

Toxic Faith
God Only Uses Spiritual Giants
March 6, 2011

Shortly after I accepted Christ as my savior as a teenager, I became part of Grace Baptist Church in Bowie, MD, where I met some of the most godly men and women I've ever known; men and women who in many ways are responsible for who I am today.

Pastor Jack Dean was one of them. He had moved his family from Garland, Texas to Bowie for the purpose of starting the church which, at the time I joined up, was about 10 years old. Pastor Dean was a tireless worker, loved God, loved people and was an excellent preacher. In my mind, as a teenager (and I'm sure in the minds of people who weren't teenagers at Grace Baptist Church), there was Jesus and then there was Pastor Dean. He was really

awesome.

A few years into my membership at Grace, as the congregation grew, the church added two young men to the staff. Dave Price and Steve Lane were students at Capital Bible Seminary a few miles down the road. Dave became our assistant pastor; Steve became the pastor in charge of outreach and evangelism. And I really liked both of them. They knew the Bible. They were hard workers. They were very good at what they did. So good, in fact, that after Pastor Dean passed away in 1979, Dave became the senior pastor of the church and he and Steve teamed up together and remained on staff together until just a few years ago when Dave retired to Florida. During their tenure, the church tripled in size, started a Christian school and had a very effective ministry in the community.

So, in my mind as a teenager, there was Jesus and then there was Pastor Dean followed closely by Dave and Steve. All three of them right together. And no one ever told me to believe this – certainly not any of those three guys – but as a young man and a relatively new follower of Jesus I came to the conclusion that those guys were “spiritual giants” being used by God in a way that “ordinary people” – like me – would never be.

I came to the conclusion that there was some kind of an imaginary line between them and the rest of us ...

... and that, if you really wanted God to use your life in some way, you would have to get on their side of the line and do what they were doing.

Problem was, as I looked at those guys, I wasn't anything like them. They were

serious. I was a goofball. They listened to hymns. I listened to rock-n-roll: *Chicago; Blood, Sweat and Tears* and a little bit of Larry Norman (the very first “contemporary Christian artist”). So, I decided, based on that, that I would probably never be more than a second-class citizen in the Kingdom of Heaven and I was OK with that, because, that was how God had ordained it.

Or so I thought.

I’m curious – have any of you ever had an experience like this in a church? Have you ever come to a similar conclusion about yourself and your usefulness to God?

If you have, it’s pretty likely that you have fallen victim to yet another of the toxic beliefs we’ve been looking at in this series:

The belief that “God only uses spiritual

giants to do His work in this world.”

... that God uses only the perfect, the near perfect, the highly committed, ready-to-go-to-Africa kinds of people, those he has called into full-time ministry. Those are the kinds of people God uses to accomplish anything of real significance, spiritually speaking, in this world.

And I want to talk to you this morning about why we believe this; why and how it's toxic to us; and then, what the Bible *really* says about it but, first, because I know that there may be some here who may not be familiar with the idea of being “used by God,” and I want to spend a few minutes defining exactly what I mean by that phrase. This is one of those times when it's very easy to fall into “Christianese” – you know, that language that all the “insiders” know but maybe people don't understand on the surface, and

I want to make sure we don't do that.

So, what does it mean to be "used by God?" First thing that needs to be said is that it's not what it means in the common vernacular. Typically, when we talk about "someone being used by someone else" it's not a good thing. It means taking advantage of them in some way. But that's not what we mean when we talk about being used by God.

Let me explain it this way (and there are lots of ways it could be explained). The Bible tells us that one day the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Lord, teach us how to pray." So, Jesus gave them a model to follow and it starts out like this.

*"Our Father in Heaven,
hallowed be your name; your
Kingdom come; your will be
done on earth as it is in*

Heaven."

The very first thing that Jesus told his disciples to pray for – the thing that's most important in *his* heart and therefore ought to be most important of in the heart of all his followers – was that God's name be "hallowed" and that God's values and way of life be established on the physical earth just as they are in the spiritual Kingdom of Heaven.

Unfortunately, however, the word "hallowed" is yet another form of Christianese so let me define what "hallowed be your name" means. It's very simple. It just means that when people hear about God and who He is and what He has done and is doing, they respond with "Wow! Awesome! Amazing! Incredible! Unbelievable!" For God's name to be hallowed means that his glory increases and people are drawn to Christ

and enter into His life as a result.

