

# Don't Shut Yourself Out of Servitude

So many men long to serve God, but they feel that their inadequacies, shortcomings and/or the issues they struggle with will keep them from being used by God. However, these men need to realize that God can use anyone who will open themselves up to be used by Him. Recently, I saw some excellent examples to prove this point.

I have been taking a class that studies the history and founding of the Assemblies of God through Berean School of the Bible. The class takes a historical look at how the denomination was started and its core beliefs.

As I was reading the stories of the men and women God used to start and grow the Assemblies of God, I was struck by the humanness of these people and how God used them despite their shortcomings and backgrounds.

For instance, Charles Parham was one of the first people to recognize speaking in tongues as a sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This became one of the founding doctrines of the Assemblies of God.

God used Parham, despite the fact that Parham struggled greatly with prejudice against African-Americans. God used Parham to advance His work while trying to work on Parham's prejudice. Parham's life proves that God can use any man to accomplish His work if the man is willing to acknowledge his shortcomings and allow God to change Him.

The history of the Assemblies of God is full of many different types of people who were used by God for His purpose. Anna B. Lock was a drug addict and an alcoholic by the age of 14. She became a believer and follower of God, and God set her free from her addictions.

Lock became a great evangelist who preached to alcoholics and addicts on Chicago's Skid Row. She went to them on their territory and helped them break free of their addictions as they found salvation in Jesus.

Another example is Edith Mae Pennington. Although she had been voted "Most Beautiful Girl in the U.S." and was a Hollywood actress, she found no fulfillment in this life.

Pennington began reading her Bible, got saved and became a great evangelist. It cost her everything she had: her fame, her fortune, even her marriage, but she gave it all up for God and He was able to use her mightily. She became a mighty evangelist and one of the first female pastors in the Assemblies of God.

God also used "average Joes" who allowed Him to use them to reach many for Him. For instance, Markus Grable was a janitor at Gospel Publishing House (GPH). He noticed the many letters GPH received were questions about Sunday school, so he took it upon himself to answer them.

Eventually, Grable was asked to lead and develop the Sunday school promotion department at GPH. This janitor was used mightily by God through the Sunday school programs of the Assemblies of God. Every Sunday morning, churches across the world still benefit from the willingness of Mr. Grable to step up and help out in an area that was lacking.

The early founders of the Assemblies of God didn't always rely on the set church environment to reach the lost. They used any and all means possible, whether it was missions, revival meetings or home churches. Some even started churches in saloons to reach the lost.

These men and women were just like us, ordinary people with problems and issues who served an extraordinary God. They allowed God to use them whenever and wherever He chose. If God could use them, He can certainly use you!

All God requires of us is to humbly seek to do His will, to be obedient to His call and to live a holy life before Him. When He points out a sin or issue in our lives, we must work to overcome it and completely remove it.

We cannot allow our ideas or our feelings of inadequacies to stop us from serving or obeying God. Who knows? Fifty or 60 years from now, maybe someone will be taking a class and will read about how God used an ordinary guy like *you* for His kingdom. With God, all things are possible, and He can use anyone with a willing and obedient heart.

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