

Gideon: Lessons in Faith, Courage, and Obedience

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[0:00] We're going to the Word of God now, Judges chapter 6. Lessons that we can learn from the life of Gideon. Gideon's faith. He was one of the judges who ruled Israel.

And it's said of Gideon that he was really one of the greatest judges in courage, in faith, in wisdom. And he brought peace to Israel some 40 years. Gideon's name means cutter of trees.

Let's take a look at Gideon's journey from fear to faith. And first notice how God uses the ordinary. You might say, I'm pretty ordinary. Average garden variety kind of person.

That's what Gideon was. Judges 6.11, we are introduced to him. And there came an angel of the Lord, Judges 6.11. And there came an angel of the Lord and sat under an oak, which was in Orah, pertained unto Joash the Abizarite.

I didn't practice that one, I got it right. And his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. Here's Gideon threshing wheat. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

[1:12] Here we meet Gideon, the man Gideon. He's hiding. And here he is threshing wheat. Now, threshing wheat is something you're supposed to do in the open, in the outdoors, so the wind blows it away. But no, Gideon's here threshing wheat in the winepress, in this kind of enclosed, hidden kind of place.

Because he wanted to hide from the Midianites. And the threshing of wheat, something you do out in the open. But Gideon was hiding. He was fearful. Israel was under oppression.

Gideon was afraid. His life was full of fear and doubt. And he talks about his sense of inadequacy. Yet for all of that, the Lord, as in Christ appearing in this pre-incarnate form as the angel of the Lord, the Lord God addresses him as a mighty man of valour.

You're such a brave man, Gideon. Gideon is what he's saying. Of course, Gideon's thinking of himself quite the opposite. But God sees the potential in the man. And he sees that in you and me too, doesn't he?

That God often chooses the ordinary people to accomplish great things for his glory. And it's true for you and me as well. We can feel so weak and inadequate, but that does not limit God.

[2:29] And God's power for what he wants to do with your life. Yet Gideon doubted. He said to the angel of the Lord, again, as we can understand, the pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He sounded very much like a sceptic. We pick it up in verse 13. He's saying, if the Lord is with us, then why is all this going on? Why such a disaster?

Why is all this happening to us? Verse 13. And Gideon said unto him, O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? Why?

And where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, did not the Lord bring us up out from Egypt? But now the Lord hath forsaken us and has delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

Think of it. He's so full of doubt here. Where's God? Why is this happening? Where's all his miracles which our fathers told us about? The Lord brought us up out of Egypt.

[3:27] But now the Lord's abandoned us and given us into the hand of the Midianites. So Gideon doubted. And he questioned. He was full of doubt and questioning. And God repeated the mission that he was sending Gideon on.

We see that there in verse 14. He says, go. Gideon says, I'm not up to it. God says, go. And the Lord looked upon him and said, go in this thy might.

And thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have not I sent thee. Here, Gideon, he feels so weak. He feels so lacking and so inadequate. But the Lord saw Gideon as the opposite. He saw Gideon as strong. He says, go in this, you might. Go this. You're a strong man. Go in this strength. Go in this, thy might. And when God tells you to go, then go.

Amen. Go and save Israel. Go. He says, go. Gideon is full of doubt. Inside of him, he's got this uncertainty, this fear.

[4:26] But God says to go. And he says that to you and me too. He's still saying go, isn't he? Go into all the world. Preach the gospel. God puts on your heart to go and tell a soul, then go and tell them.

It doesn't matter how fearful you are. God puts on your heart to come for the Saturday door knocking. It doesn't matter how fearful you feel. Amen. Go. He says, go.

Go in this, thy might. Go despite your doubts, despite your fear, despite your self-talk. Go. Gideon's full of doubt, though.

And verse 15. You can imagine, you know, are you talking to me? You mighty man of valor. You really mean me? You must be. He's looking over his shoulder thinking, who are you talking to? And he said, oh, my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold, my family's poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. You know, you didn't have the credentials of others.

[5:21] My family's poor. I'm just from the lowly tribe. I'm the least in my father's house. I'm the least in my family.