Now, let me try to connect the dots between that and being “used by God.”

The Bible makes it clear that the primary way that God gets the kind of glory we’re talking about is through people who love and serve others because they themselves have been loved and served by God.

So, to be “used by God” means that “God gives you the opportunity to love and serve others in ways that increase His glory and draw people closer to Him.”

God gives you the opportunity to love and serve others in ways that increase His glory and draw people closer to Him. That’s what it means to be “used by God.”

And that’s what happened in my church as a teenager. God gave Pastor Dean and Dave

and Steve the opportunity to love and serve me and many others in ways that increased the reputation of God in our lives and drew us closer to Him. God “used them.” And I am so thankful that He did.

Why We Believe It

But why do we believe that that kind of thing, that kind of opportunity, that kind of experience, that kind of effectiveness is reserved primarily for pastors and for those who are willing to go to Africa as missionaries; for super-committed people we would label as “spiritual giants?” Why is there a dividing line between those people and everyone else?

Well, I think there are several reasons. The first I alluded to in my introduction to this message. And that is that ...

1. We've *experienced* God using gifted and spiritually mature leaders in our lives.

And it's hard not to make the connection: "Well, if God wants to get something done, then naturally he taps on the shoulders of the people who are spiritually mature and gifted – the spiritual giants."

The second reason we believe it is similar and, actually lends support to the first.

2. The Bible tells us to honor spiritual leaders.

For instance, in one place Paul writes ...

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. 1 Timothy 5:17 (ESV)

In another place he writes ...

We ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work.

*1 Thessalonians 5:12-13
(NIV)*

Now, obviously, these kinds of people are very important to God and to His purposes. He's asking us to make them important to the rest of us as well.

One more reason as to why we believe that God prefers to use spiritual giants instead of ordinary people like us:

3. Rose-colored glasses that keep us from seeing that those we consider to be “giants” are flawed sinners like the rest of us.

For example, whenever we read Bible stories of the “heroes of the faith” – the patriarchs and the kings and the prophets of Israel; the 12 apostles who followed Jesus; Paul and his companions – we tend to put on these rose-colored glasses and assume that *because these people are in the Bible and the Bible is spiritual, then they must be spiritual ... more spiritual than we are.* See, we tend to read past those parts of the stories where they doubt and they disobey and they do stupid things just like the rest of us do.

And we don't put on the rose-colored glasses just when reading the Bible. A lot of times, we put them on when we come to church and listen to the pastor or the worship leaders. We put them on whenever we watch a TV preacher or hear a message on the radio, or when we read a Christian book or go to a Christian seminar or a

Christian concert. And, unless the pastor or the preacher or teacher or the worship leader works hard to be appropriately transparent, a lot of times we mistakenly assume that they don't have the same kinds of problems and struggles as we do.

But that's just wrong because they do. Those people who we consider to be "spiritual giants" – those who we are told, by the Bible, to hold in highest regard – really are ordinary people just like the rest of us.

Why It's Toxic

And that leads to why this belief is so toxic to us. And I need to tell you that the words I'm going to use in just a minute do not do justice to the way I really feel about this. So, I just want to say up front that this particular belief makes me want to throw up. It makes me want to gag. And I hate it with a passion

because of what it does to those who think of themselves as being on the “ordinary people” side of the line, but also what it does to people who find themselves in positions of spiritual leadership; the ones that get labeled as “spiritual giants.”

So, are you ready? Here’s what this sick belief does to us:

1. It produces elitist attitudes in some people who are full-time pastors and ministers.

And I don’t want to say all because some people are immune to this. But I know a lot of guys and gals who are susceptible to this elitist attitude. See, here is what happens, because they are thought of by so many people as being “spiritual giants” and “the ones through whom God is going to do his most significant work in the world” eventually they come to believe it

themselves.

Now, they may say otherwise – “oh, I really don’t believe that. I’m no different than anyone else” – but the way you can tell that a pastor or ministry leader has adopted an elitist attitude is that ...

- They get discouraged because they believe that it’s all up to them.
- They don’t enjoy what they’re doing because they feel like they’re tied to the mast and that if they don’t stay tied to the mast the ship will go down.
- They don’t take seriously the “ordinary people” around them who are willing and able to help with what they’re doing.

