

Judges 6-7 – 28 October 2021

“Growing Faith Thru Experience”

Introduction

*God has given Israel great unearned prosperity

*But instead of recognizing the grace of God that brought them to prosperity, the Book of Judges’ theme is “*everyone did that which was right in their own eyes*”. Therefore, a cycle of sin & deliverance develops in which God raises up a series of judges.

*Today we get a look at the mighty man Gideon who didn’t know he was might...yet

*His story in chap 6-9, today in chap 6-7 we see how God begins to grow his faith thru experience

*Trying of our faith works patience (Read Rom 5:1-4)

*That word ‘experience’ is same as word ‘glory’

*Read II Cor 4:17 – Our troublesome experiences are working something in us that matters

***Today, here’s 4 experiences that can grow our faith**

1st experience that can grow our faith is everyday life (Chap 6:1-13)

Intro

1. We don't live too long before we realize that life is hard in many ways
2. Who do we blame for that?
 - a. *We need to accept that the shortcomings are ours, not God's*
 - b. Starting chap 6, Gideon faces this question

Read Chap 6:1-6

1. Midianites spoil & rule over Israel from east for 7 years
2. Until Israel cries unto the Lord

Read Chap 6:7-10

1. Un-named prophet declares all that God has done for them & his warning to avoid idols, but they've disobeyed
2. God has always helped them, not harmed them

Read Chap 6:11-12

1. Angel of the Lord is Jesus - Theophany
2. Threshing in a winepress to hide
3. God sees beginning to end & knows Gideon is a mighty man, yet Gideon doesn't know it yet

Read Chap 6:13

1. If Gideon has only been there to hear the unnamed prophet from vs 7-10, he gave the answer
2. The shortcoming is never on the Lord's part, but on our part (Read Isa 59:1-2)

2nd experience that can grow our faith is ministry or service (Chap 6:14-24)

Intro

1. Many people wander thru life never knowing what their purpose is or how to use their talents
2. God is calling each 1 of us to a specific mission
 - a. *We need to acknowledge the call on our lives*
 - b. Gideon doubted what God was calling out for him

Read Chap 6:14-16

1. We doubt God's call on our life as Gideon and Moses did
2. Key to the success of your call is "the Lord is with us"

Read Chap 6:17-18

1. Gideon expresses honest doubt
2. Communing w/ God continually will grow you

Read Chap 6:19-24

1. B/c the Lord received the offering Gideon now believes and the Lord offers him peace
2. Gideon now looks beyond the pending war to the peace to come – given by God

3rd experience that can grow our faith is sinful times (Chap 6:25-40)

Intro

1. As a well-known soccer coach recently said, “Sometimes you win & sometimes you learn”
2. In the times of believing, thinking or acting wrong, identify what needs to change
 - a. *We need to grow in purity, don't fear failure*

Read Chap 6:25-32

1. God starts Gideon with a smaller, shorter but much more personal task
2. We have great goals to glorify God, but our house needs to be in order first to accomplish them
 - a. Read I Pet 4:17
3. Notice vs 27 – “He did it at night”
 - a. He's still nervous & imperfect, but that's ok
 - b. The goal is purification not perfection

Read Chap 6:33-40

1. How do we determine God's will?
 - a. OT – Thru the Spirit, prophets & judges
 - b. Now – Read Heb 1:1 – thru the Word and the Spirit within us
2. Again, we see, Gideon's faith is growing thru each experience
 - a. Each time we obey God & follow Him, we find Him to be trustworthy!
3. What is your communion with God based on?
 - a. Base it on His faithfulness to keep His Word & then we won't doubt and waver

4th experience that can grow our faith is victorious moments (Chap 7:1-25)

Intro

1. Times of success can be the most dangerous
 - a. We can easily get lifted up in pride
 - b. *We need to give God the credit for all things*

Read Chap 7:1-2

1. Read I Cor 1:27-29 – “God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise”
 - a. God wants the glory for what happens in our lives
 - b. If we have all ability to accomplish the situation, then what credit does God get? None
2. Billy Graham has said – “Don’t touch the money, the women or the glory”
 - a. Money – Achan (Jos 7), Women – David, Glory – Gideon (Judges 7)

Read Chap 7:3-8

1. After the fearful left, still had 10,000
 - a. Still too many for God to get the glory
2. Having a fearful part is worse than having few
 - a. Pure numbers are better than great numbers
3. Only 300 drank vigilantly & God retained them

Read Chap 7:9-15

1. If we could only see the behind the scenes look at all that God is doing to prepare for victory, we'd trust Him more
2. This is the life of faith that God is calling us to believe His Word *before* His promises come to pass

Read Chap 7:16-21

1. So they started a stampede based on fear not based on substance
2. Victory not by might, not by power, but by the spiritual intervention of the Lord

Read Chap 7:22-25

1. Once we take a step of faith, *then* God sends reinforcements
2. Now Gideon's ready to glorify God to all the reinforcement that come to join

Conclusion

So, every experience of life is a chance to learn how to trust and obey God to His glorification

1. In everyday life...

- a. Accept that the shortcomings & failings of life are man's fault, not God's fault
- b. God is the great provider, don't force Him to hid His eyes from us b/c of our sin

2. For ministry or service...

- a. Acknowledge God's call on our lives, but grow into it
- b. Key to taking baby steps forward is God's promise that He will be with us

3. During sinful times...

- a. Grow in purity, don't fear failure
- b. Victory in the personal, private tasks is more important than victory in the public tasks

4. During victorious moments...

- a. Give God the credit for all, don't steal it