A bit like David, isn't it? A bit like others who say, who am I, Lord? That you should pick me. You must have got the wrong guy here. It wasn't about him, though. It was about the one who was going to send him.

And it's the same for you and me. It doesn't matter. When God says, go, he's the one who's sending you. It's about him, not about you. Isn't it? When God gives you a mission, you might say, well, I'm not up to it.

Well, it's not about you. It's about him. It's about him. He says, I'm sending you. It wasn't about Gideon. It was about the Lord commissioning him. It sounds like the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 1.

Those words that tell us how Paul says, for you see your calling, brethren. How that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty. Not many noble are called.

[6:18] But God had chosen the foolish, the foolish things of the world. To confound the wise. And God has chosen the weak things of the world.

To confound the things which are mighty. What matters is who has chosen you. That's what counts. And we naturally don't think of ourselves as pretty much up to anything.

We're not able. But what matters most is this. That he has chosen such as we. And we see 1 Peter 2. Of the people of God, which in time past were not a people.

But are now the people of God. Which had not obtained mercy. But now have obtained mercy. Without Christ we're nothing. Not a people. But now we are the people of God.

Wow. Think of it. Brother, sister. You're the family of God. You're blessed. I'm amongst the royal family. The greatest royal family. The very children of God.

[7:15] And so you had not obtained mercy. But now you have. You were not a people. Now you are the people of God. The greatest bunch of people that could be. The people of God. Isn't it? Think of that.

Not to take any credit for it. But thank God. You're chosen to be such a people. God's got a way of taking the weak. And the unworthy. And making such as we the people of God.

The very people of God. He gives us grace. And he makes us his own dear people. In Judges 6 verse 16 we read on. And the Lord said unto him. Surely I will be with thee. And thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

The Lord said. Surely I will be with thee. Really that's all you need. It's interesting. If you look in a concordance to some 11 times. It says. I am with thee.

And that makes all the difference. Doesn't it? Fear thou not for I am with thee. There's many scriptures. You could check your concordance. Look at those 11 times. I am with thee.

[8:14] That makes all the difference. That's really all that you need. It doesn't matter who you are. What matters is that he is with you. He is with you. And he says I am with you. To the ends of the age.

To the ends of the world. I will never leave you nor forsake you. And the context here is that the Israelites were being ravaged by the Midianites. Seven long years of struggle. Seven long years. The Midianites and the Amalekites had come. The eastern foreigners had invaded. And ruined the land. The crops. The cattle was destroyed. Meantime Israel. Even worse was that Israel had been unfaithful to God. And they followed after the Canaanite gods worshipping them. And finally they come to the place where. They come to their knees. They come to a place where they're crying out. Lord. And he heard their cry. God heard them. And he raised up a man. Gideon. Gideon. Of all people. Gideon. Threshing wheat. [9:10] In this hidey hole. Gideon's story. Teaches us that God wins wars. Wins unwinnable wars. Through weak men. Inadequate men. And women.

As his agents. And friends. We're all in this fight together. All of us. Feeling unable. We're fighting this same war. It's still going on. We're still fighting the Midianites. In the sense that we've got the same enemy ultimately.

The war's still on. We're still in it. And like Gideon. We can feel unable. Just like Gideon. This is hopeless. You've got the wrong man. No. You are the man. Like Gideon. We can feel. How can I do anything? It matters what we are trusting in. Don't trust in yourself. As Gideon was kind of talking. Well from my own perspective. I'm not able. He says. I am with thee. That's what matters. And it matters who we're trusting in. What we're trusting in. Tells us that some trust in chariots. And some in horses. But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

[10:06] It doesn't matter the superiority. Worldly wise of the enemy. Because we're trusting in the Lord. The name of the Lord our God. Next Gideon teaches us how to put our faith into action.

And here was Gideon's first task that he was given. And we read it from verse 25. God instructs Gideon to tear down his father's altar to Baal. And to build an altar to the Lord in its place. And he cut down the grove. Verse 25. And it came to pass the same night that the Lord said unto him. Take thy father's young bullock of seven years old. And throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath.

