

A man was telling his neighbour, "I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me four thousand dollars, but it's state-of-the-art. It's perfect." "Really," answered the neighbour. "What kind is it?" And the man answered, "Twelve thirty."

The problem with talking to God is we need to listen to what he says, and sometimes we can't hear him or we don't like what we hear.

You see, God knows we're far more capable than we could ever suspect, and how does he know that? He built us that way. David hinted at this in Psalm 139 (we just sang the Scottish version just before).

You it was who fashioned my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.

Psalm 139:13

The Bible repeatedly declares that every individual on earth has value, we are born in his image.

You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honour.

(Psalms 8:5 NIV11)

Every person that has ever been born has been born with the potential to do great things. God has created each one of us with the ability to change the world we live in.

That's why God told Jeremiah

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

(Jeremiah 1:4-5 NRSV)

Every child that is born has the potential to do great things for God. Paul tells us in his letter to the Ephesians:

we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10

How soon does God prepare those "good works" for us to do? Well once again Paul tells us that it's from birth:

But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles

(Galatians 1:15-16 ESV)

The Bible repeatedly tells us... we're born with potential. This is an incontestable reality.

The question is not: do you & I have potential? But – do we believe we have that potential?

Do we believe we have that kind of value? Will we hear God when we he speaks to us and how will we react?



Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.

(Jeremiah 1:6 NRSV)

In other words, sorry God, I don't have the potential to be used by you. In fact, I was thinking of staying here wallowing in my own sin!

There was a guy, let's call him Wayne, who fell over a cliff, but just at the last second he grabbed hold of a tree root and he finds himself stuck there, he doesn't have the strength to climb back up and if he lets go he's dead.

He screams and yells for ages:

"Help, help, is anyone there? Help!"

But no help comes. Eventually he calls for God, suddenly it gets very quiet.

"Wayne"

"Yes"

"This is God, I heard your call, what do you want?"

"I'm stuck hanging from this tree root, and you ask me what I want"

"I heard your call, let go of the root and I won't let you fall"

So Wayne thinks it over — “Help, help is anyone else out there?”
Jeremiah, like most of us I suspect, suffered from a condition I call
“spiritual short-sightedness”

I’m short sighted. Without my glasses on, I can only see about so far.
When I don’t have my glasses on, everything becomes blurry and out
of focus.

People who suffer from SPIRITUAL short-sightedness can only see
so far. They can only see what is in their immediate area. God is out
of focus. His power is blurred for them. And, as a result... they can
only see their own abilities, their own strengths and their own
weaknesses.

They’ll say:

- I can’t do anything
- I’m too uneducated
- I’m too poor
- I’m too untalented

Just like Jeremiah we say to our God — I’m but a child in my
spirituality and I can’t do much.

But God says: Who says you’re doing the work!

But the LORD said to me,
“Do not say, ‘I am only a boy’... Do not be afraid of them, for I am with
you to deliver you... I have put my words in your mouth.”

(Jeremiah 1:7-9 NRSV)

God was telling Jeremiah... you don’t have to do this on your own.

- I am with you.
- I will strengthen you.
- I will protect you.
- I’ll never leave you.
- I’ll never forsake you.

On our own nothing is sure. Nothing is certain:

What is impossible with man is possible with God.

(Luke 18:27 ESV)

What God was basically telling Jeremiah was this:

"You have value. You have potential... because I (God) gave it to you. I formed you for a purpose, and IF I (God) formed you for that purpose then I'll give you the strength to fulfil your task.

The cure for spiritual short-sightedness is corrective lenses. Spiritual glasses that focus on God and see what He is capable of providing

How many Jeremiah's are here today?

Don't look at me,

I'm not a boy — gender makes no difference, think of St Theresa, Mary McKillop, Deborah from the OT

I'm not young — Moses was 80 and Aaron was 93 when they confronted Pharaoh

In answer to Jeremiah's protest and everyone else's protest; in resisting God's call; God answers each one of us something like this: "I am calling you to do this because it needs to be done and, with my help you can do it. I'll provide you with everything you need in order to do it. Listen to me and trust me, I will be with you every step of the way."

When God comes calling your answer should be like Paul's:

And I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?'

(Acts 22:10 ESV)