

This sermon is based on chapter one of the “Someone Like You” book (pg. 1)

*This message introduces the series, focusing on how God starts with the willing, supplies strength in weakness, and sends us with purpose.*

Written by: Joe Boyd

## Introduction

---

Today we are going to kick this off and start this series. If today's your first day and you're like, "Oh, I know somebody that could really benefit from this." Good news is the train is leaving the station, but it's not gone. And so the next eight weeks are going to build and gain momentum. So feel free to invite somebody. It's going to be a great journey.

The central idea that we wanted to focus on for this theme and the kickoff today is this: that **God can use anyone to start something incredible. And God can use ordinary people to do extraordinary ministry.**

I look in the mirror every day, and I know me, and I'm like, "Really? I get to do this?" And despite my flaws, God uses me and he uses you and someone like you in order to change the world. And in order to get this going and kind of see where we might fit in on this journey, we wanted to take a moment today and show a video that highlights these seven different founders and these organizations, so you can get a sense of where we're going and maybe ask yourself the question, "Is the person I'm seeing on the screen, is that someone like me?"

Is that someone that you resonate or connect with? Maybe you connect with the pain they feel for the problem they solve. Or maybe you can identify with their journey. But nonetheless, I want you to just consider and ask this: "God, how might you use me? Someone like me, to impact the world like these founders?" Let's take a look.



Show the week one sermon video here, available for streaming or download by following this QR code.  
Length: 6 minutes 47 seconds

That is amazing and I love it because these are stories of someone like you, someone like me, that God is using to impact someone like you in the world. When I think about this, God reminds me in very simple ways of how profound this idea is that God can use us. You know, we think, “Oh, man, if I just had the fame or abilities or giftings or talents, then I could make an impact.” Even this morning, God was showing me, consider this cup.

**(Hold up a coffee cup as an object lesson.)**

I don't know how many of you love the fact that we serve coffee. I love it. I think everybody needs Jesus and everybody needs some coffee. Right? Can I get an amen for that? But what God brought my attention to was the cup. I mean, these are fine, but there's nothing exceptional about a cup.

And really a cup that you **want** is a cup that's **empty** and **available**, and then you fill it with something great. And I use the Highlander Grog. That's my drink of choice here on Sunday mornings. But when I think about it, the value of this is not in the **cup** as much as **what goes in the cup**.

You can't give people what you don't have. But whenever you have more than enough, you can share it. And so God's teaching us this idea. Today if you watch these videos, I hope what you're learning is that these are people **just like us** that God is using. And God's calling isn't about your **credentials**. It is about your **availability**.

Are you open to the idea that God could pour something into your life that doesn't just satisfy your soul, but actually meets the needs of someone else? And that is the point that we're trying to make today. I want to share three ways God can do something extraordinary in someone like you. And this is a message that is for all of us.

There are no superstars in the Kingdom of God, but there are ordinary people like you and I that follow and get to know an extraordinary God that wants to pour into our lives, if we're willing to remove the lid of doubt or excuses in order to allow him to fill us up. And so today we're going to be taking a look at a prophet.

And his name is Jeremiah. And he's not a bullfrog. He was kind of sitting on a log a little bit. And he's got these excuses and God says, “No, no, no, I'm going to use you, someone like you, to speak to nations to transform the world.” And we're reading about it today. And so with that being said, I want to start with point number one.

## **Point Number One: God Starts with the Willing**

---

**God starts with the willing.** Turn to somebody next to you, say, “Hey, are you willing?” Are you willing? Right? It’s a powerful question. God starts with the willing. Is this how Jeremiah started? Well, I mean, he had some doubts, but God speaks to him and says these words in Jeremiah 1:5, “*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.*”

God knew Jeremiah before he was born, had a plan for him. And he said, “I’m sending you to expand a territory, to be my spokesperson in areas you never even considered.” There are things that God has in store for you and me, and all of us that none of us saw coming.

