

“YOU CAN DO IT”

Pastor Mike Corwin

TEXT: 1 SAMUEL 15:34-16:13

GOD’S WORD: PSALM 20

I – YOU CAN’T:

I’m sure that you’ve all been told at one time or another how you are below expectations. That you will never succeed in any of your endeavors. It comes from friends, from classmates, from teachers, from employers, and even sometimes from parents or other family members. In this day and age I’m even finding they have turned harsher than I remember they used to be. These take forms like:

- You’ll never amount to anything
- You’re worthless
- You’re not good enough
- You can’t possibly do that

These and many more are usually by people who have no idea who you are or what you’re capable of.

In High School I remember taking all kinds of tests, but one sticks out in my mind this morning. Do any of you remember taking a test called the “Iowa Skills Test?” It was a lot of different tests, but I remember the one on dexterity. You took a peg out of the hole, turned it upside down, and put it back in the hole. When they got done my projected career was as a lawn mower repairman. Either they were wrong or I’ve been living a lie for a lot of years!

One of the things I have always respected my daughter for is how she raised my Granddaughter. She did a lot of things but the one I remember most is the fact that Makenzie was not allowed to use the word “CAN’T” AS SHE WAS GROWING UP. She was not allowed to have a negative outlook on herself or her abilities. She had to at least try.

And yet in our society today it seems we are constantly telling people they “CAN’T” do things. We look at them and based on appearance or witnessed actions we pronounce our opinion that they don’t measure up. People are labeled not as people with possibilities but as people with failures, with limitations, with some kind of disability.

II – GOD SEES US DIFFERENTLY:

I am so happy to stand here this morning and tell you that God sees you differently. God looks at you with love and sees one of his children, full of potential and possibilities. I love the verses King David wrote in Psalm 139. Let me share just a couple with you:

Psalm 139:1, 13-17

¹ O LORD, you have examined my heart
and know everything about me.

¹³ You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body
and knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex!
Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.

¹⁵ You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion,
as I was woven together in the dark of the womb.

¹⁶ You saw me before I was born.
Every day of my life was recorded in your book.

Every moment was laid out
before a single day had passed.

¹⁷ How precious are your thoughts about me, O God.
They cannot be numbered!

Look at these words! God did not create you to be a failure. God did not create you to be looked down upon. God did not create you to be someone else's whipping post. God created you as one of his children. A child to mature in their faith and succeed. I take it this Scripture even tells us that God has a plan laid out for you and your life. He's laid out a path, you just have to stay on it. God sees your inside, not your outward appearance that we humans judge one another on.

III – TEXT:

And that sometimes means God chooses the least expected person to fulfill his plan. I see that in this morning's text from 1 Samuel. This morning the lectionary starts telling the various stories of David, who became the greatest King of Israel. I hope as we journey through this life we learn again some of these wonderful lessons of our faith. Here is this morning's:

1 Samuel 15:34-16:13 (NLT)

³⁴ Then Samuel went home to Ramah, and Saul returned to his house at Gibeah of Saul. ³⁵ Samuel never went to meet with Saul again, but he mourned constantly for him. And the LORD was sorry he had ever made Saul king of Israel.

¹ Now the LORD said to Samuel, "You have mourned long enough for Saul. I have rejected him as king of Israel, so fill your flask with olive oil and go to Bethlehem. Find a man named Jesse who lives there, for I have selected one of his sons to be my king."² But Samuel asked, "How can I do that? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me." "Take a heifer with you," the LORD replied, "and say that you have come to make a sacrifice to the LORD."³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you which of his sons to anoint for me."⁴ So Samuel did as the LORD instructed. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town came trembling to meet him. "What's wrong?" they asked. "Do you come in

peace?" ⁵ "Yes," Samuel replied. "I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." Then Samuel performed the purification rite for Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice, too. ⁶ When they arrived, Samuel took one look at Eliab and thought, "Surely this is the LORD's anointed!" ⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, "Don't judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The LORD doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." ⁸ Then Jesse told his son Abinadab to step forward and walk in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "This is not the one the LORD has chosen." ⁹ Next Jesse summoned Shimea, but Samuel said, "Neither is this the one the LORD has chosen." ¹⁰ In the same way all seven of Jesse's sons were presented to Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." ¹¹ Then Samuel asked, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse replied. "But he's out in the fields watching the sheep and goats." "Send for him at once," Samuel said. "We will not sit down to eat until he arrives." ¹² So Jesse sent for him. He was dark and handsome, with beautiful eyes. And the LORD said, "This is the one; anoint him." ¹³ So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and anointed David with the oil. And the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.

