

I'm Not Qualified For This

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Date: 14 April 2024

Preacher: Dr. Wes Feltner

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

If you're able to stand, please do so as we honor the reading of God's Word. I'm just going to give you a little bit of taste of it in verse 14. Exodus chapter 6 and verse 14.

It says, Now, who's glad they came to church tonight?

[2 : 50] That'll change your life right there. Amen? What is he going to do with that? Let's pray. I'm going to preach it. It's what I'm going to do. Let's pray. God, thank you for this time. And every single verse and every part of the Bible has been inspired by you.

Even the ones that we think are hard, even the ones we don't understand, God, you have put them there for a purpose. And we love you. And because we love you, we love your Word because it's your Word.

So help us tonight. Come and talk to us tonight. Speak to us through your Word, I pray, in Jesus' name. And God's people said, Amen.

Amen. You can be seated. When Cecilia Jimenez started the restoration project, she had no idea it was going to make her internationally famous.

And internationally famous indeed. You see, she would end up on the cover of newspapers from New York City to Sydney, Australia. She would end up on late night talk shows.

[3 : 56] She went viral on social media. She literally had thousands and thousands of people from all around the world comment on her artwork.

But it's not exactly what she wanted. You see, Cecilia was an 81-year-old devout parishioner at a small Catholic church in Spain.

In the summer of 2012, she noticed a painting hanging on the church wall. And it had been hanging there ever since 1930.

It was fading. It was beginning to crack. It was at very high risk of being ruined forever. And the painting was called Ecce Homo.

It's Latin for behold the man. It's a painting, as you see, of the very face of Christ. Well, because this painting was old and at risk of being ruined, she took it home.

[4 : 56] And she started a restoration project. She put big blocks of color and retraced the divine countenance of Christ. And when she finished, this once beautiful image of Christ now looked like this.

She became the laughingstock of the art community and indeed the laughingstock of the world. She was even made fun of on Saturday Night Live.

You got permission from Jesus? Yes. Say, Jesus, he came to me in a dream. And Jesus, he looked at me with his enormous, round monkey face. And poor Jesus.

Jesus had broken his arm. And he was wrapped up in a little jelly roll scroll. Sorry. So you're saying Jesus looks like your painting? Yes.

Oh, say, he was so beautiful. He had beautiful hair. And that became a scarf. It was a scarf made of hair that wrapped around his little round expressionist face.

[6 : 01] And then he looked at me with a dead black eye. He had black eyes. Now I know. I was surprised as you. It was like a rabbit eye.

I said, Jesus, why you look like a shark? The mockery of her painting did not stop there. It became meme after meme after meme.

There are like thousands of these. Here are just a few of them. There was E.T. Jesus. There was South Park Jesus. There was Monkey Jesus.

And I don't know why this one's my favorite, but Baby Jesus. All right. So, I mean, she was laughed at. She was mocked because of her painting. And listen, I don't have any doubt that she probably had the best intentions.

She really wanted to do well. But everybody around the world agrees. She wasn't exactly qualified to do the work.

[7 : 00] Amen. Listen to me, Faith family. Have you ever taken on a project? Have you ever taken on a task? Have you ever made a commitment? And you realize somewhere along the way, I don't have a clue what I'm doing.

Anybody? Anybody ever felt like the job you were doing and your abilities to do the job didn't exactly match? Have you ever felt unqualified?

Inadequate? Way in over your head? You ever thought that as a parent? You looked at your kids and you're like, I have no idea what I'm doing.

And all the parents said, amen. You ever looked at your spouse or partner and thought, you could do so much better than me. You ever applied for a job and thought, there's no way they'll ever hire me.

I don't have the experience. I don't have the education. Maybe you played a sport and you thought, there's no way I'm good enough to ever see the court. Maybe you started a home improvement project and you thought, what did I get myself into?

[8 : 09] Or maybe you entered into that debate and it didn't take long and you realized, I don't have the knowledge to hold my own. Or maybe at one point you prayed to God and you told him he'd be better off using somebody else.

In one way or another, at one time or another, you and I have felt unqualified.