But when we believe that our God is able and we’re willing, God does extraordinary things. Now I get it. Some of you, you’re sitting here and you’re like, “I don’t know. I’ve been disappointed a lot of times.” Right? How many of you love football? How many of you are Vikings fans? Oh, you know what disappointment’s all about.

I love football season and I love being a Vikings fan because man, it helps my prayer life so much. You know what I’m talking about? Some of you are like, “Isn’t there sorrow and lament in the Bible?” It’s also in football in Minnesota, right? But when I think about that, I think about the fact that not every team started out with everything going great. Not everybody gets drafted in the first round. That’s not always their story.

There’s this guy, you might have heard of him. He’s called the GOAT of football quarterbacks. Tom Brady, and things didn’t start out great for him, did they? I remember that draft in 2000.

**(Show the graphic of the NFL draft from the year 2000, “Slide9-2000-Draft.PNG”)**

We look at this list of people, the quarterbacks that got drafted. And if you really know football you know some of these names.

Many of us though in this room are looking at those names, and you’re like, “I don’t know anybody **but** Tom Brady.” And he’s at the bottom of the list. He was drafted in the sixth round. That’s days after the party’s over. And he was drafted 199th. Think about that. And he went on to be one of the greatest quarterbacks.

He also ran one of the slowest 40s in the history of the NFL. That gives me hope. You know, because all I do is run out and get buttered corn. But anyway, I like the fact that he started out low on the totem pole. In fact, there's a story that Robert Kraft, the owner of the Patriots, said that he was walking through the stadium and he saw this young guy running in the bleachers, and it was Tom Brady.

He didn't even know who he was. And Tom Brady comes up and he says, "Hey, I just want to introduce myself. I'm Tom Brady and you drafted me at 199 and that is the best decision this organization has ever made." And Robert just kind of laughed and thought to himself, "Well, it's good to have dreams." And then to his surprise, he was amazed that it did turn out to be one of the best decisions ever made.

And the thing is, it started out with adversity, with setback. He wasn't the number one pick, but he was willing. And in fact, there's a quote that Tom Brady is famous for.

**(Show the graphic of the Tom Brady quote, "Slide10-Tom-Brady-Quote.PNG")**

And it's this, he said, "I think sometimes in life, the biggest challenges end up being the biggest things that can happen in your life."

Now, what does that have to do with a series called Someone Like You? Well, if you think about it, all of these founders were faced with really big challenges. Some of them were their own insecurities, and some of them were things that they just couldn't imagine doing. But in a world where God is able and using people, they said, **"I don't know how to do this, but I'm willing."**

And their greatest challenges became some of their greatest moments, not only in **their** life where God filled **their** cup, but where they had something to pour out for someone else. And so we want to be willing. And I guess the point that I want to make in this is that **if God knew you before you were born, he knows what you're capable of.**

You ever think about that? That you may not know your true potential, but God knows your value, your worth. He knows how to use you in a way that you could never imagine. And listen, man, a football in my hands is not going to go far. But a football in Tom Brady's hands will go incredibly far, even if it's a little deflated.

Too soon? Okay. Anyway, moving on. The point is, that God really can use each and every one of us. All right.

## **Point Number Two: God Supplies Strength in Weakness**

**God supplies strength in weakness.** I don't know about you, but how many of you have this experience that I have on a regular basis?

I look in the mirror, I know me, I know the behind the scenes. I know what I'm not good at. I know where all the problems are. You know? And so, I just think, "I'm not able. I don't have what it takes." Well, if you feel like that, if you feel like me, you're not alone. This is a common theme of people like Jeremiah, and people that have been used greatly by God in the Bible.

They often started with why they couldn't do it. And it always hinges around some weakness, some place where they're not strong. Look at Jeremiah chapter one, verses six through seven.

Jeremiah is speaking to God and look at what he says. *"Alas, Sovereign Lord,' I said, 'I do not know how to speak; I am too young."* You know, when God asks us to do something, we often give him excuses about why we can't. And man, I believe that God is calling us to just be willing and be honest where we're **weak**, so that God can show us where **he's strong**.

