

Ordinary to Extraordinary

*How God Uses Ordinary People
to Do Extraordinary Things*

A Nine-Week Devotional Journey
through the Old and New Testaments

Pastor Chris McCormick

Calvary Church

Ordinary to Extraordinary: How God Uses Ordinary People to Do Extraordinary Things

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Dedication

*To my wonderful wife Cindy and my family —
who have walked with me through every season,
and whose love and patience have made me
a better pastor, a better man, and a better follower of Jesus.*

*And to the congregation of Calvary Church —
ordinary people who inspire me every week
with your extraordinary faithfulness to God.*

*This book exists because you were willing to listen.
My prayer is that it will call even more people
to say their own “yes” to the God who uses ordinary people
to do extraordinary things.*

Series Introduction

On Being Ordinary

There is a word that most of us would not choose to describe ourselves, yet would probably accept if we are being honest: ordinary. Not in a self-deprecating way — not as an expression of low self-esteem or false modesty — but in the simple, factual sense. We are not famous. We are not powerful. We do not appear on lists of the most influential people in the world. We go to work, raise our families, attend our churches, try to love our neighbors, and wonder, sometimes, whether any of it adds up to something that matters. The Bible has a great deal to say to people like us. And most of what it says is not what we expect.

We have been taught — by the culture around us and sometimes by the church itself — to think of significance in terms of scale. Big platforms. Large audiences. Dramatic moments. The people who appear to be doing something extraordinary are the ones whose names we know, whose stories get told, whose contributions are celebrated. The rest of us, by implication, are in the supporting cast.

But that is not how God tells the story.

When you read the Bible carefully — not just the famous passages and the celebrated figures, but the whole sweep of the narrative — you begin to notice something remarkable. Again and again, at the most critical moments of God's redemptive story, the instrument He chooses is not the obvious one. It is not the most powerful person in the room, or the most educated, or the most gifted, or the one with the most impressive credentials. It is often a person whose name most readers have forgotten before they reach the next chapter.

A craftsman from the wrong tribe. Two midwives with no political power. An elderly wealthy man in a region of mixed loyalties. A foreign court official excluded by law from the assembly of Israel. A man who grew up in a royal household and walked away from everything it offered. A Gentile believer from a city in Asia Minor, known primarily for showing up reliably. A messenger who nearly died completing his mission. A man who searched through an imperial city to find a friend in a dungeon. A church planter from a town the rest of the world had already written off.

These are the people in this book. You may not have heard of most of them. That is precisely the point.

What made each of these ordinary people usable by an extraordinary God was not an unusual gift or a remarkable circumstance. It was something far simpler, and far more available to each of us: they said yes. When God's purposes intersected with their moment and their position, they did not disqualify themselves. They did not wait until they felt more qualified, more prepared, or more certain of the outcome. They looked at what was in front of them and chose faithfulness over fear.

Three truths run through every story in this book, and they are worth holding in your mind as you read:

First: God wants to use you.

Not a theoretical version of you with better gifts and fewer flaws. You, as you are, where you are, with what you have. The people in these pages were not exceptional specimens of human virtue. They were flawed, fearful, limited people who made themselves available to a God who is none of those things. If He could use them, He can use you.

Second: The standard is faithfulness, not the amount of talent or skill.

Jesus told a parable about this in Matthew 25. Three servants received different amounts of resources, and the ones who were commended were not the ones who had received the most — they were the ones who had been faithful with whatever they had been given. The playing field of faithfulness is perfectly level. It does not advantage the gifted or penalize the ordinary. It simply asks: what will you do with what you have?

Third: You say the “Yes.” God determines the “When and Where.”

None of the people in this book chose their moment. They did not design the circumstances that called for their particular response. They simply kept saying yes — and when the moment arrived, they were ready.

The theme verse for this entire journey is Ephesians 2:10, and I would encourage you to commit it to memory before you begin:

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”

You are God’s masterpiece. Not a rough draft. Not a discarded attempt. A masterpiece — created with intention and care, placed in this moment in history, equipped with the specific combination of gifts, experiences, and relationships that God knew would be needed for the good works He has prepared for you to walk in.

Those good works were planned long ago. Before you were born. Before you had done anything to earn or disqualify yourself from them. They are already waiting for you in the days ahead. The question is not whether God has prepared a place for your faithfulness. He has. The question is whether you will show up for it.

My prayer as you begin this nine-week journey is a simple one: that by the time you reach the final page, you will have been so convinced by the evidence of these ordinary, extraordinary lives — and so moved by the grace of the God who used them — that you will say your own yes. And mean it. And live it.

The world has enough people waiting to feel extraordinary before they begin. What God is looking for are people who are willing to be faithful right now, with what they have, where they are.

That is enough. It has always been enough. These nine lives prove it.

— Pastor Chris McCormick

Week One

Bezalel

The Tabernacle Craftsman

Three Truths to Carry Through This Book

1. God wants to use you.
2. The standard is faithfulness, not the amount of talent or skill.
3. You say the “Yes.” God determines the “When and Where.”

*“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”
— Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)*

Bezalel is one of the lesser-known figures in the Old Testament, yet his story carries a remarkable message for every believer. He was not a priest, a prophet, or a military hero. He was a craftsman — a man whose hands worked with gold, silver, wood, and stone. But God chose him by name, filled him with His Spirit, and entrusted him with one of the most sacred building projects in all of Scripture: the construction of the Tabernacle. This week, we will explore seven principles from Bezalel’s life that speak directly to how God wants to work through ordinary people in the everyday moments of their lives.

Week One, Day One

God Calls You By Name

Exodus 31:2 (NASB)

“See, I have called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.”

There is something profound — something almost startling — about the way God chose Bezalel. He did not send out a general announcement to the camp of Israel asking for skilled craftsmen. He did not run a search for the most qualified candidate. He called one man, by name, and said, “This is the one.”

In a wilderness of perhaps two million people, Bezalel was not a nameless face in the crowd to God. He was a specific, deliberate, personal choice. The Hebrew language makes this even more vivid — God essentially said, “I have summoned him. I have singled him out.” Bezalel was chosen before he knew he was being called.

I think about my own early days in the working world. When I moved from Illinois to Toledo for my first job out of college, I was twenty-two years old and knew no one. It would have been easy to feel invisible — just another new hire in a big company. But God knew exactly where I was and what I needed. He was already arranging the circumstances of my life before I thought to ask Him to.

That is the nature of a God who calls by name. He sees you — not as a category or a demographic, but as a person with a history, a set of gifts, and a role in His story. You are not a “warm body” filling a slot in God’s plan. You are a deliberate choice. Long before you sensed any calling on your life, God already knew your name and what He intended to do through you.

The question is not whether God has called you. He has. The question is whether you are listening for the sound of your name.

A Prayer for Today

Lord, in the noise and busyness of my daily life, help me to hear You calling my name. Remind me today that I am not invisible to You — that You have known me, chosen me, and set me apart for a purpose only I can fill. Give me ears to hear and a heart that is ready to say yes. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Continue the Journey

This is Day One of sixty-three daily devotionals in

Ordinary to Extraordinary: How God Uses Ordinary People to Do Extraordinary Things.

Eight more characters. Sixty-two more devotionals. One extraordinary God.

The complete book is available on Amazon.

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