

THE MAN GOD USES



The author is standing where George Whitefield preached to 20,000 in the open air.

E. A. JOHNSTON

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By

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The Man God Uses
By Dr. E. A. Johnston
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COVER PHOTO:

Author is seen standing on Whitefield's Tump, Minchinhampton Common where George Whitefield preached to 20,000 in open air

DEDICATION

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED WITH WARM AFFECTION TO MY DARLING DAUGHTER CARLY, OF WHOM I AM PROUD OF THE WOMAN SHE HAS BECOME THROUGH THE ADVERSITY SHE HAS FACED.

E. A. Johnston
November 2024

“Whenever I get too big for my britches, God puts me on His grill and barbecues me!” E. A. Johnston

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INTRODUCTION

When God gets ready to do something He sends a man to a people—a man sent from God. God is looking for a man to use for His purpose. We see from the Word of God:

“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him” (2 Chronicles 16:9).

God is uncovering every stone and searching in every place to find that man that He can use. Often a man used by God is a man set apart for God, consecrated to God, and wholly given to God. This was true in the life of D. L. Moody. Before Moody was well known as an evangelist, he was in England sitting on a park bench speaking with a minister who said to him, “Moody, the world has yet to see what God can do with the man wholly sold out to Him.” Moody walked away from that meeting, muttering under his breath—“Oh God! Make me that man!” And God did just that!

For a man to be used of God there must first be a desire on the man’s part to be used of God. A man not only willing to be used of God but wholly given to and surrendered to God! *“Whose heart is perfect toward him.”* Our text declares. He must be

a man of God on fire for God and useful to God. What makes a man useful to God? That will be the subject for our treatise on “The Man God Uses.”

If you have a desire to go deeper with God and be more useful to Him then this book is for you friend. But bear in mind there will be a sacrifice to be made. For what costs counts and what counts costs. May God grant you the grace to become more useful to Him for the good of His people and the glory of His name!

CHAPTER ONE:

THE MAN GOD USES: IS A MAN OF PRAYER

- ❖ “I was lost and Jesus found me, I was filthy and He cleansed me,
- ❖ I was a rebel and He conquered me, I was crooked and He straightened me,
- ❖ I was empty and He filled me,
- ❖ I was broken and He used me.”

E. A. Johnston

I used to live in a forest, and I had to build a long fence around my property to keep wild animals out. I had a dog and a little daughter who played in the backyard and that fence was built for protection and safety to keep out bobcats, coyotes, and the occasional wolf. But we'd get some bad storms in the spring every year and the force of wind and water would break down the fence and bust a hole in it. I would have to get some wood, and some heavy stones and load them in a wheelbarrow to repair that fence line. I would stack those heavy stones atop one another to fill up the hole or gap made by the storm and I did this to keep the danger out.

In Ezekiel chapter twenty-two and verse thirty we read:

*“And I sought for a man among them,
that should make up the hedge, and
stand in the gap before me for the
land, that I should not destroy it: but I
found none.”*

Here is a picture of a broken-down hedge with imminent danger lurking near it, ready to break it at any moment with ruin and destruction. It is a picture of a provoked God by His sinful, rebellious people and He wants to extend mercy and not destroy them but He is missing something; missing someone. A man. An intercessor. If only an intercessor would make up the hedge and stand in the gap by desperate prayer, then God would relent and not destroy. In this case, “standing in the gap” not for a person but a nation.

So here in our text God is looking for a man. Is He looking for a Prince? A Statesman? A military general? No. Our text says, “a man.” But not just any man will do. But a man suitable to the task. A special man with a certain specialty in prayer—an intercessor. He is the only one who can stand in the gap and be effective and get the job done. So the man God is looking for is a Man of Prayer.

We have a more detailed description of him over in the Book of James. Let’s turn there now to James chapter five and in verses fifteen to seventeen, to learn more about this man. We pick

up our description of him in the middle of verse sixteen where we read,

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

So first and foremost, a righteous man is needed. This means one who is born again and in a right relationship with God. A man of God who walks with God. Amos 3:3 declares,

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”

The answer is “no.” One must be in a close relationship with God to walk with God. Friends must be in agreement to be friends. God is looking for a man sold out to Him who desires more of Him.

The kind of man needed for the task of standing in the gap is a righteous man. But what kind of prayer is needed? Let’s take a look: our text in James which says *“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man.”* Effectual denotes one who is active and energetic. Fervent prayer is burdened, broken, sacrificial prayer. Prayer that costs something. There is a sacrifice involved—the sacrifice of time and wrestling in agonizing prayer. What costs counts and what counts costs. The word “fervent” in the Greek signifies prayer that is inspired by the Holy Ghost. It’s the inspired prayer of a righteous man wrought by the operation of the

Holy Ghost. We see mention of this kind of praying in Jude 1:20,

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.”

