

32.5 Ability or Availability?

I heard a preacher say, “**God doesn’t want your ability, He wants your availability.**” That statement grabbed my attention because that is not my natural inclination when it comes to serving God. It is not what I was taught as a new Christian or in training for Ministry. My tendency is to try to improve my serving skills so that I can serve better. The problem with that is it puts all of the pressure of performance on me. It makes me focus on my works and I get discouraged because I never seem to do enough.

I think there is a great point to that preacher’s statement. God is infinitely more capable than I am. He is able to take us, as incapable people, and so work through us that HE accomplishes great things. HE receives the glory for it, not us. It points out our firm reliance on Him, just like the Founders stated in the last line of the **Declaration of Independence**:

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

God does the extraordinary through the ordinary. That is His plan! We see it all through the scriptures. Let’s consider some examples.

First, there is Moses. He had been providentially rescued from death as a child and grew up in the lap of luxury in Pharaoh’s house. He was trained in the ways of Egypt but apparently, his mother also had explained his heritage to him.

At first, Moses seems to think he has the ability to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt by his own power and Egyptian pedigree. He fails and flees to the Midian desert. There he is brought low for forty years as a shepherd, one of the lowest occupations of his day. This was especially true among the Egyptians.

Moses has been emptied of pride and ability. God has him right where He wants him. You will remember in **Exodus 3** of God’s conversation with Moses at the burning bush. As God calls him to the task of leading the Hebrews out of Egypt, Moses begins to focus on his inabilities. Listen to his response to God in **Exodus 3:11** (NKJV):

¹¹But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”

We know the story. God was the capable One. He worked through Moses to lead the people out of Egypt and into the land of promise.

Second, there is the story of Gideon. Years after Moses led the people out of Egypt and Joshua led them into the Promised Land, the Midianites oppressed the Hebrews. God raised up Gideon to overthrow their persecutors. You can read the story in **Judges 6-8**. Right now I want to point out how God worked through an ordinary man for His purposes.

You may remember that Gideon was in hiding and threshing wheat. Notice **Judges 6:12** (NKJV):

¹²And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, “The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!”

In the ensuing conversation, the LORD commissions Gideon to be the deliverer of the Hebrews but look at Gideon’s low view of himself in **Judges 6:15** (NKJV):

So he said to Him, “O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.”

Then listen to the Lord’s response to him in **Judges 6:16** (NKJV):

¹⁶And the LORD said to him, “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.”

The LORD pared down Gideon's army to 300 soldiers. God led them to defeat the Midianites and free the people of Israel for forty years. It came, not through the increased ability of Gideon but through his availability to God. He proved God's power because that victory did not happen by the will of men but by God.

Third, there is the group of disciples that Jesus chose to be His closest followers. He chose commoners to be His closest of friends. Most rabbis wanted the top of the class students. Jesus chose the ordinary and turned them into "**fishers of men.**" When these disciples became great men of God, who do you suppose got the credit?

These examples and many more in the Bible hit home with who God is and how He works. He does give us gifts and skills that we should develop. However, the power is not in our ability but in our availability to the real Power, God in us. Remember **Ephesians 3:20-21** (NKJV):

²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ²¹ to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

We need God in America today. We need His purposes for our nation. His presence will come when we are open and available to Him so that He can accomplish His extraordinary purposes through His ordinary people. When He acts we will know that only HE could accomplish the results.

Paul reminds us in **Philippians 4:19-20** (NKJV):

¹⁹ And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. ²⁰ Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

It is not our ingenuity or abilities that accomplish God's will. GOD will accomplish His will through us. We are His conduits. We must merely be willing vessels. So, as we close let's . . .

Keep The Light of Availability to God Burning!