the likes of us.

In the accomplishing of your eternal purposes. You give us the privilege, Lord, of working together with you. Though we recognize, Lord, that it's your work.

Not even our faith, the faith which is by him. And yet, Lord, here we are. How blessed and how privileged we are.

That you should use us, Lord. In the fulfilling of your plans and your purposes. Help us, Lord.

Help us to spend more time with you in prayer. Lord, increase our faith. Lord, may we indeed reckon the old man to be dead.

That the body of sin might not rule. But the spirit of God would rule in our lives. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11013.mp3>

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