And cut down the grove that is by it. Verse 26. And build an altar unto the Lord thy God upon the top of this rock. In the ordered place.

And take the second bullock and offer a burnt sacrifice. With the wood of the grove. Which thou shalt cut down. God says the first thing I want you to do. Is to go to the mountainside here.

[11:12] And tear down this idol to Baal. Remember Gideon's name was what? Cutter of trees. Time to live up to your name Gideon. Go hack that altar down. And those poles.

These groves. These carved idols of worship to the false god. These groves. They were asherim. Is the word. Underlying the word groves.

They're trees. Or a wooded area where these religious rituals were conducted. And these groves. They were sacred sites. Dedicated to various deities. God says go and destroy these sacred sites. God tells Gideon. Start in your own backyard. It was his dad who had this altar. This idol that they worshipped. This was the family worship. Of a false god.

And here's the lesson for us. Get your house in order. Starts at home. Get your house in order. Get your home right. As the first thing. Build an altar. Go to worship.

[12:10] It begins at home doesn't it? For Gideon it began at home. With his own household. His own family. God says cut down the images. And it's interesting. I like the thought. Not just cut them down.

But use them as firewood. So you can burn a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God. Interesting isn't it? Cut down the images and turn them into firewood. So he went ahead with the first mission there. And we read that there. As it reads on. Then Gideon took ten men of his servants. And did as the Lord had said unto him. And so it was. Because he feared his father's household.

And the men of the city. That he could not do it by day. That he did it by night. So here's Gideon's act. Tearing down his father's altar to Baal. He feared his family. So he did it at night.

But he did still go ahead. He was obedient to God's command. Think of it. Believer. Is there any high places in our lives. That we need to cut them down. Alright.

[13:07] Things that are high places. Cut them down. Is the stuff in our own family. Sort that. Despite his fear Gideon obeys. And he did it all at night. To avoid confrontation.

But then. We could discount him for doing it at night. But then. Think of Nicodemus. He came to the Lord by night. There's that natural fearfulness at times in us. Yet.

God worked in this man who was fearful. He still acted. As much as he was afraid and uncertain.

And so. It's the same for you and me. We might feel naturally. Fearful.

Fearful. What's my family going to say? What's my dad going to say? When he gets up the next morning. And his idol's been turned into firewood. What's dad going to say? Now be a witness to your own family.

It's an important thing isn't it? Live out your trust in God. Don't let fear stop you. It came to his father's knowledge. The dad saw the example of his son. Gideon had feared what his father was going to do.

[14:03] The reaction. But it turned out that the boldness of his son inspired his father to stand for the Lord. It actually worked out. It reads on.

And here's the turning point now. Verse 34. But the spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon. And he blew with a trumpet. I always like to put those sound effects in. And Abiasa was gathered after him. So he got the trumpet. This was a call to war. You see summoning the troops here. The spirit of the Lord clothed him. Is the sense of it. The spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon with himself.

And Gideon began to blow the horn. This call to war. And one clan joined him. And then his own tribe. People started to rally. But the spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon.

And he blew a trumpet. And Abiasa was gathered after him. So it only took one man to stand. One man to say yes.

[14:58] I'm going to blow the trumpet. It's time for war. He rallied the troops to the cause. It took only one man to stand. It's the same for you and me. You might feel like you're just Gideon in a land of heathen.

The spirit of the Lord came upon him. It's what we need isn't it. The spirit of the Lord to come upon us. To be an ordinary man like Gideon. In all of his lack. So inadequate.

The spirit of the Lord came upon him. Can you just be that ordinary Christian. And the spirit of the Lord comes upon you. Like in the New Testament. He comes within us doesn't he. The spirit of God fills us and overflows us.

Empowers us. We've got a good fight to fight. We need the spirit of the Lord to do his work. To equip us. To enable us. To empower us. It's time to blow the shofar. And rally the troops.

Next we see that God brings assurance to Gideon. Now we skipped over one time elsewhere. Where Gideon sought God for a sign. Moving on to the sign of the fleece.