Right? That is exactly, that is exactly how Moses feels here in Exodus chapter 6. Look at verse 10. This is where we left off last week.

It says, The Lord said to Moses, go in and tell Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to let the people of Israel go out of his land. But Moses said to the Lord, behold, the people of Israel have not listened to me. How then shall Pharaoh listen to me? For I am of uncircumcised lips. Moses here is struggling with his qualification to do this mission, to do this task.

[9 : 23] At this point in Exodus chapter 6, he feels like, and I don't hardly blame him, that this mission that he has been on has been a total failure.

Nothing is working. This is the home improvement project that just keeps getting worse. This is the restoration project that has turned out to be a disaster.

And think about it. Ever since the end of Exodus chapter 4, do you remember? When Moses finally goes back to Egypt, and he meets with Israel, and he shares with them God's promise.

And what does Israel do? They believed Moses, and they worshipped God. Here we go. Things are going to get better. Things are looking up.

And everything got worse. In fact, since that moment at the end of chapter 4, it has been one thing after another. Pharaoh will not cooperate, chapter 5, verse 2.

[10 : 24] Israel is not free. In fact, life has gotten harder for them, chapter 5, verse 9. Now Israel is upset with Moses and Aaron because they feel betrayed, chapter 5, verse 21.

Israel won't listen to Moses anymore because of their broken spirit, chapter 6, verse 9. And God is like stuck on repeat. He keeps telling these promises about freedom from Egypt, and they never seem to come to pass, chapter 6, verse 10.

And at this point, Moses is saying, enough is enough. I'm done. I quit.

I'm out. It is obvious, God. I'm not qualified. I'm not qualified for this job.

I'm not qualified to do this mission. I've told you this before. Let me say it again. I'm inadequate to do this. In fact, look at the phrase that he says again in verse 12.

[11 : 35] And I want you to underline this in your Bibles. He says, Now, obviously, that's not literal, right?

You don't circumcise lips. It's an expression. It's a metaphor. It's the idea of uncircumcised would mean to an ancient Near Eastern mindset, unclean, unqualified.

I don't belong. I don't belong here, God. In fact, let me give you a parallel example of this. In fact, does that phrase uncircumcised lips ring a bell to you?

Does it ring Isaiah chapter 6 when Isaiah is taken in by vision into the throne room of God and he sees the holiness of God?

Do you remember what he says? Look at Isaiah chapter 6 in verse 4. The foundations of the threshold shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.

[12:43] And I, that is Isaiah, said, Woe is me, for I am lost, that is, I am undone, for I am a man of, say it, unclean lips.

What's he saying? He's saying, I don't belong here. I don't belong in the presence of God. This is too holy for me. I do not belong in this, and not only am I a man of unclean lips, but I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips because my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

Are y'all with me? Y'all with me? Isaiah, seeing the holiness of God, says, I know one thing is true. I don't belong here. It's what it means to have uncircumcised or unclean lips, that is to recognize that you don't belong.

And so Moses, in Exodus chapter 6, is saying, I'm done. I don't belong on this mission. Pharaoh won't listen.

Israel won't listen. God, it seems like you won't listen. I don't belong here. I'm not qualified.

[13:52] Oh, faith family, would you talk to me tonight? Have you ever been there? Have you ever felt like Moses feels here in Exodus 6? That is, you're empty. You're done.

There's nothing left. You feel totally helpless and completely weak. And this is not new for Moses. Oh, this is not new at all. But Moses has got to learn here, and I believe God is teaching him this over and over as he is trying to teach us over and over. He's got to learn a lesson that another man of faith had to learn.

In fact, it's something every single one of us as a people of faith have to learn, and it's this. 2 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 8. This is the Apostle Paul. Three times, and he's referring to here his thorn in the flesh, this suffering that he had.

Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, much like Moses, that it would leave me, but God said to me, my grace is sufficient for you.

[14:57] My power is made perfect in, say it. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my, say it, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am, then I am strong.

See, Paul had to come to understand in his mission that it's actually in his weakness that he's strong. Listen to me.