And I can say this because I’ve been there. Obviously, I’ve talked to you about it. I have often struggled with an elitist attitude that

says I'm somehow more important to the work of God than you are. It's just sick. It makes me sick.

But that's what comes from this belief that God prefers to use people we think of as being on the "spiritual giants" side of the line.

Here's another toxic effect:

2. It puts pastors and ministers on an unwarranted and dangerous pedestal.

Unwarranted for them because they really don't deserve it (we really are no different - pastors and ministry leaders), but it's dangerous for everyone else because whenever a "spiritual giant" reveals himself or herself to be a mere mortal, it can be crushing.

When Jetta and I lived in NJ in the mid-80s, I

was a software engineer, she was a stay-at-home mom. We were also volunteer youth directors at our church. One evening, our pastor, Jon, and his wife, Lola, had us over for dinner to talk to us about the youth ministry. And we were very excited because more kids than ever were involved in the youth program at the church, and God was really “using us” and the other volunteers in the youth ministry, so I was very surprised when in the course of this conversation Jon had some negative things to say about what we were doing with the youth in this church. And, I’m kind of a hothead, so I kind of pushed back on what he was saying, and Jon, much to my surprise, got a little bit testy with me.

And, when we left, I was stunned because it was the first time I had ever seen someone I considered to be a “spiritual giant” act just like me – a mere mortal.

To Jon's credit, two days later I got a letter in the mail that said:

Dear Rick,

Between the Holy Spirit and my wife, it has been brought to my attention that I was too harsh in my words. I really do respect and appreciate what you and Jetta are doing.

Your friend,

Jon Meek

But the pedestal effect happens here at NHCC, too. Sometimes it's kind of funny when it happens, like when people are surprised when they invite Jetta and I over to play games and they find out that I want to kick their butt while we're playing the game.

I mean, I want to win! I guess people think “spiritual giants” are supposed to let everyone else win.

But sometimes it’s not humorous. Sometimes when I mess up or the staff messes up; when we’re not particularly sensitive or compassionate; or when we get testy when someone pushes back on us; or when we feel threatened and overreact – people don’t know what to do or how to take it. “But wait a minute, you guys are supposed to be on *that* side of the line! You’re supposed to be above all that. You’re supposed to be the spiritual giants.”

Now, I’m not making excuses for bad behavior or immaturity. If you’re a leader in a church, you’re supposed to have some spiritual maturity about you. But just like everyone else, in this life you’re never going to be everything you’re supposed to be.

That's reality for every follower of Jesus and that's why pastors and spiritual leaders need to always cling to the gospel of Jesus Christ as much as anyone else.

OK, briefly, two more ways this belief that "God only uses spiritual giants" is toxic:

3. It devalues most of the gifts of the Spirit (those "divine enablements that God gives us to serve Him") and it also devalues the people to whom God has given those gifts.

See, as it turns out, the people who we label as "spiritual giants" tend to have a very small subset of the gifts of the Spirit that Paul lists in his various letters. Specifically, *they have the gift of preaching, teaching and/or leadership*. That's three out of about 25.

The Bible says that the Spirit *also* gives to some people the gift of serving, administration, prophecy, encouragement,

giving, mercy, missions & church planting, discernment, faith, healing, helping, knowledge, miracles, speaking in unknown languages, interpreting unknown languages, wisdom, celibacy, hospitality, martyrdom, voluntary poverty and evangelism.

All of those are divine gifts that enable people to be used by God, but because they're not up front, like preaching, or teaching or leading, we tend to devalue them. And the people who have those gifts – which is the majority of the Body of Christ – they feel devalued as well.

And if there is one nail that the Apostle Paul hammers over and over again in his writings concerning spiritual gifts, it's that all of these are equally necessary and important.ⁱ And this toxic belief that "God primarily uses spiritual giants" just cuts against that truth.

Okay, one more toxic effect that it has is that ...

4. It obscures a fundamental reality of following Christ: “the priesthood of all believers.”

I’ve used the analogy of an imaginary line several times in this message; an imaginary line that separates the “ordinary people” from the “special people” – those supposed spiritual giants through whom God does most of His really important work.