[15:59] It says that he had these doubts to overcome. Again it shows the human side of Gideon. You know there's hope for us. When you think. Well I can see a bit of myself in Gideon. A bit fearful. Worried what my family's going to think.

I'm feeling like. Who am I? I'm the weakest one of my whole tribe. You've got the wrong man. It's like he wanted assurance. Reassurance. And so we see these times.

Where he had these doubts. It shows the humanity of the man. Doesn't it? And we can see.

Friends. You might feel. Who am I? How can I do anything? As much as he was one of the heroes of the faith.

He had his doubts. See the warts and all of the man Gideon. And so we read through there. Verse 36 of Judges 6. And Gideon said unto God. If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand.

As they are said. Behold I will put a fleece of wool in the floor. And if the dew be upon the fleece only. And it be dry upon all the earth beside. Then shall I know.

[16:58] That thou wilt save Israel by mine hand. As thou hast said. And it was so. For he rose up early on the morrow. And thrust the fleece together. And wringed the dew out of the fleece.

A bowl full of water. That fleece of wool had been saturated with water. But the ground was dry. And verse 39. And Gideon said unto the Lord.

Unto God. Let not thine anger be hot against me. And I'll speak but this once. With the fleece. Let it now be dry only upon the fleece. And upon all the ground let there be dew.

So he. It's like he wasn't satisfied with one. Wonder. He wanted another one. Okay. Maybe that was just coincidence. It shows the doubtfulness of the man.

Doesn't it? He doubted. And so. And God did so that night. For it was dry upon the fleece only. And there was dew on all the ground. Gideon asked for these signs with the fleece.

[17:56] He wanted to know God's will. He wanted to know for sure. And he asked for this confirmation through a sign. Gideon needed some reassurance. We can be like that. It's not a human. God graciously provides that assurance to him.

God understands. We've got need for confirmation sometimes. And he gives us encouragement. To bolster our faith. Yeah. Our faith must trust. Regardless of signs.

And rest on his promises. That's what matters. Like Gideon. We've got that communication channel. Of prayer. He was speaking to God. God was confirming his faith. God showed up and revealed himself.

And it's the same for you and me. That God confirms his will to us. Of course we've got the word of God now. It's black and white and red. It's in our hands. In the pages of the scriptures. God reveals himself to us.

We can hold steady and keep on believing. No matter what. So confirmation. God's assurance came to Gideon. God showed up. And revealed himself.

[18:55] Then God called Gideon to the fight. And next we see God's power in weakness. So one of the big problems really. Is that ego can get in the way. Even when we're doing something good for God.

The ego is always there. You've got to nail it. Crucify the flesh. One of the big problems. Getting in the way of God. Is our flesh. It's my flesh. Pride and ego gets in the way.

Doesn't it? And so. The Lord wanted to. Show to Gideon. That it wasn't about. Their might and power. But about his power. God wanted to show Gideon.

To give God all of the glory. And. As verse 2. It reads. And the Lord said unto Gideon. The people that are with thee. Are too many for me. To give the Midianites into their hands.

Lest Israel vaunt themselves. Against me. Saying my own hand hath saved me. He was saying. Look. There's too many of you. Some of you are going to get prideful. And say. Look what I've done. All the glory to me.

[19:56] Look at how good I am. And what I've achieved. There's a great lesson here. Isn't there? That God's got to get you. A little smaller. To do his mighty work. In your life. It's not about you.

It's not about me. It's not about us getting credit. Or any acknowledgement. Or appreciation. Seems like many people can. Like to take the credit. Brag.

Brag. Brag. Look at what I've done. Look at me. God's got to get us. Smaller. So he can be magnified. Amen. So he can get the glory. So all of our vanity.

And self pride. Needs to be crucified. Nail it. God's got to go through. That whittling down process. And so we read on. It tells us how. Now therefore go to.

Proclaim in the ears of the people. Saying whosoever is fearful. And afraid. Let him return. And depart early from Mount Gilead. And they returned to the people.

