

# An End of Ourselves

by Zac Poonen

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*God calls us to live by faith, emptied of self-confidence and self-sufficiency, and dependent entirely on Him.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 42:1, John 5:19, John 15:5

**Topics:** "Total Dependence", "Spiritual Humility"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes that God is not impressed by the size of our works, but rather looks for works of faith, even as small as mustard seeds. He encourages believers to take heart when faced with shattered hopes and challenges, as God may be preparing them for greater usefulness by bringing them to a place of impotence. Poonen highlights Jesus' training of His apostles over three and a half years, focusing on teaching them the vital lesson of total dependence on Him, rather than scholarly pursuits. Just as Jesus lived in total dependence on God, believers are called to empty themselves of self-confidence and self-sufficiency to be filled with the Spirit of God.

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## Transcript

It is not the size of a work that impresses God. The world looks for size and numbers. But God is looking for works of faith - even if they be the size of mustard seeds.

And so, when God brings us to an end of ourselves, hedging us in on every side and shattering our hopes, let us take heart! He is preparing us for greater usefulness by bringing us first to the place of impotence. He's equipping us to produce Isaacs.

This was how Jesus prepared His apostles for His service. What do you think was the purpose of His training them for three and a half years? They were not being coached to write scholarly theses that would earn each of them a doctorate in theology. That's how some people today feel they can be equipped to serve the Lord. But Jesus didn't train His apostles for that. None of the twelve disciples (except perhaps Judas Iscariot!) would have qualified for a basic theological degree (by our standards), even if they had tried. Jesus trained them to learn one lesson primarily - that, without Him they could do nothing (John 15:5). And, I tell you, a man who has learned that lesson is worth more a hundred theological professors who haven't learnt that lesson.

Total dependence upon God is the mark of the true servant of God. It was true even of the Lord Jesus Christ, when He was on earth, as the Servant of Jehovah. In a prophetic reference to Him in Isaiah 42:1, God says, "Behold My Servant, whom I uphold." He does not stand in His own strength; He is upheld by

God. Because Christ emptied Himself thus, God put His Spirit upon Him, as the next verse says (Isa. 42:2). Indeed, it is only on those who have come to an end of themselves and who have emptied themselves of self-confidence and self-sufficiency, that God pours out His Spirit.

Look at some of the remarkable statements that Jesus made, which clearly show how emptied of self He was:

" The Son can do nothing of Himself " (John 5:19). " I can of Mine own self do nothing " (John 5:30). " I do nothing of Myself " (John 8:28). " I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father Who sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak " (John 12:49). " The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself " (John 14:10).

Amazing! The perfect, sinless Son of God lived by faith. Emptied of all dependence upon His own self, He depended entirely on His Father. It is thus that God calls us to live too.

When we are self-sufficient, we try to use God to help us serve Him. But when we are emptied, God can use us.

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