For to pray in the Holy Ghost means you first must be anointed by the Holy Ghost and filled with the Holy Ghost. For to pray in the power of the Spirit means unobstructed access to the Almighty, influence to gain His attention and power to attain answers to our pleading petitions. For praying in the Holy Ghost storms the portals of heaven with a holy violence, and makes fire fall upon the drenched altar of sacrifice; it makes kings tremble and kingdoms shake. For a man praying in the power of the Holy Ghost can startle the very angels in heaven and rattle the red-hot gates of hell! For a man full of the Spirit and anointed with the Spirit and praying in the Spirit knows no resistance, has no opposition, fears no earthly mortal and conquers all unearthly enemies.

Additionally, we read in James 5:17&18,

“Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heavens gave

rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.”

The expression, “prayed earnestly” infers supplication to God for a particular benefit; either the supplication or intercession on the behalf of an individual, who perhaps is sick, and the prayer is for healing; or it may be intercession on the behalf of a nation that it might not be destroyed. A sinful nation that has turned its back on God and deserves judgement. Like Moses stood in the gap for the Israelites who sinned against God with the golden calf in an out and out orgy! In Exodus 32:11-14, we have a pattern for intercessory prayer in how Moses pleaded with the Lord on behalf of the people:

“And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst

unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever. And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.”

So, Moses here prayed fervently and earnestly making supplication on the behalf of a people in intercessory prayer. We should do the same. Is our nation evil? Has not our nation turned its back on God? Has not our nation called evil good and good evil? Why doesn't God destroy us? There are those who make up the hedge and stand in the gap—that person can be you! God is not looking for a superhero but a man—the right man for the job.

James says that Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are. Elijah was an imperfect man who believed in a perfect God and leaned on that God in prayer by faith and he got the job done as an intercessor. God is looking for that kind of man today! A man of prayer! Not in casual prayer or occasional prayer but desperate prayer and fervent prayer! But there is a cost involved in being an intercessor.

For a prayer life that grips the attention of the heavenly throne room is not built beneath calm, sunny skies but shaped during dark sorrow-filled

nights. A serious prayer life is hammered out on the anvil of pain and affliction, desperation and despair, when hope hangs on a tattered thread and all human resources are gone. There and only there does the answer to the request come. Here is where the vital prayer life commences which gains the cupped ear of the Almighty, as He leans over to listen more intently to the pathetic sobs and anguished heart-cries; which in desperation reach out for His robe of righteousness to grab hold of and hang onto and not let go like Jacob wrestling with the Angel until the blessing is attained. To become a person of prayer is to be a shrill, holy note which continually rings the ears of angels, and pounds on the gates of glory! A true prayer life is born out of necessity: in your leanness you will learn to lean on Him. Through your rolling on stormy seas, you will be enabled to roll it all onto Him. When friends fail, disappoint and desert you, you will seek and find favor with your Faithful Friend Jesus.

“And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before me, for the land that I should not destroy it.”

Friend, will God find you standing there?

Let us pray, “Great God! You are holy and the Ancient of Days! Forgive us for our multiplied sins as a people. We have forsaken Thee and turned our

backs on Thee. We have banned You from our school house; legislated You out of the Court House; kicked You out of the White House; and locked You out of the Church House. We are a spiritually bankrupt people who deserve judgment from on High. I pray in Your wrath, remember mercy. In Your wrath, remember mercy! Send us a mighty revival and spiritual awakening to our land that will grip this generation of young people and shake this nation from coast to coast! I pray these things in the strong name of Jesus! Ahmen!”

The man God uses is a man of prayer.

CHAPTER TWO

THE MAN GOD USES: IS A MAN OF FAITH

- ❖ “Faith is standing on the promises of God when there
- ❖ is nothing left to stand on.”

E. A. Johnston

In Hebrews 11:6 we read,

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

Years ago I had a heart burden to go deeper with God in my walk with Him. I asked God to make me a man of faith. At the time I did not properly understand what a man of faith was but I knew God would honor that request and make me a man of faith—from His perspective. Little did I realize at the time what would have to transpire in my life to make that prayer a reality in my life. There would be deep waters I would have to pass through, hardships I thought I never would have to encounter, and trials and losses which, had I known in advance what they were, I would have shied away from my request for

God to make me a man of faith. But in the providence of God He knew the most effective means to use in my life to strip away what was hindering His work in my life and to burn out the dross in me that needed to go out so more of Christ could come in.

The faith life is the most exciting adventure in the world! The man that God uses is a man of faith. Faith has to be developed by the spiritual eyes rather than the physical because one must see beyond his circumstances to see God at work. I believe faith and obedience go hand in hand like biscuits and gravy: for in Hebrews 5:7-9 we read:

“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared: though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

For God to answer my prayer and make me a man of faith He had work to do in me and that wasn't going to happen all at once or overnight. It would take years to make this desire a reality in my life. Moses had much of Egypt still in him when he