[20:52] 20 and 2,000. And they remained. 10,000. So God's telling Gideon. To reduce that army. Was 32,000. Now it's down to 10,000.

Verse 4. And the Lord said unto Gideon. The people are yet too many. Bring them down unto the water. And I will try them for thee there. And it shall be that.

Of whom I say unto thee. This shall go with thee. The same shall go with thee. And of whomsoever I say unto thee. This shall not go with thee. The same shall not go. So he brought down the people.

So this army. Now 10,000. They come down to the waters. He brought down the people unto the water. And the Lord said unto Gideon. Everyone that lappeth of the water with his tongue.

As a dog lappeth. Him shalt thou set by himself. Likewise everyone that boweth down. Upon his knees to drink. So some people. They lapped the water like a dog.

[21:51] And some brought their hand to their mouth. Two different ways of drinking the water. And verse 6. It reads. And the number of them that

lapped. Putting their hand to their mouth.

Were three hundred men. But all the rest of the people. Bowed down upon their knees. To drink water. And the Lord said unto Gideon. By the three hundred men that lapped. Will I save you. And deliver the Midianites.

Into thine hand. And let all the other people go. Every man unto his place. So God reduces Gideon's army. Down. Thirty-two thousand. Three hundred.

To ensure that the victory is seen. As his victory. His doing. To show that the victory was his. It came from him. Not from human strength. Thirty-one thousand. Seven hundred.

Went home. Thirty-one thousand. Seven hundred. Troops. Went back home. Only three hundred. Stowed. With Gideon. Now the number of the Midianites army. Who stood against them.

[22:48] Was 135,000 plus. 135,000 strong. Plus camels. And the Midianites had this advantage. Because camels gave them an advantage.

Humanly. They added an extra benefit. Because a foot soldier was no match. For an attacker mounted on a camel. And so Israel safely outnumbered. Four to one.

The fearful were let go. And there was this other sifting. The ones who lapped were chosen. It was a test of preparedness. They were on the alert. As they were drinking. They were on the alert. That they could see the enemy.

They could be vigilant. And ready for battle. The point is. That we can know victory. Because of God's power. Not from human strength. There's another great lesson here for us.

Isn't it? We think of. And really. Preachers. Churches can make the mistake. Or we've got to have the numbers. Got to have the numbers. More and more people. Instead of relying on God.

[23:45] And really. That. It's about. The spiritual work. It's relying upon him. Not our own weaknesses. That God's strength. That God would get the glory.

That God would be magnified. And. With Gideon's story. We see that God works through. The weakness of a man. Yet a yielded man. To demonstrate his strength and glory.

That he would. Find. God's enabling. That it was God's power. Not his own abilities. And it reads on. In the account. How Gideon snuck down. To the enemy's camp. To scout.

Out the land. And Gideon was there. And. He overheard one of the Midianites. Talking of a dream. To his companion. I've just had a dream. And. He tells of the dream. He says. This loaf of barley bread.

Tumbled into the camp. Of the Midianites. Now barley was what the poor ate. There was wheat. And there was barley. Barley was what the poor people ate. And notice Gideon said.

[24:40] I am poor. I'm from a poor family. I'm. Really a nobody. And this barley loaf. Came down. And it. As dreams can be pretty. Exaggerated.

It was a large barley. Loaf. And it. Struck this tent. And overturned it. And the tent fell down. With this mighty. Loaf of bread. And the.

Commandant said. Oh this must mean that. Gideon. This man of Israel. Is going to. Get victory. Over the whole camp. It was another sign.

Gideon saw the. Telling of the dream. And of its meaning. And it reads on. Verse 15. When Gideon heard. The telling of the dream. And the interpretation thereof.

That he worshipped. Notice that. He worshipped. And he returned unto the host of Israel. And said. Arise. For the Lord have delivered. Into your hand. The host of Midian. Here was another confirmation.

[25:37] To encourage Gideon's faith. Notice how the first thing. That Gideon did. Was to worship. It's an important point. Isn't it? We must first worship. Before we. Go out.

