

WELCOME TO



BELL CREEK

Community Church



JUNE 28, 2026

IN CASE YOU'RE TEMPTED TO BOAST...
JUDGES CHAPTERS 7 AND 8

SERMON BY: PASTOR FRED WRIGHT

CURRENT SERMON SERIES:
JUDGES—THE GOD WHO DELIVERS

IN CASE YOU'RE TEMPTED TO BOAST...

JUDGES CHAPTERS 7 AND 8

The LORD is Better than an Army

The LORD Wins the Battles

The LORD Rules and Reigns Over Us

FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Judges Chapter 9.

DAILY CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE READING

JUNE 28: 1 KINGS 20-21
JUNE 29: 1 KINGS 22; 2 CHRON. 18
JUNE 30: 2 CHRON. 19-23
JULY 1: OBADIAH; PSALM 82-83
JULY 2: 2 KINGS 1-4
JULY 3: 2 KINGS 5-8
JULY 4: 2 KINGS 9-11

UPCOMING AT THE CREEK

KIDS' CREEK MIDWEEK

Children ages 4 through 4th Grade are invited to the Large Group Room to enjoy Bible Lessons, discussion, activities, worship, and games 2 more times this summer. Please register your child at www.bellcreek.org/calendar to join us for the following classes:

July 8-Can We Trust the Bible?

August 5-Did God Create the World?

Each class will meet from 6:30-7:45 PM. If you have any questions, please reach out to elyse@bellcreek.org or rachel@bellcreek.org.

BELL CREEK DAD COMMUNITY

DadCo is a community just for dads that gives an opportunity to build real friendships, share honest advice on parenting and life, and helps dads find encouragement through monthly meetups and events. Whether you are a new dad or your kids are grown, DadCo equips you to thrive as a father, husband, and man-together in community! The ministry meets the first Monday of each month. Join us at our next gathering on Monday, July 6 at 6:30 PM in the Prayer Room. Please reach out to Alex Quint or email info@bellcreek.org to learn more.

AS THEY GO PRAYER MEETING

Join our group of parents of adult children to pray together in the Prayer Room from 9:00-10:00 AM on Saturday, July 11. We will continue to meet every month on the 2nd Saturday of each month. Join us as we cry out to God in praise for the amazing gift our children are and cry out for guidance and mercy as they navigate life as adults. Please reach out with any questions to Kelly Salter (ksalter1122@gmail.com).

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Our Young Adult Group is open for adults 18-30 years old! Our next gathering will be Sunday, July 12, after 2nd service in the Prayer Room. Join us for lunch, fellowship, games, and encouragement in our faith. Gather with us to build friendships in a fun laid-back environment.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

PRAYER MEETINGS

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:30 PM

FRIDAYS 12 NOON

PRE-TEEN & MIDDLE SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

SUNDAYS AFTER WORSHIP

2ND SERVICE

AWANA

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

SEPTEMBER-MAY

HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

SUNDAYS 11:00 AM

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES
AND EVENTS AT BELLCREEK.ORG

OUR MISSION

MATTHEW 22:37–40

He said to him, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and prophets depend on these two commandments.”

MATTHEW 28:19–20

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember that I am with you always to the end of the age.

STAY CONNECTED

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU HERE!

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FOLLOW US!



BELL CREEK
Community Church

30000 FIVE MILE RD.
LIVONIA, MI 48154

Sermon Series | Judges – The God Who Delivers

Sunday, June 28, 2026 | In Case You're Tempted to Boast...

Sermon Text | Judges Chapters 7-8

Scripture Reading:

"God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'" (1 Corinthians 1:28–31, ESV)

The LORD is Better Than an Army

"Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod. And the camp of Midian was north of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley. The LORD said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.'" (Judges 7:1–2, ESV)

"Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, 'Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home and hurry away from Mount Gilead.' " Then 22,000 of the people returned, and 10,000 remained. And the LORD said to Gideon, "The people are still too many. Take them down to the water, and I will test them for you there, and anyone of whom I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' shall go with you, and anyone of whom I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' shall not go." So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, "Every one who laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set by himself. Likewise, every one who kneels down to drink." And the number of those who lapped, putting their hands to their mouths, was 300 men, but all the rest of the people knelt down to drink water." (Judges 7:3–6, ESV)

The "lapping test" hints at no virtue (or vice) in how one drinks water. Even though some commentators over the years have tried to find a reason why God chose those who "lapped water as a dog laps" the text never reveals this. It was simply God's mechanism to shrink the army.

Here's the main point: Those 300 men are intended by God to be a sign of Israel's weakness. These are not 300 choice warriors!

There is "a certain deviousness in God's people, a tendency to steal God's praise." Sometimes God "cannot trust us with his work unless we realize how inadequate we are to do it." – Dale Ralph Davis.

Illustration: William M'Culloch of Cambuslang (c. 1740). A scholar with little gift for the pulpit, nicknamed the "Ale-minister" because hearers slipped out to the tavern when he rose to speak. God used him to spark an incredible revival in Camusland in 1742 where tens of thousands heard the Gospel and many came to Christ. Why him? So the work would be credited not to human ability or eloquence but to the Spirit of God!

