

Judges 8:22-28

Trey Waldrop

Right orthodoxy is most valuable when applied by righteous orthopraxy.

Right orthodoxy (belief) is most valuable when applied by righteous orthopraxy (Action)

Ortho: “Straight” Orthodontics: “Straight Teeth”
Orthopedics: “Straight Children”

Straight, Right and True Teachings.

Orthodoxy: Right Glory

Orthopraxy: Right Practice

The men who really believe in themselves are all in lunatic asylums.' — G.K. Chesterton *Orthodoxy*

It is natural for fallen people to elevate results and the people who bring them.

Notice that this itching desire for a king in Israel in this moment falls on the ears of Gideon. Israel wants a king like everybody else. When they see the hand of God at work within the nation specifically as it pertains to battles against enemies their response is make that guy king. Its not unnatural for they have seen the results of His leadership. Notice the reason they attribute the desire to make Gideon king. “You have saved us from the hand of Midian.”

10,000 Sermon Illustrations (Folly of Glory)

Some men become proud and insolent because they ride a fine horse, wear a feather in their hat or are dressed in a fine suit of clothes. Who does not see the folly of this? If there be any glory in such things, the glory belongs to the horse, the bird and the tailor. - St. Francis de Sales

In the fallen condition of man is the desire to elevate people to prominate places when they see results especially if those results will benefit them. Is this not the case in our own day. A good word is spoken on behalf of a friend we know at the place of our employment so they'll hopefully become our boss. The problem with Israels thinking and belief in this moment is that they have forgotten what God has previously said. He has not been silent on this issue.

Exodus 20:1–5 “1 And God spoke all these words, saying, 2 “I

am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 “You shall have no other gods before me. 4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,”

Deuteronomy 33:1–5 “1 This is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the people of Israel before his death. 2 He said, “The Lord came from Sinai and dawned from Seir upon us; he shone forth from Mount Paran; he came from the ten thousands of holy ones, with flaming fire at his right hand. 3 Yes, he loved his people, all his holy ones were in his hand; so they followed in your steps, receiving direction from you, 4 when Moses commanded us a law, as a possession for the assembly of Jacob. 5 Thus the Lord became king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people were gathered, all the tribes of Israel together.”

There seems to be an honest belief that Gideon has done something great. Gideon gathered the least likely to succeed army together with trumpets and clay pots at God’s command. These 300 men alongside Gideon were used by God, but it was God who defeated the Midianites.

In moments of success we may be more vulnerable than we recognize.

Spurgeon's spiritual presence of mind when he was approached by an over-effusive admirer, following a particularly brilliant sermon is reflected in the following response...“Mr. Spurgeon, you were wonderful,” she crooned.

To which the reply came, “Madam, the devil whispered those same words in my ear, as I left the pulpit.”

I believe measurable, statistical success can sometimes lead to elevating objects and or people to inappropriate places. It is natural when we see good results to boast in those results, but we must remember that it is God who saved Israel and God who saved you and me.

Our worship of God becomes shallow when we think we contributed to our own success. When we have a high view of results it sometimes leads to a low view of God. It pushes us toward becoming achievers instead of worshippers. It causes us to work toward nickels and noses instead of discipling transformation. If you and I will set our hearts on worship God in the way He has told us to worship Him then the motivation for what we do will be a response to grace and not guilty service for man made results.

It's possible on the backside of success to have right theology but unrighteous action.

Gideon's response is appropriate. I will not rule over you; The Lord will rule over you. Right on, Amen, great answer. It tells us that Gideon understood his role and call clearly. It shines light upon what God has previously said. Be mindful when you hear someone say "I've got a word from the Lord." Your first question should be, "What chapter and verse?" God had instructed the nation on who would rule them. He the one true God would rule over them and Gideon;' response is not just a refusal to serve but an acknowledgment of what God has already said.

It is why the next statements are so detrimental. I will not rule over, but bring me all the gold and spoils of war.

While this may seem fitting given the fact that the Midianites have been defeated and the spoils of war were tremendous. The problem with this scenario is that while Gideon said I won't rule over you or be your king, he begins acting and making requests that a king would make. He refused to lead but didn't refuse the reward of winning. God is your king and ruler but bring me all that God gave us and put it in this cloak. While he refused to take the position out in the open, he garnered the ability to command and get results. Notice their is an instant willingness of response from the people.

While he may not be their king in title they are willing to respond to him to him as if he were king.

Some have estimated the value of this gold to be close to 1 million U.S. dollars.

Gideon lays a cloak to gather it and then makes an. The ephod was a priestly garment and also a symbol.

Exodus 28:15–16 “15 “You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, in skilled work. In the style of the ephod you shall make it—of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen shall you make it. 16 It shall be square and doubled, a span its length and a span its breadth.”

The ephod was a symbol understood as the breastpiece of judgment. I don't believe that Gideon's desire here is completely inappropriate. It seems as though he was creating an item that would be similar to the high priestly vestments as a reminder of God's judgment on the Midianites and their victory over them.

The problem is that Gideon has taken a liberty here that is somewhat unprecedented. According to the Moasic law there is to be only one ephod. It seems that although Gideon's intentions are good His actions lend to detrimental results. Sometimes on the backside of successes or good results we think we can take more liberty than God's word allows or instructs. When we take one small step away from

God's word and desire we are in treacherous territory.

Idolatry often arises in success not failure. So it is with a misappropriation of worship here. The intrusion into God's design for the high priestly vestments by Gideon creating his own brought horrible results. Good intentions that are not based in good godly instruction will lead to inappropriate action that yields detrimental results.

Notice verse 27

Judges 8:27 “27 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.”

The language of the text is clear. Israel developed a love affair with the tangible results of victory at the expense of honoring and worshipping God because of His deliverance. In the ebb and flow of life and blessing of God's hand we too can fall into this way of thinking. Success has a way of causing us to celebrate before the final conclusions are made.

Mario Cristobal: Reaction from a hug by one of his coaches prior to the conclusion.

While Gideon knew Yahweh was king and the one who delivered Israel from the hand of the Midianites the decisions that followed demonstrates that right knowledge

without right practice leads to a snare of entrapment. Gideon although recognized in Hebrews 11 as a man of faith didn't finish very well. Freedom without instruction leads to failure by entrapment. He in some ways disregarded what God had said and took liberties of his own.

10,000 Sermon Illustrations (Would-Be Bank Robber)

He felt like a failure! Everything he attempted seemed to turn out wrong. He began to fantasize about being rich. He would do the one thing he could do to make the most money in the briefest period of time. He would take up the occupation of bank robbing.

The would-be bank robber began to plan his strategy. He sat up late at night working on detailed plans, drawing sketches and going over steps he would take in robbing the bank. But he could never seem to get around to robbing the bank. He would plan each night, but when morning came, his anxiety paralyzed him, again.

One night he determined that his mind was made up. Regardless of his feelings he would force himself to rob the bank the next morning. The next morning an anxiety attack paralyzed him again. Finally he came through it and forced himself to get into his car and go to the bank.

The reluctant bank robber sat in the car in the parking lot from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. trying to force himself out of the car. Finally, he got out of the car and went into the bank. At the

teller's window he handed the teller his pistol. He stuck his brown paper bag in her face and said, "Don't stick with me. This is a mess-up."

Don't mess with me this is a stick up.