As a warrior. If you want to be a good warrior. Be a good worshipper. And. He returned to the camp. He said. The Lord's delivered. Into your hand. The host of Midian.

It wasn't. That there was a need. For more people. It was a need. For the right people. The 300. With the right people. Amen. And God plus one. Equals a majority. Doesn't it? There's a blessing.

Being weak. If we're just weak enough. To realise. Our dependence. Upon our Lord. If we can. Realise our own weakness. That will stop relying on ourself.

Actually. It was the Midianites. Who were hopelessly. Outgunned. Because God is on. Our side. That's what he's saying. So what happens next. We see. That obedience. Led to victory.

[26:33] We could say. Faith is the victory. That they acted in faith. They obeyed in faith. They went forward in faith. And God brought great victory.

We know the story goes. Judges 7 verse 16. And Gideon it says. He divided the 300 men. Into three companies. And he put a trumpet. In every man's hand.

With empty pitchers. And lamps. Within the pitchers. So pitchers. Is another name for. A clay vessel. These pots. These jars. These containers.

That held the lamps. Interestingly. Gideon is not said. To have held a sword. We'll read there. Verses 16 through 18. And he divided the 300 men.

Into three companies. He put a trumpet. In every man's hand. With empty pitchers. And lamps. Within the pitchers. And he said unto them. Look on me. And do likewise. And behold. When I come to the outside.

[27:28] Of the camp. It shall be that. As I do. So shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet. Woo. The shofar. I and all that are with me.

Then blow you the trumpets. Also. On every side of all the camp. Let's practice that. Shall we? Ready? Woo. Let's do that again. Woo.

Okay. Good on you. Thank you for joining in. Imagine what it would have sounded like. There's people. A bit crazy really. Isn't it? Yeah. We had our music practice this morning. He says. Blow with me a trumpet.

Blow you the trumpets. On every side of all the camp. And say. The sword of the Lord. And of Gideon. Let's say it. The sword of the Lord. And of Gideon. So this was what happened. This was the.

This was the. Strategy. This was the. The military. Strategy. Was. Simply. A sounding of a trumpet. And the shouting out.

[28:23] Of the sword of the Lord. And of Gideon. And then we see. Judges 7. Verse 19. So Gideon. And the hundred men. That were with him. They came unto the outside of the camp.

In the beginning of the middle watch. And they had but. Nearly set the watch. And they blew the trumpets. And break the pitchers. That were in their hands. So this. Smashing sound. These 300 jars. These 300 pitchers.

Were smashed. And broken. And that would have been. Quite a loud shattering noise. And the three companies. Blew the trumpets. They break the pitchers. They held the lamps. In their left hands. And the trumpets.

In their right hands. To blow. And they cried. The sword of the Lord. And of Gideon. And they stood every man. In his place. Around about the camp. And all the hosts ran.

And cried and fled. Notice they blew the trumpets. They break the pitchers. They held their lamps. In their left hands. An unconventional strategy. Interestingly. It says. The sword of the Lord.

[29:17] And of Gideon. Doesn't actually say. Gideon was holding a sword. Think of the sword of the Lord. The sword of the spirit. The word of God. Could it be that the sword. Was actually divine intervention. And so.

Gideon's battle plan. Was given by the Lord. And it led to the Midianites. Turning on each other. In this confusion. And God's intervention. Was here. Was God's hand. In the battle.

A miraculous victory. It wasn't. By human armor. Or weaponry. Or technology. Or technique. It wasn't. They had a superior armament.

Armament. It was God. Faith. And God. Trust God's plan. Think of it. Brother. Sister. For yourself. Are you trusting God's plan? Can you be like Gideon.

And have a heart. To believe God. That God will act. In your situation. God will do a work. By faith. Don't let fear overtake you. Don't look humanly.

[30:12] At the circumstance. But trust in the one. Who overrules circumstances. Trust and obey him. The Lord. And lastly. We see Gideon's. Really humility.

In leadership. So there's this great victory now. The people wanted. Then to make Gideon their ruler. They wanted to crown him. But he refuses. And he says. No God is king.

