

This is the last of our series called ‘Doubters Anonymous’ on doubts that people have.

- Doubting the resurrection
- Doubting the existence of God
- Doubting that God is for us
- Doubting that God can use us

Many of you would acknowledge that you know that God can use people. You just doubt that God will really use you in a significant way. I know, for much of my life I have thought, “Yeah, I know God can use Billy Graham, or great musicians, or talented people, but I’m just not so sure that God can use me. If you are anything like I am, as soon as you take a step toward the things of God to use your gift, it’s amazing how quickly these nagging doubts will come into the back of your mind. Maybe you’ve thought things like, you know, “I’m just not good enough,” or “I don’t know enough. I’m just not a mature enough Christ Follower. I’ve only been following Christ for a certain amount of time. I’ve messed up big time. I don’t have any great talent. I’ve still got some things in my life that are just not right.

I want to look particularly today at verse 10 of *Ephesians 2:10 For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.* For we are God’s masterpiece. You are the masterpiece of God. We are created anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things that He planned for us,” when? “That He planned for us long ago.” I love this. You are the masterpiece of God, created and designed by God for His glory to use the gifts and the passions that He has given you, and long before you were even born, God knew that He would use you to glorify His name and to make a difference. You are the masterpiece of God. Everybody say that. “I am God’s masterpiece.”

When you face doubts that God can’t use you there are three things I want you to think about:

Let’s answer the question, “Who does God most often use?” Three types of people. Number one, **God loves to use the insecure.** God loves to use those who are not sure of their own abilities. Raise your hand if you have some insecurities. Now, those of you that you aren’t raising your hand, typically, you are the most insecure. “Yeah, I’m not raising my hand. He might ask me to come up front or something,” and so that really reveals your insecurity.

You’re not alone – when God called Moses his answer was, “O Lord, I’m not very good with words. I never have been, and I’m not now, even though you have spoken to me. I get tongue-tied, and my words get tangled.”

Every Sunday before the service I get really nervous because it's a big responsibility. I don't feel competent. You are the masterpiece of God. God knew what He was doing when He made you. God wired you with certain gifts and certain abilities, certain passions. There are things that you care about more than those around you, and you wonder why that is. God made you that way, and in all of history, God knew that this was the most opportune time for you to be born, the right place for you to live around the right people with the right weaknesses. Now, why do I say that? Because, our weaknesses are often the greatest clue to where God wants to work – because, it's through our weaknesses and insecurities that His strength is made perfect. There's more room for Him to work when we put confidence in Him, rather than in ourselves. God wants to use those who are insecure.

What was God's reply to Moses? "Who makes a person's mouth? Who decides whether people speak or do not speak, hear or do not hear, see or do not see? Is it not I, the Lord? 12 Now go! I will be with you as you speak, and I will instruct you in what to say."

You have to step out in order to find out. You have to open up your mouth so that I can fill it. You have to take a step of faith and believe that I will meet you there, and even though you do not believe in yourself, God says, 'I believe in you and, I can make a difference. If you will step out and go you'll find me.'

Second thing is this is: **God also uses the unlikely.** A couple of people at the conference said they had no qualifications but God had called them. God specializes in using the unlikely, those that others don't believe in. We see this found in I Samuel, chapter 16, when Samuel, the prophet, was called to go and anoint the next king. And he went to a guy named Jesse's house, and he was looking at Jesse's sons, and he said, "I wonder which one has what it takes, and he looked at the tallest, most handsome, most likely candidate, and thought, "This is surely God's." We see the story, verse 6, "Samuel saw Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord.'" Verse 7, "But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." God doesn't look at the things people look at. What do people look at? The outward appearance, the paper qualifications, the experience – and then perhaps character - but the Lord looks at," what? "The Lord looks at the heart." Do you understand this? God sees things in you that no one else sees. God sees things in you that no one else sees. God loves to use the unlikely. One of things about leadership is that you need to identify that potential and encourage it.

Stop believing what other people say about you.

You are not what others say.

You are not the sum total of other people's opinions.

You are who God says you are, and God says you are His masterpiece.

You are created by Him, for Him, with unique gifts, placed at this moment in history.

God loves to use those that others overlook. Samuel is looking for the next king.

Even David's father did not believe David was qualified. Look at verse 11. Then Samuel asked, "Are these all the sons you have?"

"There is still the youngest," Jesse replied. "But he's out in the fields watching the sheep and goats." You can hear the doubt, even in the father's mind about the one that God saw as the next king.

Thought number one, who does God often use? **God uses the insecure.** Number two, **God uses the unlikely.** Number three, **God uses failures.** If you've failed, I've got great news. You're still a candidate for God to use. In the New Testament, we see what I call the most successful failure in the Bible, and that was a guy named Peter. If you know anything about Peter, Peter loved to talk, and it often got him in trouble, and he was the guy that bragged about his faithfulness to Jesus. Luke 22: 33-34 *But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.*

Well, verses 54-62 tell us the rest of the story – Peter followed Jesus to the High Priest's house and waited there to see what would happen. Two people approach Peter and he says he doesn't know Jesus. The third time it happens he says, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" (v60). Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. 61 The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." 62 And he went outside and wept bitterly.

Can you imagine the pain at that moment? "And Peter went outside and wept bitterly.

All of us have failed God but some people believe that they have gone too far, done something so bad that they can never be forgiven.

- Moses murdered someone,
- David committed adultery,
- Peter denied Jesus three times with Him watching,
- Jacob lied to get an inheritance.

Sometimes, when you fail, it's at that point that you are more broken and humbled before God, and more dependent on Him than you ever have been before. God still wants to use you.

What's humbling to me about Peter is that Jesus came back to him, forgave him, and immediately used him to do, perhaps, the greatest thing that happened in the New Testament besides the resurrection, and that was help birth the New Testament church. It was Peter, the failure, that preached at Pentecost, and the bible says, as he preached, those who accepted his message were baptised and about three thousand were added to their number that day. Imagine that. He becomes an incredibly significant success.

You may feel insecure. You may feel an unlikely candidate. You may feel a failure. You might feel all three. But it's not feelings that are important here. It's not what other people say about you, or what box they try and put you in. GOD says – You are my masterpiece.