But the idea of that line is nowhere to be found in the Bible. In fact, what we find is the exact opposite. To the believers under his influence, the Apostle Peter wrote:

As you come to him, the living Stone (Jesus) ... you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual

house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:4 (NIV)

And then a few verses later he goes even further, he says:

You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

And notice in those verses that Peter makes no distinction between different groups of people based on spiritual gifts or church ministry position or function. Instead, he says that everyone who comes to Jesus is part of the spiritual house, the chosen people and the holy nation. Everyone is part of the

special possession of God. *Everyone* is part of the royal priesthood.

That means that you are as much a priest in the eyes of God as I am. In fact, the only real difference between people who work on a church staff and the people in the congregation of the church is that the people in the congregation have said to some of its members “we think that you being able to use your particular set of gifts full-time will make such a big difference in our ministry that we’re willing to pay you so that you don’t have to have another job and then you will be able to devote *your best efforts* – your primary vocational energy – to the work of this congregation.”

That’s what a church staff is and that’s why people are asked to be part of it. And I hope you (and I and the people who are part of this church staff) will never forget that

because I can't think of thing that has caused more damage to the work of God – to God's ability to use people to accomplish his purposes – than the loss of that understanding; the loss of the understanding that every believer is a priest in the service of God, to be used by God in some way to accomplish his purposes.

And I think by now you're kind of getting why I'm ticked off about this little belief that "God only uses spiritual giants." It makes me sick.

What the Bible Really Says

So, let's get on the solution side and see what the Bible really says about the issue.

I think some of you are going to be surprised ... because *I was*. As I studied for this message, God showed me something in the scripture that I hadn't seen before;

something which, I think, gives a much clearer picture of what He's up to in our lives if we are followers of Christ. I hope it will give some of you a new level of acceptance and freedom that you've never had because you've always thought of yourself and your efforts to serve Jesus and the people around you as being "not nearly as important as those of the spiritual giants."

The Bible says three things about the kind of people God uses and how he works through them. I'll give you all three of them now so you can see how they fit together, then we'll break each one of them down.

- 1. Sometimes God uses an ordinary person to do a *few extraordinary things* for Him in their lifetime.**
- 2. *Most often*, God uses an ordinary person to do *many ordinary things* for Him.**
- 3. *Rarely* does God use an extraordinary person (which would include the people we want to call "spiritual giants"); rarely does God use someone who thinks of themselves**

in that way to do *anything*.

That's the framework, and if you can lock that in your brain, it will help you take off your rose-colored glasses when you come to church. It will help you take off your rose-colored glasses when you read the Bible. It will help pastors and ministry leaders get off the pedestal; it will help them avoid elitist attitudes; it will help all of us value all the gifts of the Spirit equally and it will protect that doctrine of the priesthood of all believers.

So, with that hope, let's look at each statement in a little more detail.

1. Sometimes God uses an ordinary person to do a few extraordinary things for Him in the course of their lifetime.

And this is the case with almost every Bible character you've ever heard of.

For instance, and I mentioned this in a message about a month ago, when we read the story of Abraham hearing God telling him to pick up everything and move to a land he didn't even know – God said, “Pack it all up – your cattle, your wife, your children, your belongings, and I'll tell you when you get there” – and we read that and we think “man, what a spiritual giant.”

But if you read between the lines, the truth is that along the way Abraham was fearful and doubting that God would do what he said he would do. So, if you read the story you find out that he and his wife took some shortcuts they shouldn't have taken. They were less than truthful to cover their rear ends because they thought they were going to get in trouble. He was ordinary guy, just like you and me, and God used him to do a few extraordinary things that ended up making a

huge difference.

Then there's Moses – you know, the guy who was the leader of the nation of Israel - after killing an Egyptian soldier in anger and rage, he goes off to hide in the desert. And for 40 years, he's out there tending sheep until one day God says, "Hey, Moses, I want you to go back there and lead my people out of captivity. I've seen it. I've heard their cries for deliverance." And Moses says, "You must be talking to the wrong person because, number one, the people aren't going to listen to me, they have a long memory and they'll remember what happened, and besides, I'm not a very good speaker – you don't get much practice when you work with sheep. And, I have some anger issues." But God sends him anyway and does some extraordinary things through him that end up making a huge difference.

Then there's Gideon, the guy who did that thing with the fleece and ended up wiping out the Midianites, one of Israel's cruelest enemies. The Israelites were so terrified of these guys that they went and hid in the hills. But God came to Gideon and said, "Gideon, you're the man, and I want you to deliver My people ...

And Gideon says ...