Because it's in your weakness that you realize you're inadequate, and you depend not on yourself, but on God, which is strength.

And so Paul said, it took me a while to get it, but I finally got it. And what I finally got was, when I'm weak, I'm actually strong, because it's when I'm weak that I totally trust, because I have nothing else to do in the power of God.

[16:04] And that is the lesson that Moses has to learn here, that it's actually in his weakness, in his unqualification, in his inadequacies, that he's actually now ready to go into Egypt.

Listen again. In fact, this whole example of Exodus reminded me of something in the book of Judges. Do you remember Gideon? Do you remember the story of Gideon? And when Gideon, this man of God, is trying to hide from the Midianites, he's afraid, and he's doing everything he can to get away.

And God, in Judges chapter 6, comes to Gideon through the angel of the Lord, and look at what he says in Judges 6, 11. The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon and said to him, The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor.

And I bet Gideon laughed at that. Gideon says, and you can sense the sarcasm here, because it is a spiritual gift, and it is frequently in the Bible. Gideon responds, and he says, Please, my Lord, please, please.

If the Lord is with us, then why has all this happened to us? Huh. You ever wondered that? If the Lord is really with us, why has all this happened to us?

[17:19] And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us? You know what I'm talking about. You know, did not the Lord bring us up from out of Egypt? But now, the Lord has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian.

And the Lord said to him, Go in this might of yours. Gideon doesn't sound mighty at all.

He sounds weak and afraid. And the Lord says, Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian. Do not I send you?

And he said to him, Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, listen, listen, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh.

And I am the least in my father's house. And the Lord said to him, But I am with you. I will be with you.

[18 : 25] And you shall strike the Midianites as one man. Are you seeing the parallels with Moses and Exodus?

I can't do this. I'm weak. I am of uncircumcised lips. I don't belong here. But Moses, I'm with you. Buddy, you're going to have to learn what somebody else is going to learn a long time from now, namely the Apostle Paul, that it's in your weakness that you're strong.

It is in your inadequacies that I will do my mighty work. Are you with me tonight, faith family? In fact, in Hebrews 11, Gideon, along with many, many others, you know, Abraham and Moses and others are brought up.

And look at chapter 11, verse 32. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah and David and Samuel and the prophets, who through faith, listen to what they did.

They conquered kingdoms and they enforced justice and they obtained promises and they stopped the mouths of lions and they quenched the power of fire and they escaped the edge of sword.

[19 : 33] And you're like, how in the world did they do all those great things? Because they were made strong out of, say it, weakness.

Learn it, faith family. Learn the lesson that God is trying to teach Moses. He's trying to teach Gideon. He's trying to teach the Apostle Paul. He's trying to teach every man and woman of faith that it is in your weakness you are strong.

Oh, listen, listen. This is the upside down nature of the kingdom of God. It is the upside down nature of the mission of God.

And here's what I mean. In this world, in this world that we live in, if you want to be qualified to do a job, what do you need to be? You need to be educated, confident, impressive, and strong.

If you're those things, man, you're likely getting the job. Amen? But if you're going to be qualified for the Lord's work, if you're going to be qualified for the mission of God, here's what you have to be.

[20 : 41] Desperate, not confident in yourself at all, fully and completely aware of your inabilities, and weak.

Because the mission's too big for you. Preaching the gospel is too big for me. Don't I know it? What God has called you to do is too big for you.

And that is why you're never going to understand strength until you understand your weakness.

That's where the power lies. Notice it on the screen. Moses would never be strong until he realized he was weak.

This is so counter-American culture. But it is the kingdom of God, my friend. In fact, I believe, I believe, and there's probably more going on, but if you're in Exodus 6 wondering, why is Israel not freed yet?

Why has the Exodus not happened yet? Here's what I wonder. Here's what I wonder. Notice it on the screen. That Israel would not be freed from Egypt until Moses got free from himself.

[21 : 53] Because he's not ready to do what God has called him to do until he realizes that when this thing is done, it will only be because of God.