“And the LORD said to Gideon, “With the 300 men who lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hand, and let all the others go every man to his home.” So the people took provisions in their hands, and their trumpets. And he sent all the rest of Israel every man to his tent, but retained the 300 men. And the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.” (Judges 7:7–8, ESV)

The LORD Wins the Battles

“That same night the LORD said to him, “Arise, go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hand. But if you are afraid to go down, go down to the camp with Purah your servant. And you shall hear what they say, and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to go down against the camp.” (Judges 7:9–11, ESV)

God is kind to us when we are afraid: “If you are afraid to go down ...” (Judges 7:10). Afraid? Gideon? Definitely (remember, this is the guy who was hiding in a winepress). This is no man of steel. But God “knows our frame” (Psalm 103:14), and He does not mock us because we are fearful and fragile.

“And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the East lay along the valley like locusts in abundance, and their camels were without number, as the sand that is on the seashore in abundance.” (Judges 7:12, ESV)

“When Gideon came, behold, a man was telling a dream to his comrade. And he said, “Behold, I dreamed a dream, and behold, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian and came to the tent and struck it so that it fell and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat.”” (Judges 7:13, ESV)

“And his comrade answered, “This is no other than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given into his hand Midian and all the camp.”” (Judges 7:14, ESV)

God’s word reaches even the enemy’s dreams. The barley-loaf dream comes through “the oddest channel, a Midianite private” (Judges 7:13–14). God governs not only the enemy’s armies, but their minds and hearts.

300 Against an Army without Number! Judges 7:14-21

“Every man stood in his place around the camp, and all the army ran. They cried out and fled.” (Judges 7:21, ESV)

“When they blew the 300 trumpets, the LORD set every man’s sword against his comrade and against all the army. And the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath.” (Judges 7:22, ESV)

This victory is completely of the Lord. The 300 men remain “primarily hornblowers!” The text says, “each man stood in his place around the camp” (Judges 7:21) while “Yahweh set each man’s sword against his companion” (Judges 7:22). They did not attack, they didn’t have to. The Lord caused the Midianite army to destroy itself. All God’s people have to do was pursue the remnant. The battle is won without Israel swinging a sword!

The LORD Rules and Reigns Over Us

Pursuit of the Midianites: Judges 8:1-21

“Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, “Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson also, for you have saved us from the hand of Midian.” Gideon said to them, “I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you.”” (Judges 8:22–23, ESV)

All well and good! That’s the right answer!

“So Midian was subdued before the people of Israel, and they raised their heads no more. And the land had rest for forty years in the days of Gideon.” (Judges 8:28, ESV)

However, after Gideon refuses kingship, he goes on to live like a king (and a Canaanite king at that)!

He gets a bunch of gold (millions in today’s money) and makes an ephod of it (which only the priests were supposed to wear). The text says, “And Gideon made an ephod of it and put it in his city, in Ophrah. And all Israel whored after it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family.” (Judges 8:27, ESV)

He amasses a harem (Judges 8:30), he names his son Abimelech, which means, “my father is king” (Judges 8:31; the priestly ephod).

What Should We Learn from All This?

First: The LORD won the victory of Israel over the Midianites so no flesh could boast. “Let the one who boasts, boast in the LORD” (1 Corinthians 1:31).

Next: We shouldn’t put too much hope in any leader because we will never find perfection in them. We only find the leader we truly need in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ (see 1 Peter 2:6; 1 John 3:5; John 8:46). Placing our hope in Christ alone helps us and our leaders to remember and be accountable for what we ought to be like, while guarding us from cynicism when we disappoint each other.

We have a King who never fails, who saves by his own hand and for his own glory. His name is Jesus. The only thing we have to boast about is the Lord Himself and what He has done for us.

A Question for Those who Already Know Jesus: Where is the Lord inviting you today, through this message, to loosen your grip on something you’ve been trying to accomplish in your own strength and rest in what He alone can do?

A Question for Those who Don’t Know Jesus Yet: Have you considered that the enemies we face (sin, death, Satan, hell) are more “innumerable” than a Midianite army? Are you ready to stop trying to save yourself and entrust your life to Jesus, the One who died on the cross to take away your sin, and rose from the dead to defeat death? He is the King who never fails His people!

For Those who are Suffering: In the place where you are in pain, or feel weakest or most afraid, receive this comfort: The Lord knows your frame, He doesn’t despise you for your fear or weakness. He stays near to you, and He will show you His strength.

BENEDICTION:

“Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people, from this time forth and forevermore.” (Psalm 125:1–2, ESV)



In Case You're Tempted to Boast

1. What did you think of the sermon "In Case You're Tempted to Boast?"

2. God cut Gideon's army down to only 300 men so everyone would know the victory came from Him. What have you seen Him do, that you know you couldn't have done on your own? Why does God let us feel weak or inadequate?

3. Gideon was afraid but, God gave him the encouragement he needed. What does this say about God's heart toward us when we're afraid? What area of your life are you afraid, and need to rely on Him and trust in Him?

4. The 300 men obeyed God's instructions, but it was the Lord who won the battle. Why can it be hard to give God the credit for what He does in our lives? Think of one way you can intentionally give Him the glory for something this week.

5. Gideon said the right thing telling Israel that the Lord should be their ruler. Later his actions didn't reflect this. What can we learn from this example about the importance of finishing well? How can you keep pointing people to Jesus instead of yourself?