By the way, I love that our youth are always here. Love you guys. But if I could encourage you, the thing I hope I never hear from one of our youth is, "I'm too young." That won't hold up, because God made you and where you may not have the experience yet, you do have a passion. Lean into that. Be obedient to that and know that God will give you the words, and God will give you the abilities to do whatever he's called you to do.

And so what does God say? It's incredible. *"But the Lord said to (Jeremiah), 'Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you."* God's called each and every one of us to something. I think he's called us all collectively to go and help people experience grace. But I think that he's called each of us in unique ways to do that. And when I look at the Bible, Jeremiah is not by himself.

Moses said this. He's like, "I can't speak, I'm not good at public speaking." A lot of people really struggle with public speaking. In fact, studies have shown that people would rather jump out of a perfectly good airplane with a parachute than stand on a stage and speak to a group of people. And Moses said, "I can't go by myself." And God said, "I'll give you the words, who made your mouth? Oh, by the way, I'm going to send Aaron with you, so that you have somebody, so that you're not alone."

And we've been in the business of **making excuses** when God's been in the business of calling us to **make disciples**.

And that just means that we follow God. **It doesn't mean that we know it all**. It just means that **we know the one who knows it all**, and we trust him for every step we take. Now you might say, those are good examples in the Bible. What about somebody like me?

*At this point, share a story of someone in your congregation who achieved victory, or was carried through a difficult moment, by the power of God.*

That is real stuff, guys. That is real. And so whatever God is calling you to, you may not be able to do it on your own. But **God is able**.

The point I'm making in this is **our excuses are no match for God's empowerment**. If God calls us **to** it, he'll get us **through** it. He'll lead us. He's the answer to the question, "Who made your mouth?"

So how do you take your next step? How do you serve people that you don't even know yet? God knows. And we can trust him. And that brings us to point number three. Everybody say "Three."

### **Point Number Three: God Sends You With Purpose**

**God sends you with purpose**. Listen, there's a plan behind what God is wanting to do in and through each and every one of us.

But any time there's a plan and a purpose, there's going to be a little bit of opposition, and God knows, look at what God says next in verse eight. "'Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,' declares the Lord." Now some of you are like, "Who's he afraid of?" Well, I don't know if you know this, but Jeremiah was in a hostile environment where people did not like what God was talking about, and what Jeremiah was going to be talking about.

And back in those days, man, they would stone people. And I don't mean like in Colorado, stoned people. I mean, with rocks, this is scary stuff. And so he's not only scared of speaking, he's scared of what he's going to speak and what might then happen to him. And God says, don't be afraid because **I'm with you**.

When I think about going behind enemy lines, I think about the Navy Seals.

**(Show the graphic of Navy Seals, "Slide20-Navy-Seals.PNG")**

Anybody in the Navy? Yeah. Thank you for your service. I mean, I've had the honor of knowing a few people that served as Seals. And, man, that is hard core. Like, they trained. They go into places and nobody ever really knows they're going. And it's very dangerous. They may be the best of the best to face some of the most challenging moments.

What I know about them is that they **never go alone**. Somebody takes lead, somebody on their six. They're to the sides. They go as a unit, as a team. They never go alone. And they experience this incredibly intense training and where officers are wearing them out day after day and just yelling at them to quit and ring the bell to go home.

We only want the ones that can make the cut. Here's something that they teach. It's a proverb. It's not a proverb in the Bible. It actually comes from an old African proverb or saying: **"If you want to go fast, go alone. But if you want to go far, go together."** And that's how they send people on mission together.

What I love is that we're on mission too. Now, we may not always send people into hostile environments where people are shooting at you. But listen, there are some of our missionaries that are in those places. Right now we're focused heavily on Thailand. We have a church, a Thai church we started here, but we also are reaching Thai people in Thailand, and we have missionaries there, boots on the ground doing it.