It will only be because of the power of God. And so God, in his grace, once again brings Moses to the end of himself and makes him realize how unqualified he really is.

There's an old quote by a Stoic philosopher that goes like this. It is impossible for a man to learn what he thinks he already knows. Listen, the more we think we've got this Christianity thing figured out, the harder it's going to be for God to use our stubborn hearts.

But the moment we realize, I got nothing, I don't really even belong here, but by God's grace, now you're ready to be used for mighty things. So let us never, ever, ever forget this.

Look at it, 1 Corinthians 1.27. That God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise. God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.

[23 : 12] God chose what is low and despised in the world, even the things that are not, to bring to nothing the things that are. And here's why God does it this way. So no human being will boast in the presence of God.

Moses needs to be reminded of his weakness. But listen to me. Are you with me? He not only needs to be reminded of his weakness, he needs to know this.

Weakness is not a disqualification. Say it again. He needs to be reminded of his weakness. I'm of uncircumcised lips. I can't do this. I don't belong here.

What in the world am I doing? I want to just, in fact, I wonder if Moses is like, you know, I think I'd just like to go back to herding sheep. Because this whole mission of God thing is just too big for me. Good, good, good, good, good. That's what I want you to be reminded of. But I don't want you to think that your weakness disqualifies you. Have you ever been, like, reading along in a story, maybe or watching a movie, and the story takes this sudden, weird twist?

[24 : 25] Anybody? You with me? Like, I don't mean like a strange twist. I mean, like, it doesn't make any sense why we were going right and now we're going left.

It just seems like out of nowhere. Listen, the reader, the modern reader, is reading along Exodus chapter 6, and I trust that you have been engaged in this story.

That you, like, you never heard this story before, you're engaged in this story, and you're thinking, all right, Moses finally goes back to Egypt, and man, they believed Moses, and they worshiped God. Oh, good, oh my goodness, now work got harder, and Pharaoh has said no.

Like, when is he going to give in and actually say yes, and is Moses actually going to quit and give up and go back, and what about Israel? I mean, they're a broken spirit, and now they won't even listen.

Like, when's it all going to happen? Like, you're engaged in all the story, wondering when is it all going to come to pass, when will God fulfill his promises, and then out of nowhere, a genealogy.

[25 : 32] Are you with me? A genealogy. Like, the modern reader thinks this. What? What? Like, what are we doing here?

We're in chapter 6. Genealogies go, last I checked, in chapter 1, right? Or maybe in chapter 2, when you introduce Moses, that would have been an appropriate place for a genealogy.

But the modern reader here is saying, why at all is there a genealogy, and why would you put it here? Why drop a genealogy right in the middle of the story?

Because let's be honest. Be honest. It's always good to be honest at church, right? Is you think genealogies are boring, don't you? Maybe not your genealogy, but you think Old Testament genealogies are boring.

And the reason you think Old Testament genealogies are boring is because they're essentially a bunch of names you're glad your parents didn't name you. Okay? I mean, let's be honest.

[26 : 36] Like in verse 19, Mooshy. Mooshy. Like, aren't you glad your parents didn't name you Mooshy? All right? And so what's up with this?

What's going down here? Why drop a genealogy in the middle of Exodus 6? Well, let me first give you a few reasons why genealogies matter generally in the Bible, and then I'll tell you how this genealogy matters specifically.

You with me? Why genealogies matter generally, and then why this genealogy matters specifically first. Genealogies matter historically.

Genealogies in the Bible, that is, matter historically. Because, listen, the Bible is the unfolding of real events that happened with real people in time and space.

These are real names. You may struggle to pronounce them, but these are real people with real names that happened in history. Listen, the Bible is giving us real history. You with me? Two.

[27 : 43] Genealogies matter not only historically, but genealogies matter theologically. Listen, the Bible is not just telling us history. The Bible is telling us a specific redemptive story.

It's telling us a specific redemptive story. Ever since Genesis 3, God promised a seed, an offspring, that there was someone coming into the world.

And then in Genesis 12 and Genesis 15, he chooses a specific nation from which this offspring will come into the world. Listen, what the genealogies of the Old Testament are doing is tracing the promises of God through this chosen nation.

