

# Voices: God uses ordinary people

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Many men and women feel ordinary. They might attend a mediocre school, live in a run-of-the-mill neighborhood or be uneducated. Being ordinary is synonymous with being “average.” One of the worst sentiments one might feel about being ordinary is presuming there is no purpose or calling in one’s life.

In today’s culture, we are impressed with wealth, beauty, popularity, accomplishment and fame. But let’s look at Amos—an ordinary man with a passion for God who was called to proclaim God’s message of judgment to Israel due to their sin and disobedience.

## Amos

Amos, an Old Testament prophet, was considered an average man.

“I’m not a professional prophet, and I was never trained to be one. I’m just a shepherd, and I take care of sycamore-fig trees. But the Lord called me away from my flock and told me, ‘Go and prophesy to my people in Israel’” (Amos 7:14-15 NLT).

Amos even might have been a seasonal worker, because he lived in Tekoa, a town 16 miles from the Dead Sea where sycamore trees are not cultivated due to the altitude and climate. This suggests he might have had to leave Tekoa during certain months of the year to care for and nurture the trees.

During Amos’ lifetime, Israel was filled with pride, beauty, elegance and riches. As Amos went about living “an ordinary life,” God called him to

become God's messenger and foretell the destruction of Israel's northern kingdom.

He lived during the reign of Jeroboam II (786-746 B.C.). During this time, Amos recognized his calling from God to proclaim the message the Lord gave him. He did not arrive on the scene to tickle anybody's ears. He came able, prepared and willing to work passionately on God's assignment.

## God can use you

Amos was called for a particular assignment at a specific time for a particular duration.

Someday, God may ask *you* to step out of *your* comfort zone. God will use those already steeped in his word and those willing to walk in his ways. He will choose and seek us as we prepare to expand our influence for him.

You may not be an educated person, you may not have been born into an elite family, but God still wants to use you. He will give you the strength to do what he calls you to do.

He desires to employ us to our fullest. He knows if we are unprepared, and he wants to prepare us. He knows we are imperfect, but he sees our potential to pursue his purposes.

You may have a dream or a vision but feel you cannot achieve it. Don't give up. Water and prune your vision and wait for God's appointed time. While waiting, follow his lead—as small or insignificant as God's leading might seem—as this is part of his preparation for you. Then, when he gives you an assignment, you will be prepared to act.

# Lucky

When my husband accepted a job in Lagos, Nigeria, 10 years ago, which took us there for two years, little did I know God would use a mere “ordinary man” to enrich my life spiritually.

Company policy required us to hire a driver capable of maneuvering us around Lagos, a city of more than 22 million people. Our driver was a man named Lucky. Lucky transported us around this crowded city with ill-equipped roads lacking street signs and traffic signals. Only the Lord could have provided the driver we had—a bivocational Christian pastor, whose church met on a concrete slab between two rundown buildings, to be our driver and bodyguard.

By all worldly standards, Lucky was a humble man without what many of us would consider advanced schooling, but he had a huge thirst for God and God’s word.

When I met Lucky to take me places, he often already had spread out my books, a Bible, notebook and pen in the back seat so I could study God’s word while confined for long hours in traffic.

Who but God could have provided me with a pastor to discuss theological issues while stuck in gridlock? God used Lucky’s servant spirit to enrich my spiritual life. Little did I know I would be so “lucky” to have Lucky, this unlikely man, to be God’s chosen vessel to teach me more about living in Christ’s presence.

## Listen, seek, follow

Our problem is the world in which we live allows us to question whether we have enough time, desire, money and intellect to follow through with God’s

nudges and calling. We need to be available to listen to the Lord, seek out his will, follow his leading and let him supply all that is needed to accomplish his purposes through us.

Let's seek out and question our reasons and motives for not moving forward.

Is it because we don't feel spiritual enough? Then we should work on that through prayer and Bible study.

Is it because we need money to start the ministry to which God is calling us? We should start with what we have and allow God to find what we need to move forward.

It is not our strength that gets God's work done, but our willingness and trust in him to accomplish the calling and ministries he puts on our hearts. Believe his Spirit is working and perfecting you until he calls you for your particular task as he did Amos.

Will you allow God to use you?

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