God is sovereign. He's the sovereign. Judges 8.22. Then the man of Israel. Said unto Gideon. Rule thou over us. Both thou and thy son. And thy son's son also. For thou hast delivered us.

From the hand of Midian. And Gideon said unto them. I will not rule over you. Neither shall my son rule over you. The Lord shall. Rule over you.

Gideon refuses to become king. He acknowledges. God is the true ruler. And really. That's true. Godly leadership. It's acknowledges. God is in charge.

[31:08] God is on the throne. Gideon didn't take the glory for himself. He gave all the glory to God. God. And humility and leadership. Reflects a heart. Surrender to God.

Can we have that heart. When God does something good for us. That we don't. Get. Too. Puffed up. And brag on. Gideon had humility.

He recognised it was God who brought this deliverance. Not himself. Because we've always got to be guarded about the danger of self-promotion. Of wanting. Recognition.

Of wanting. Possession. It's not about that. Let the Lord rule over you. He shall rule over you. This was the message of Gideon's story of life.

Let God rule your life. Let him rule over you. Come under the Lordship. Of Christ. All glory belongs to him. And friends. It's the same for us today. God's able to work in your life.

[32:03] Think of Gideon. Look at his long list of disqualifications. Wow. Who would have picked Gideon? This fearful man. Man. Constantly needing this reassurance. This doubting man.

God is greater than your fear. This was to Gideon's credit at least. So that he gave God the glory. And so can we. When God does anything good. Give God the glory for it. Sadly the record of Gideon reflects a failure on his part.

See it reads on. The record shows his error. Next up. Judges 8. 24. Gideon said unto them. I would desire a request of you. He would give me every man the earrings of his prey.

For they had golden earrings. Because they were Ishmaelites. And they answered. We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment. And did cast there every man the earrings of his prey. So they gathered all the golden earrings.

Of these idol worshippers. The Midianites. That they had taken these earrings from them. And it reads on. The weight of the golden earrings. Was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold.

[33:05] And there's these ornaments. And collars. And purple raiment. That was on the kings of Midian. Besides the chains that were about. Their camel's necks. Excuse me. And verse 27. And Gideon made an effort thereof.

And put it in his city. Even in Ophrah. And all Israel went there. There are whoring after it. Which then became a snare unto Gideon. And to his house. So just to explain. An effort.

In ancient Israel. Was this priestly garment. A special garment. Associated with worship. And inquiring of God. It was worn. Often by the high priest. And Gideon rationally organises.

The making of an effort. So it was a religious. Item. But God didn't tell him to make it. Gideon just went ahead. Willy nilly. And did his own thing. Gideon's effort.

Was not for the high priest. It wasn't sanctioned by God. It was just his own idea. Really it was a compromise. And so we see Gideon. As the Bible shows people. When. In their true.

[34:01] Purpose. Their true nature. The good of them. And we see. The error of them here. That Gideon. Slipped up badly here. Into idolatry. He acted presumptuously.

Presumptuously. He did his own thing. He didn't seek God. About doing this. He just went ahead. And did it. And so it says. The effort became a snare. For Gideon. And his family. As well as all.

Israel. Think of it friends. We can do something. God looks to you. As God's people. You could do something. That could have caused others. To stumble. That was what happened here.

He led the people. Into something that was wrong. Caused an offence. We should lead by example. People looking at us. It can happen. That we might do something. Well meaning maybe.

But it was a source of. A snare. Caused a spiritual downfall. So Gideon's story. It serves as a warning here for us. About the danger of.

[34:56] Religious acts. Or actions. That are away from God's. Pure worship. It shows that even the ones. Mightily used of God. Were at times faulty.

Failing men. Yet the record does end. On a more positive note. Verse 28. Thus was Gideon subdued. Before the children of Israel. So that they lifted up. Their heads no more. And the country was in quietness. Forty years. In the days of Gideon. So Midian was crushed. And the people of God. They had quietness. There was rest. There was peace. In the land. For forty years.

