

Day 1
November 13



Pray | Thank God for covering every insecurity, shortcoming, and failure

INCOMPETENT HELP WANTED.

Professional announcer: “Do you feel inadequate? Suffer from poor spelling? Stutter? Hate public speaking? Find yourself in a state of constant under-preparedness? Have poor posture, bad breath, ailing hearing, eyesight, or lack a sense of taste or smell? Are you short, tall, skinny, fat, un-athletic, fashionably late or just fashionably challenged? Don’t worry, we’re not selling anything! As a matter of fact, we want to offer you a job. We are now hiring absolutely everywhere on the entire planet Earth. No. Yes, that is absolutely correct, no experience, whatsoever is necessary to be hired. As a matter of fact, someone is about to approach you right this very minute and offer you a job. Why, you ask? Because we can. Besides, it’s not about you; it’s all about us.” Totally made up? Absolutely. In many ways it represents how God chose his prophets, and still picks his emissaries in the world today.



Read | Psalm 139: 13-16; Jeremiah 1: 4-5



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.

Everyone has areas in life where they feel inadequate based on looks, skills, intelligence, or natural talents, especially when comparing against others. What things do these verses tell you about when God’s role in who you are began, and how should that negate feeling inadequate?

Perfect people don’t get chosen by God to fulfill his mission of delivering the salvation message. Instead, he chooses everyday people with their inadequacies, bad habits, and selfish natures. Spend some time praying God will help you overcome your inadequacies through his love and power.

However you track today’s schedule, take a moment and look at everything there. Now consider that God is with you and wants you to share his love through all those activities. Which things do you need to pray about and remember as God’s divine appointments?

Day 2
November 14



Pray | God, show me when my reasons are really only excuses.

NO ACCEPTABLE EXCUSE.

Everyone has reasons for why things did or did not happen. Many times, it's obvious to others that these reasons are actually excuses. Adam and Eve may have been the original practitioners of "passing the buck," but it is now such an integral part of our sinful nature that we hardly recognize it in ourselves even when we are doing it. The Bible is full of too many examples of this to explore in depth here. The selected examples will show that even when we are dealing with God himself, we tend to deploy our reasons and excuses. Let it be absolutely clear: when God asks you to do something for him, there is no acceptable excuse that you can use. Incredibly, he makes up for what we cannot do with what he can do. Thank God that he is merciful when we insult him by offering excuses for why we can't do as he asks. Let's look at a few examples to see what themes emerge.



Read | Jeremiah 1:6-8; Exodus 4: 10-17; 1 Timothy 4:12



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.

God's solution differed, but Jeremiah and Moses were told in no uncertain terms that poor public speaking was no reason not to do what God asked them to do. What weakness in your life can God reinforce with his power when you surrender your excuses?

Fact: Exclusion by age happens, it always has, and probably always will. Amazingly, God respects no such limitations. Jeremiah directly and Timothy (through Paul) were told their age was of no concern to God. Do you believe it? If so, go where he sends you.

No doubt there is something you are struggling with God about at this very moment. You may have long lists of pros and cons about why it cannot be accomplished. In what ways may God be showing you that you need simply listen and obey?

Day 3
November 15



Pray | Lord, help me believe that you can do what I cannot.

ERRORS OF ASSUMPTION.

A paradox of sorts develops whenever some new record is achieved. The new record holders feel a sense of great accomplishment for achieving the heretofore unachievable. Ironically, the new record setters then assume no one else can do or exceed what they have just accomplished. How incredible is it that what they just achieved they now assume no else will exceed in the future? Jeremiah seems to have a similar problem in these verses. It is almost like he is implying that what he cannot do because of his youth and lack of speaking ability, God cannot do either. God is not fooled as we are. Consider the similar situation in which King Solomon realizes his youthful inexperience and learns from the different approach he takes.



Read | Jeremiah 1:6-8; 1 Kings 3: 5-9



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.

Whenever we make excuses to God we rob him of who he is by assuming that our weaknesses are somehow greater than his strengths. Are there some things you need to pray and confess to God in which your focus was on you and not on him?

God does great things for and through Solomon and Jeremiah. Why is it important to see that God's pouring of himself into them was for the benefit of others and not merely themselves?

God could make puppets; instead, he invites us into mission reaching the world with his love and forgiveness. Compare and contrast the implications of reading Jeremiah 1:7 seeing Jeremiah as a puppet vs. being empowered in his weakness by God. How can God empower you?

Day 4
November 16



Pray | Make me your messenger, and keep me true to your words.

ABSOLUTE CLARITY.

Jeremiah and Isaiah shared a common experience in that God himself told them what to say. Not only did he tell them each what to say, but also he told them to whom to say it and he gave them authority as his prophets. In many ways, they went from questioning their ability to even do what God asked to having absolute clarity because of who the words came from. God has given us his word in the Bible and told us that we are to take it to everyone. The first step is realizing with absolute clarity who is sending us. A messenger is only as good as the message they carry and even moreso because of whom that message comes from.



Read | Jeremiah 1: 9-10; Isaiah 6:8-9



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.

Jeremiah seems a little lacking in age, skill, and self-confidence. Where did Jeremiah's power and authority come from, and in what ways does that make him an effective prophet?

Both Jeremiah and Isaiah had to accomplish certain things in order to be used by God. What things are standing in your way of serving God as he is asking you to? Are those things limiting for you or God?

Absolute clarity of purpose can only be achieved when we have proper perspective about who we are and who God is. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Specifically, why or why not?

Day 5
November 17



Pray | Let me learn, live, and share about you in all I do.

KNOW IT. SPEAK IT. SHOW IT.

Most of us will never experience God personally commissioning us, touching our lips and giving us his words to be sent out as his prophet. We are, however, commissioned to be God's missionaries wherever we go. He has given the Bible as our knowledge base and our instructions for fulfilling his commission. Three things are necessary to fulfill this in our everyday lives. 1. We need to know it. What does God's word say about who he is, what is true, and where hope may be found for a hurting world? 2. We need to share that knowledge with others by speaking what we know as God prompts us through his Holy Spirit. 3. Finally, unless our lifestyle choices show what we know and agree with what we have said we believe, we will not reach others for Christ. Each of you is reading this because eleven men, Jesus' disciples, knew it, spoke it, and showed it, even unto death.



Read | Matthew 28: 16-20; Mark 16: 15-16



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on the following questions.

Know it. Speak it. Show it. Being an impactful Christian is difficult when any of these three components is missing or deficient in your life. Consider which areas are you strong in, and those you are weak in. What things can you do to improve?

God's math is wonderful. Billy Graham's ministry brought untold thousands to Christ. Impressive, yet each of those people reached out to families, friends, and neighbors. Are you ready to ask God into your life as savior so he can show you how to reach others?

Persecution brings to mind the suffering of Jesus' followers for their beliefs. Amidst persecution God's church is growing around the world. When you pray for the persecuted, are you praying for an end to their suffering, or that their faith would be emboldened? Why?

Unless indicated otherwise, all Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®). Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved. ESV® Text Edition: 2016.