God had made Saul king of Israel and he did well for a short time. Then he started to disobey God's commands. Decided he knew better than God. The prophet Samuel tried to rein him in but it didn't work. The passage this morning is right after Saul's latest disobedience and we find that Samuel, who still holds out some hope is mourning for Saul and the people of Israel but God has reached the point he is sorry he ever even gave Saul the position. God tells his prophet Samuel that he has mourned long enough, now get up and do what he tells him to do. Go and find his new king. The one he has already chosen. So Samuel does what he's told. He takes oil to anoint this new king and heads to Bethlehem.

God has told him to go to Bethlehem and find the man Jesse. This was a man from the tribe of Judah. Do you see a tie in here? The next king will be from the tribe of Judah, the son of Jesse, and from Bethlehem. All prophecies that concern the coming Messiah.

He goes and works through the politics of the day so he doesn't get killed and then he sets about finding and anointing the next king of God's people. He knows it's one of Jesse's sons so let the parade begin. The first born son is Eliab and Samuel takes one look at him, sees his stature and his appearance and judges that this has to be the one. And now we see a lesson that ties into our reading from Psalm 139. God tells Samuel this isn't the one. Tells him that where man judges by the outward appearance, as Samuel has just done, God looks at the inside...God looks at the heart.

This parade lasts through 7 sons, all of which God says are not the one. Samuel knows God had said one of Jesse's sons would be the one so he presses the issue. He asks Jesse if he's presented all of his sons. Jesse says that there is only one more. The youngest...the least of the men...he's out doing the meaningless task of tending the sheep. The lowest of the boys at this point. He hadn't even been considered by his father as worthy to even meet Samuel, let alone be presented as a candidate for king, a person who God would use.

But he was wrong. This least looked at son, was the one God had chosen. The one God had looked at inside and decided he would be the king of his chosen people. David was anointed with oil as commanded by God and take notice that the story ends by telling us that God's Holy Spirit was poured out on David as well and that it was a mighty force in his life from that moment forward.

IV – THE LEAST LIKELY:

God uses those we consider to be the least likely. I could go through a litany of those he used that we probably wouldn't have like Moses, Jonah, and Samson and on and on. But we only have to look at the story of Salvation to see this played out.

The story started with the lineage of David. The Savior was born to a lowly carpenter and a Jewish peasant girl. He was born during a forced census in David's city of Bethlehem. Born and wrapped in strips of cloth and laid in a manger among animals. Surrounded not by the rich and famous but by smelly shepherds. The lost...the least as Pastor Becky talked about last Sunday. He came for the people that everyone else muttered about.

He grew up disrespected by the ruling religious authorities of the day. The very people he came to save called for his untimely and gruesome death. After dying he didn't even get a proper and formal burial because it would have been against the church rules. It would have led to more muttering. Yet...he was the one God chose to save all of his creation. God used the least expected, one looked down upon, to fulfill his plans.

V – YOU CAN:

You can measure up! You can do what God calls you to do regardless of what everyone else thinks. If God is calling you to a task you need to stop saying "I CAN'T" and instead say "I CAN."

If you've ever watched an Adam Sandler movie there is usually a guy, another comedian, who is in the background yelling "YOU CAN DO IT." That's what the church needs to do. The church, encompassed by God's Holy Spirit needs to stand behind the person God has called to do something and keep yelling "YOU CAN DO IT." It needs to provide the encouragement, resources, and training to enable people to answer God's call.

I want to close the message a little different today. I want to stand behind you all and say "YOU CAN DO IT." So stop for a moment and in your mind as yourself what it is God is calling you to do? What piece are you in the body of Christ? How is God calling you to build his Kingdom on earth? What is it you've been thinking you were supposed to do but thus far have been afraid to try?

Now move that thought from your head to your heart.

We are going to sing hymn #593 – HERE I AM, LORD" as we ask God to anoint us and pour out his Holy Spirit on us to answer his call. You can sit, stand, raise your hands, come to the altar, or however you want to share this time and answer with God.

PRAY OVER THEIR CALLINGS / ANSWERS

AMEN

