

Underdog: Under God - Gideon

Ice Breaker: Recall a time when you faced insurmountable circumstances or odds but still came out on top? If you don't have a story, what is your favorite underdog story and why?

Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and for seven years He gave them into the hands of the Midianites...It was impossible to count the men and their camels...Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the LORD for help. (Judges 6:1, 5b-6)

Fear and an earthly perspective of the battle...

- **Doubts the calling of God** – “When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, ‘The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.’ ... ‘But LORD,’ Gideon asked, ‘how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.’” (Judges 6:12, 15)

We all engage in some kind of battle or struggle. What is your current battle/struggle? When you are confronted with that battle/struggle, like Gideon, do you feel inadequate of God's calling on your life (cf: 6:12, 15)? Do you feel God is distant? If so, be reaffirmed with the verse below.

The LORD answered, “I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together.” (Judges 6:16)

- **Doubts the promises of God** – “Gideon said to God, ‘If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised – look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said.’” (Judges 6:36-37)

Out of fear, Gideon asks God to prove it, in other words, to play his (Gideon's) game in order to validate God's will. God chooses to play (he doesn't always).

Have you ever negotiated with God, asked him to play your game, in order to validate His will? What happened? Why isn't Judges 6:16 truth enough for us so that we don't play games with God?

Faith and a kingdom perspective of the battle...

The LORD said to Gideon, “You have too many men for me to deliver Midian into their hands.” (Judges 7:2)

- **Courage: stand firm when the rest run** – “‘Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.’ So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained.” (Judges 7:3) – In what specific thing/area do you think God may be telling you to stand firm?
- **Weapons: be weak enough to be strong** – “The LORD said to Gideon, ‘With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands.’” (Judges 7:7a) – In your battle/struggles, how might God be working mightily through you?

¶ **Note: God is creative at keeping us motivated in the trenches** – “When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped God. He returned to the camp of Israel and called out, ‘Get up! The LORD has given the Midianite camp into your hands.’” (Judges 7:15)

“A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!” While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled. (Judges 7:20b-21)

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- ***Victory: a seasoned faith and a glorified God*** – “The Israelites said to Gideon, ‘Rule over us – you, your son and your grandson – because you have saved us out of the hand of Midian.’ But Gideon told them, ‘I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. The LORD will rule over you.’” (**Judges 8:22-23**) **Read these verses, especially verse 23. How does Gideon arrive to have faith like this? What would it take to bring you from a fear driven Christianity to a faith driven Christianity? Take some time to pray about this.**

Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.
(James 1:4)