"But Lord, [again, you must have the wrong person] how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family!"
Judges 6:15 (NLT)

"I'm just an ordinary guy – about as ordinary as you can get." But when you read the story, God empowers him and he accomplishes the mission.

Fast forward to the New Testament and the disciples of Jesus. You couldn't get more ordinary than these guys. In fact, one day, after the resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit and all this power that happened, an extraordinary thing happens: Peter and John heal a man just by their words, and then as the story goes they get dragged before the council of the Pharisees.

And while they're in front of the council of the Pharisees, the Bible says that ...

The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John. For they could see that these apostles were ordinary men who had no special training. Acts 4:13 (NLT)

Not only that, just a few weeks before Peter had denied Jesus as he was being beaten

before his crucifixion, and John had been arguing with his brother James over which one of them would be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. They were just like you and just like me.

Are you getting the picture here? God uses ordinary people – not spiritual giants.

However, I think this is where a lot of us get confused, and this might be the new information that will be helpful to you, because it is helpful to me. A lot of us read these Bible stories which focus on the extraordinary things that happened and we look at ourselves and we think, “OK, I’m an ordinary guy or gal just like Moses, Peter or whoever, so what extraordinary thing am I going to do for God? How is God going to use me in some extraordinary way in my life?” And when that doesn’t happen, and we don’t see it, when we don’t get called to

Africa, we think “Well, maybe I’m not spiritual enough; maybe I’m not good enough.”

See, the problem is that we don’t realize two things: first, that the extraordinary was not an everyday occurrence with the people of the Bible. Only twice in his life did Abraham do anything that took a lot of faith. Only a few times in his life did Moses do a miracle. It didn’t happen every day. Gideon had one amazing victory over the enemy. For the rest of his life, as far as we know, Peter only healed two other people.

See, *sometimes*, God uses ordinary people to do a *few* extraordinary things for Him in their life.

2. But *most often*, God uses an ordinary person to do *many ordinary things* for Him through their life.

One of the best illustrations of this comes from the dramatic story of the Apostle Paul's conversion. We all know about Paul and how God eventually used him to do extraordinary things, but the *persecutor Saul* (Paul's Hebrew name before he became a Christian) would have never become the *Apostle Paul* without the influence of an ordinary guy named Ananias.

When Jesus appears to Saul on the road to Damascus, Saul is blinded and has to be led around by the hand; he's so shook that he can't even eat or drink. So, his companions are totally confused, but the best they know is to lead Saul into Damascus and figure it out from there.

At the same time as that is happening, the voice of God comes to Ananias and says, "Ananias, get up and go into town and there you will meet a man named Saul. Go!

Welcome him into the faith, because I have big plans for him. This guy is going to be my missionary to all the Gentiles. A big deal is going to happen with him.”

Ananias can hardly believe what he hears. “Lord, did you say Saul? The same Saul who is church enemy number one, the persecutor and destroyer of so many Christians?”

The voice replies “Yes, now go! You’re the man.”

So, Ananias goes to Saul, and what does he do? He doesn’t treat him as church enemy number one, and he doesn’t treat him as a murderer or destroyer; he calls him “Brother Saul.” Ananias just puts his hands on Saul’s head and says a little prayer for him, Saul’s sight is restored and he is able to eat again.

And Saul goes on to become the great

Apostle Paul while Ananias goes back home and is never heard from again in the Bible. We have no idea what happened to the guy later. He probably didn't become a preacher or a teacher. He was just an ordinary guy who God used to do many ordinary things through his life ... like showing hospitality to people who most of us would reject.ⁱⁱ

I like the way Larry Osborne describes this in his book *The Contrarian's Guide to Knowing God: Spirituality for the Rest of Us* (those of us who are on the other side of the line). In fact, I love this quote. He writes:

As I was reflecting upon the early church and the church-planting efforts of the apostle Paul, it dawned on me [that] ... the vast majority of the people Paul [eventually] led to Christ and the vast majority of people in the churches he planted never became leaders,

never joined Paul on one of his missionary journeys. Instead, they stayed behind as the farmers and merchants, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters who did nothing more than quietly live out changed lives through Christ.

I began to recognize the miracle and majesty of what I now call the "Cobbler in Corinth." I don't mean the pie. I mean the Corinthian shoemaker who after turning to Christ stopped visiting the temple prostitutes, became scrupulously honest in his business dealings, and started treating his wife and children with a love and respect unknown in the pagan and Roman world. And though he may have never planted a church, spent hours in study or solitude, or courageously preached the gospel on a street corner, he

crossed the finish line still loving and following Jesus.

In God's eyes his life was a win – a big win. It was the “cobblers” left behind in Corinth who turned the ancient world upside down just as much as the zealous missionaries bouncing from town to town. Both were needed. Someone had to be out on the edge, spreading the word; but someone had to stay behind and live it out.

And I love that, because when I look back at my teenage years, it wasn't Pastor Dean or Dave Price or Steve Lane who had the biggest impact on me. It was a young woman named Jackie Byrd and her husband, Toby. And actually, I thought of them as really old at the time because they were married and I was just a teenager, but they were probably only seven or eight years

older than me. You know what they did? They dedicated themselves to loving the kids in our youth group. They hung out with us, they taught us, and they took us to camp. They were just regular people. They weren't the spiritual giants.

Sometimes, God uses an ordinary person to do a few extraordinary things for Him in the course of their life. But most often, God uses an ordinary person to do many ordinary things through their life.

3. But rarely does God use an extraordinary person (someone who would think of themselves as a “spiritual giant”) to do anything for Him.

And again, the Apostle Paul is a great example of this. If you were to describe Paul as Saul before he met Jesus on that road to Damascus, you would have said he was an extraordinary man. In fact, he said it himself,

he said that he had the highest pedigree that one could ever want, spiritually speaking. "A Hebrew of Hebrews" is how he described himself, highly trained in the scripture and in the law of Moses.

But not until God broke him on that day was he usable.

And when Paul later wrote that ...

*God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. 1
Corinthians 1:27 (NLT)*

... he could have been speaking of himself.

- Sometimes, God uses an ordinary person to do a few extraordinary things for Him.

- Most often, God uses an ordinary person to do many ordinary things for Him.
- Rarely does God use an extraordinary person to do anything.

Applying It

So, what are we to do with this? Well, I think we need to ask ourselves some questions as our band and drama team get into place.

First of all ...

1. Will I repent of believing that “God only uses spiritual giants” and believe this truth instead?

Will I change my mind from what I thought to what God says? Will I start looking at myself in a different light? Will I start thinking of myself as a critical component of what God is up to in this world? Will I start believing

that, because I have been loved and served by God through Christ and gifted by the Holy Spirit, God can use me to love and serve other people, maybe in a way that no one else can? Will I accept my acceptance in Christ?

For some of us, that will be a huge shift in thinking. That's what repentance is, but that's where it starts.

The second question I think we need to consider ...

2. Is God currently inviting me to do something extraordinary to serve Him in some way?

As I said, I think this happens maybe three or four or five times in the course of your life. If you become a Christian when you're a teenager, three or four or five times in your life, I think God is going to ask you to do

something extraordinary for Him.

Sometimes, God is going to ask you to pick up and move, just quit your job, take your family and move somewhere else, because He has a way that He wants you to serve Him better in another location.

Sometimes God is going to tell us to change careers so that we can devote our primary vocational energy to His work.

Sometimes God is going to tell us to take a big chunk of all those financial resources that we've been laying up for our future and give it to His work.

And I have to believe that in a room this size, God is inviting at least a few of us to do something extraordinary, like those things or something else. If He is, I encourage you to say yes. And don't worry about whether or

not you fit the profile of “spiritual giant,” because you don’t. *No one does.*

That’s the second question: is God currently inviting me to do something extraordinary to serve Him in some way ... OR ... and this is the third and final question and this one is much more likely ...

3. Is God inviting me to serve Him in the many ordinary circumstances of my day-to-day life?

And of course the question is: What does that look like?

Well, let’s watch the exciting conclusion of our drama to find out.

God invites us to serve Him, in the many ordinary circumstances of our day to day life. The question is: How has God uniquely positioned you for that? What could you

easily do that maybe no one else can do?

What opportunities has God already given to you to love and serve others in ways that increase His glory, that make people go “wow, what a cool God, how awesome” and draw them closer to Him? That’s where our focus needs to be most of the time, because that’s where God most often uses us in His service.

Let’s pray together.

Endnotes

ⁱ 1 Corinthians 12

ⁱⁱ Adapted from <http://www.towsonpres.org/sermons/2006-07-30.Acts9.10-19.pdf>