Just to close. What lessons. What truths. Can we learn. From Gideon's life. A quick recap. God calls the ordinary. The weak. You know what. Say preacher. Who am I. That God would have. Even wanted me. That he would choose. To save me. That he could. Use me. As his servant.

[35:51] Gideon was such a man. God calls the ordinary. The weak. The fearful. And by faith. We. The powerless. The inadequate. We can trust God. Who makes us able.

We can trust God. And take action. Because God. Surely God. Is with you. And even amidst. All of our inclination. To doubting. Our constant.

Probably human inclination. To wanting. Reassurance. From God. We can know God's assurance. And God's leading. Through the word. That he's given us. That precious. Word of God.

Full of precious promises. We can know. God's assurance. And we can know. God's power can work. Even in such inadequate. And weak men. And bring great victory.

Even by what might be. Considered unconventional. What matters. Is that we yielded vessels. And that we like Gideon. We can have the spirit. Fill us. And we need to decrease.

[36:46] So that he will increase. Amen. Like John the Baptist. God does wonders. When we get out the way. When we don't get in the way. Any preacher. All of us. Anyone who serves.

We've got to get out of the way. And let the Lord be glorified. Let the Lord be magnified. Let's hide behind the cross. Let Christ be glorified. In whatever service we render.

That God be glorified. That God be magnified. That we get out of the way. And obedience. It sells us. Leads to victory. Believe God. Faith is the victory. That overcometh the world.

Even our faith. Trust his plan. And Gideon shows us how. The best attitude. Ultimately. Truly. Is humility. That we'll be humble enough. That we'll be small enough.

That God will be magnified. That we will decrease. That he will increase. That we will get out of the way. That we'll exalt the king. As the king of kings. The lord of lords. The king of glory.

[37:41] Let's keep a humble spirit. Such that we're constantly crucifying the flesh. We're constantly. Under his hand. Humbling ourselves. That he will exalt us in due time.

And give all the glory to God. For any good thing of your life. And keep alert to the flesh. Like Gideon. He slipped up. His ungodly actions. It brought a snare. People are watching you.

Believer. Stand strong. Be faithful. Be firm. Be a warrior. We don't cause a snare to anybody. Let's not fall for anything. When the devil would try to ensnare us.

Because others will follow. Our actions. We don't want to be a snare. And let's be as Gideon. Let's be as the 300. Let's join up. Let's sign up. To be one of the 300. Let the fearful go home.

Let the fearful go home. We want to go into the battle. We want to be those that are vigilant. Looking for the enemy. We want to be the 300. Be sober.

[38:37] Be vigilant. Let's be as Gideon and his 300. Believe that God can do his work. In your life. And bring you victory. Gideon. He was an unlikely hero. Inclined to be a warrior.

Rather than a warrior. But God made him a worshipper. Amen. And so too for you. It starts at home. Tear down the idols. Turn the sacred sites into firewood.

Join the 300. Join Gideon's band. And know. Surely I am with thee. It's God's promise. The spirit of the Lord. Came upon Gideon.

Let us pray. Our Lord God. We thank you that it's by faith. We have the victory. That overcomes the world. Lord for Gideon. We see his example. We see. Yet he did slip up.

Lord it's in all of us to. Make a mess of things. Yet Lord. You made. Use of him. When he yielded to you. You filled him. You led him.

[39:36] You reassured him. You gave him your promises. Your spirit. And the sword of the Lord. And of Gideon. Is the word of God. It's our trust.

That these.

Truths. We can live too. And Lord. Help us to be. One of the 300. Lord. Even though we're. Massively outnumbered. In a world. That's. Hell. Hell bound.

That we'll be one of the 300. Lord. Give us grace. We pray that each one. Might know how to be saved. By putting their faith. In Christ. As their saviour. And Lord. That we can know. That wonderful saving.

That wonderful forgiveness. Of all our sin. Because of the virtue. Of your blood shed. On our part. That everything was paid. Such that we can. Receive your great forgiveness. For our great sin. So we can know. Such a great salvation. Such a great saviour. We praise you Lord. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen.