

TEXT: Judges 6-8

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Go to redeemerchurch.com/events to get more information and register for:

- The WKNDR | May 17
 - Men's & Women's Discipleship Classes | June 4
 - Kids Camp | June 11-13
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Big Idea: Jesus Uses Unlikely People

Icebreaker: What irrational, or rational, fear do you have?

Judges 6:1-6, 11-13

You can't even feed your family because if you grow a little garden in your backyard, the moment it starts producing vegetables the Midianites come out of nowhere and take it. The people cry out for help and God provides Gideon, who we find hiding in a winepress from the Midianites. God calls Gideon "valiant warrior," not because that is who he was presently, but that is who God would make him to be.

- As children of God, what are some things God says is true of us because of Jesus in our place?

Judges 6:13-17

Even after God's calling, Gideon doubts and is afraid. Gideon makes a pretty harsh accusation, "If you are with us, why has all this happened?" God hasn't moved, they have. God hasn't abandoned them, they abandoned God.

- In what ways do we blame God for our unfaithfulness and inconsistency?

Gideon gives God excuses for why he can't be obedient. He tells God that his family is the weakest of all, and of his family, he is the weakest, so he is the weakest of the weakest. God isn't calling Gideon to be brave, He's calling him to be obedient.

- What excuses do we give for not being obedient to God?

Judges 6:25-27

Before Gideon can be obedient, God has him tear down the other idols he and his family are worshipping in addition to God. Obedience begins with the proper understanding and worship of God alone, it's more than going through the motion, it's a relationship.

- What gods are we worshipping alongside of God?

- *“Regret is all about “us”: how I am being hurt, how my life is ruined, how my heart is breaking; but repentance is all about God: how he has been grieved, how his nature as Creator and Redeemer is being trampled on, how his repeated saving actions are being trivialized and used manipulatively.” - Timothy Keller*

Gideon still didn't fully trust God and so he lays out the fleece as a test. Gideon already knew what to do but lacked the faith to do it and thought more signs would be sufficient. We no longer need a word from God, we have God's Word.

- In what ways are we lacking faith in God and relying on other things to grow our faith?
 - This whole scene is negative. Gideon is telling Jesus “I don't believe you!” This isn't an act of discerning faith, this is faithlessness. You and I don't need to lay out a fleece, we have the Word, we have God's people, and we have the Holy Spirit. We know what God's will is, we don't need a word from God, we have God's Word.
 - There is nothing wrong with being uneasy and even a little afraid when you believe you're doing something that will fail unless Christ is with you. But you don't need a fleece to figure out if Christ is with you.
 - *“Contrary to popular interpretation, these fleecings have nothing to do with discovering or determining God's will. The divine will is perfectly and absolutely clear in Gideon's own mind. These “signs” reveal his lack of faith.” - K. Lawson Younger*
 - *“We don't need a fleece, we have the cross.” - JD Greear*

Judges 7:1-3, 16-23

God tells Gideon that He will give them victory but that he has too many soldiers, otherwise they will think they saved themselves. God cuts the army back to 300 men and works to defeat the enemy by causing them to fight among themselves. It wasn't because of Gideon's bravery, but his obedience, that God worked to save His people.

- How have you experienced God work through your obedience?
 - Fearful Gideon's rise is meant to remind us that obedience always precedes boldness. That usability always comes when our affections are undivided. But it's also meant to point us forward to the Unbroken Savior. Gideon, the not so mighty man of not that much valor, is meant to point us forward to the true and better Gideon, the only mighty man of valor who has ever lived, Jesus. Gideon was the one man who provided salvation for Israel from Midian. Jesus is the God Man who provides us salvation from sin.

Overview

- How does the Israelites' suffering in the hands of the Midianites reflect the consequences of their disobedience?
- How does Gideon's doubt reflect his human nature? How does God respond to this doubt?
- How did Gideon's faith evolve throughout this passage?