And they're not doing it alone. They work as a family. They're partnering with churches like ours so that we can go further together. And so I love that. See, what I know is that **God never sends us alone. His presence is a promise** that he is really with us. And not only is he with us, but he sends other people with us.

Which is why we say the worst place you and I can ever be in 2025 is alone. Which is why we are a church **of** groups, not a church **with** groups, but a church **of** groups. Because we can **learn in lines**. But man, we **grow in circles** and we want you to find your friends because we do better and we go further when we're on mission together.

So today I'm going to ask us to take some steps together. Okay? And here are the steps. What is your next step today? Everybody say "Today."

Listen, you have to take a step every day when you get up and stretch and take a shower and shave and do whatever you do to get your day going and get coffee in your system.

We all have a step to take. Some of us have little steps. Some of us have big steps, but we all have steps. And so I want to give steps that everybody can take. The first one is **will you get the book?** Will you get the book? Like, just start. You might be fearful to get a book like this because you think, “Well, I don’t know. If I start seeing that God **can** use someone like me, then he might actually **use** someone like me.”

But I would say, **be brave**. Don’t be afraid. Get the book. Get started. Everything you need to do this series is in the book. Number two, **will you join a group?** Listen, don’t go alone. Go together. Let’s go far. Grow and learn. You might find your new best friend in a group. You might find your purpose and your meaning in life.

For those of you that are fearful about long-term commitments, you at least give a couple years to your phone plan. How about you give eight weeks to God?

Let’s put that out on social media. All right, so the third question and I think this is really important. **Will you say yes to God’s call in your life?** Now that’s a simple question, but it’s profound. Let me talk to two different groups for a second. Let me first talk to those of you that have been following Jesus for a while.

Jeremiah followed God. That’s why God called him to be a spokesperson. He also had excuses and fear. I believe that even if you follow Jesus, even if you went all in with Jesus at some point in your life, fear can creep in. And what happens is, we get our hands full with life’s problems and worries and circumstances and situations and we’re like, “Oh, I don’t know if I can carry all this. This is really heavy.”

**(Take hold of a heavy object such as a table or chair.)**

And what we do is we close our hands, we take hold of something to avoid things that we’re fearful of, and we get a death grip on it, and then we don’t change. We can’t move. Like you ever latch down on something? Like, if I hold this, I can’t go far. If I hold on to this table. But if I let go, I’m not bound by that.

And now, my hands are open to what God wants to do next.

**(Demonstrate by opening your hand.)**

What is it God wants you to do next? Will you say yes? And it's not even about **knowing** what's next. It's just being **willing**. Because God works with the willing. So I want you to think about that. And we're going to pray over that in a second.

For those of you that are new or never put your faith in Jesus, I'm glad you're here. I'm really glad you're here. Because, listen, that's where I started. I mean, I didn't know who God was, but when I met God, I realized he had a purpose and a plan for me, and that changed everything. When I realized that there's a God who says, "Listen, I want to be with you, I can't stand the idea of not having **someone like you** in eternity with me."

This is God saying, "I'd rather die than be separated from you." And that's what he did. He died on a cross. The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death. That's the penalty you pay. If you get a speeding ticket, you pay the price. If you sin, you pay a price. But he paid the price for us on a cross.

He died for us. Now, if you said, "The fact he paid the price is amazing," you'd be right. What's even more amazing than that is that he not only died and paid the price. Three days later, he rose from the grave, proving he conquered sin and death.

And if you're going to follow anybody into eternity. And by the way, we're all going to follow somebody into eternity. Follow the one that's **fully alive**. Because Jesus is the way and he says, "Follow me. I know where this is going, and it's good." But if that's not enough to blow your mind... out of all the religions in the world, and I've studied them all, Jesus is the only one that says, "I will send God to live within you."

Meaning you and I are never alone. It's not about our performance. It's not about whether we **measure up**. It's whether or not we are **available**. Because he wants to fill us up with his grace, his truth, and his love. Let's pray.

*Close in prayer, and then this is a good opportunity to share about some local organizations where your congregation can get involved in serving the needs of your community.*