It matters theologically because it's showing us how God is fulfilling the promise of a promised child, a promised seed from Genesis chapter 3.

You with me? So they matter historically. They matter theologically. And thirdly, they matter personally. They matter personally. Now you might say, okay, I get that it's redemptive story.

[28 : 54] I get that it's history. But how in the world do genealogies matter to me? Why should I give a rip about the genealogies in the Old Testament personally?

Here's why. Are you listening? You listening? You listening? Just making sure. Because listen, every one of the names in this genealogy mattered.

Every single person in this genealogy matters. Listen, notice it on the screen. The names that mean nothing to you meant something to the story of God.

These names that meant nothing to you meant something to the story of God. And do you know why that should encourage you? Because it means that your life matters to God.

Notice it on the screen right here. Your life may be unknown, but your life still matters. There are names and stories here you will never know.

[30 : 05] Or you may know the name, but you don't know all the details. You don't know all the situations. You don't know all that went down. Just like there's a whole lot of people that won't know anything about you.

They'll never know your name. They'll never know how you fit in the story of God. But you do! You belong to the story of God just like they belong to the story of God.

And so if nothing else, you should walk away from a genealogy saying, while I know nothing about most of these people, they mattered. And so do I.

I may be unknown, but I am still important and matter to the story of God. That should encourage you, right? Now, that's why genealogies exist generally.

Now, why does this genealogy exist specifically? And this is where I want to talk about how practical this genealogy actually is. See, why drop this in the middle of Exodus chapter 6?

[31 : 13] Well, first, what is this genealogy even about? Look at chapter 6 and verse 26. These are the Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said, bring out the people of Israel from the land of Egypt by their host.

It was they who spoke to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, about bringing out the people of Israel from Egypt. This Moses and this Aaron.

Okay? So let's just stop. Clearly, we know why this genealogy exists is some type of connection or establishing something to Moses and Aaron.

Does everybody see that? Because it's about these were the ones who led Israel out of Egypt. It was this Moses and this Aaron. Okay, okay, okay, okay.

Well, who was in this genealogy? I read it at the top of the sermon. You've got Reuben in verse 14. You've got Simeon in verse 15.

[32 : 14] You've got Levi in verse 16. Who are they? Three of the 12 tribes or three of the 12 sons of Jacob.

And then the next 10 verses simply take Levi and they break that tribe down further talking about Levi's sons and his grandsons. What's the point?

They're trying to show you that this Moses and this Aaron belong to the Levitical tribe. They're part of the priestly line.

And who are the ones that are the mediators between God and Israel? The priests. But wait.

There's more. Look at chapter 6 and verse 23.

Aaron took his wife, Elsheba, and the daughter, Amimadab, and sister, Nashon, and she bore Nadab and Abihu and Elzardi.

[33 : 16] Do those names at all ring a bell to anybody? Do those names jump off in any way? Look at Matthew chapter 1. Matthew chapter 1.

Matthew chapter 1 in verse 4. What do you see? Ram, the father of Amenadab and Amenadab, the father of Nashon and Nashon and you've got Salmon and Boaz and Rahab and it leads all the way to who at the very end?

David, the king. Oh, oh, oh my, oh my, oh my. This is a big deal. This is a big deal because not only does this Moses and this Aaron belong to the priestly line of Levi, they belong at least Aaron to the kingly line of David which is a part of the ultimate lineage to the true high priest and the ultimate king of all kings, the Lord Jesus Christ who accomplished the greatest exodus ever.

And you thought genealogies were boring. Are you listening? This genealogy establishes the qualification of Moses and Aaron.

Somebody say preach, preacher. Because if you think I've let it loose now, just wait. I'm about to go. Here, listen, listen, listen. Why put this genealogy right in the middle of Exodus chapter 6?

[34 : 43] This genealogy establishes Moses and Aaron's qualification and what is Moses struggling with?

His qualification. I don't belong here. I'm not qualified. I'm not adequate for this mission. It is as though God in his providence puts this genealogy here to say this.

Oh, Moses and Aaron, listen, you are not qualified for this mission because of your abilities. You're qualified for this mission because of your bloodline.

Don't you see? Notice it on the screen. You're not qualified because of your credentials. You're qualified because you belong to God's chosen.

Dear Christian, listen to me. Listen to me. When you feel like Moses and you are down and you are discouraged and you feel disqualified to all the things that God has called you to do.

[35 : 50] You don't feel qualified to be a parent. You don't feel qualified to do your job. You don't feel qualified to serve the church. You don't feel qualified to preach the gospel. You don't feel qualified to be on this mission of taking the good news to the world.

And in that moment when you feel like you don't belong here. In that moment when you feel like you're not qualified for this, you need to remember that your qualification is not found in your resume.

It is found in his righteousness. You need to remember that your qualification is not about the fact that you are from the right family. It's the fact that you belong to God's family.

Faith family, listen to me. Your qualification is not in your pedigree. It's in your family tree. You in all of your leekness are qualified because of the blood of Christ.

Christ. Now get up and get back to work. Get up and continue the mission.

[37 : 01] Get up and get over yourself because in your weakness you are strong and what qualifies you is not you.

It is the blood of Christ. You know, faith family, I used to think the answer to my failures was to fix them.

That the solution to my weakness was to replace them with strengths. I assumed that the secret to being a successful pastor was to be perfect, flawless, and superhuman.

That my character and my competency would qualify or disqualify me until I learned that God's qualifications system is different than ours. Our qualification is not in our strengths.

It's in our weakness. It's not in our name. It's in His. If you are here tonight and you have put your faith in Jesus, you are qualified for whatever it is He has called you to do.

[38 : 14] I got to admit when I first read about Cecilia, I kind of felt sorry for her. To have her weaknesses and inadequacies display for the entire world to mark, to mock.

But do you know how her story ended? Because the images, the image she made literally went viral across the world. 150,000 tourists started showing up every year to that little church in Spain, bringing in massive amounts of revenue for that little town.

When one of the locals was asked, quote, why are people coming to see the painting if it's a terrible work of art? Here's what the local said, quote, it's a pilgrimage of sorts driven by the media into a phenomenon.

God works in mysterious ways. Sometimes your disaster turns out to be a miracle.

Indeed it does, Faith Family. Indeed it does. Because if you think Cecilia's painting of Jesus was awful, imagine what he must have looked like as he hung on the cross for your sins.

[39 : 46] There was nothing beautiful about that. In fact, the psalmist in Psalm 22 which foreshadows the cross says, I am a worm not a man scorned by mankind and despised by the people all who seek me mock me.

You see, Faith Family, Jesus knew weakness. You better believe he knew weakness. He knew what it was like to be brought to the end of himself. And three days later, that that was weak became strong.

Here's how Paul says it in 2 Corinthians 13, 4. For he was crucified in weakness but lives by the power of God.

Let's pray. God, we thank you so much for genealogies. Genealogies preach because they point us to the one who qualifies us.

Genealogies in the Old Testament point us to Jesus. And what really matters is not whether or not we're strong, gifted, able. What really matters is that we belong to the family of God.

[41 : 21] Because our belonging to the family of God, our being in the genealogy of God is what qualifies us for the mission of God. And I do pray.

It's hard to do, but I pray, Lord, that you'd help protect us from the lies of the world that makes it all about our strength and how we look and how impressive our resume is.

Help us be like the Apostle Paul, who had the impressive worldly resume but recognized it was all rubbish compared to knowing Christ.

All the accomplishments of this world will one day burn away. It is the kingdom of God that stands forever. Forever. So thank you for showing us our weakness and that we are strong.

And as we turn our minds now to the cross and we think about what Jesus did, as we participate in communion, oh before us is going to be weakness.

[42 : 47] It was foolishness to the world, but it was the power of God. So come and meet us now as we remember and as we reflect on how Christ was crucified in weakness but lives the power of God and help us understand what that means for our life as we go about each day seeking to do what you've called us to do.

In Christ's name, amen. Nab