

6 Kinds of People God Won't Use

About 22 years ago, I prayed the most dangerous prayer in the Bible while lying on the floor of a church in Florida. I repeated these words from Isaiah 6:8: "Here am I. Send me." Then I cringed. I knew God would "mess me up good" in order to use me to touch others for Christ. I wanted God to use me, but I was aware that we don't just go out and start a ministry on our own terms. God bends and breaks those who speak for Him. He requires full surrender. I had to let go of fears, adjust attitudes and change priorities.

It has become popular today to suggest that God can use anybody. It's true that He doesn't show favoritism based on race, age, gender, marital history, past failures or income status. Yet His standards have never been lowered; He only uses humble, obedient, consecrated followers.

Many Christians will never be useful in the kingdom because of mindsets or behaviors that limit the flow of the Holy Spirit or, as the apostle Paul said in Galatians 2:21a (KJV), "frustrate the grace of God." I don't ever want to frustrate His grace! If you want God to use you, make sure you don't fall into any of these categories:

1. Driver's seat Christians. Jesus is not just our Savior; He is the Lord. He wants to guide our decisions, direct our steps and overrule our selfish choices. There are many believers who enjoy the benefits of salvation, yet they never yield control to God. If you want Him to use you, you must slide over into the passenger seat and let Jesus drive.

2. Armchair critics. Some people roll up their sleeves and serve the Lord; others make it their business to analyze and pick apart everyone who is doing God's work. The devil is the

accuser, so if you are accusing others, you are operating in the spirit of Lucifer. The Holy Spirit doesn't work through people who are bitter, angry or judgmental.

3. Carnally minded Christians. It has become fashionable today for believers to lower the standard of moral behavior to the point that anything goes. Don't be fooled. Just because more and more people are jumping on the bandwagon of sexual permissiveness doesn't mean God has rewritten His eternal Word. People who live in blatant sin cannot be instruments of the Holy Spirit. Second Timothy 2:21 (MEV) says clearly: "One who cleanses himself from these things will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, fit for the Master's use, and prepared for every good work." Our usefulness to God is based on whether we have submitted to the process of sanctification. Holiness is not an option.

4. Church dropouts. I won't win a popularity contest by saying this, but it's true: God does not use people who have turned away from the church. Today it is fashionable to bash the church; some people have even established "ministries" to lure Christians away from church and into an isolated spiritual wilderness. Most of these church-bashers are bitter because they had a bad experience with a pastor.

I have compassion for victims of spiritual abuse. But no one has the right to tear down the work of God just because a spiritual leader hurt him. The church is God's plan A, and He does not have an alternative. If we are to be used by God, we must get connected to the church and learn to flow with God-ordained leadership.

5. Timid cowards. Paul told Timothy: "Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord" (2 Tim. 1:8a). Fear has the power to paralyze. All who surrender to the call of God must bravely defend the faith, risk their reputation and suffer rejection—and possible persecution. If you're afraid to share the gospel, ask God for boldness.

6. Lazy spectators. Many Christians today think following God means clocking in for a 60-minute service. We read quick devotions on our smartphones and breathe short prayers during our morning commutes. But somewhere in all this 21st-century stress, we lost the meaning of discipleship. If you want God to use you, you must take His call seriously and become a focused student of His Word and a passionate prayer warrior.

The apostles of the first century declared: “But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4). Half-hearted people never changed the world. You must be devoted, committed and passionate if you want to make maximum spiritual impact. {eoa}

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