

## A weak Man, in a weak Clan, w/a weak Plan

### I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Pastors Wives Retreat next week (M-W) They've asked us to do 2 things:
  1. Help Hostess & direct ladies to workshops (Mon & Tues afternoon for a few hours)
  2. Bring baked goods for the hospitality table.
    - a) Please see Cindy tonight. She has all the times and details. Can also email/call Kel.
- B. Slide2 Comedy W/a Cause - tickets available tonight (also at the door)
- C. Slide3 Parenting Conference - read. Oct 24th Sat.
- D. Mental Health & The Church Conference - Rick & Kay Warren, US Surgeon General, Dr Daniel Amen, so many others. Oct.7-9.
  1. It's difficult to imagine that 50% of adults will develop depression, anxiety, self-harm, eating disorders, bipolar disorder, PTSD, borderline personality disorder, schizophrenia, or some other mental illness in their lifetime. This staggering reality can feel daunting, but there is HOPE for mental health.

### II. Slide4 Intro: A weak Man, in a weak Clan, w/a weak Plan

- A. This is the 4th cycle of sin.
- B. The evil of Israel can be summed up in 3 words: *infidelity, idolatry, & intermarriage*.
- C. Slide5 The setting for Gideon's story is in the same Jezreel Valley as the last chapter.
  1. The Valley runs from the Mediterranean, right into the Transjordan & the great eastern desert through a narrow passage called Harod Valley, named after the Harod Springs.
  2. This Valley became an inviting doorway that funneled the Midianites into the broad basin.

### III. Slide6 2 SINS (1-10)

- A. Fearing gods, rather than God - Prov.9:10 *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*
- B. Disobedience to God's voice -
- C. Slide7 (1-3) [see map] Midianites (strife) - 4th son of Abraham/Keturah(2nd wife). So, cousins or 1/2 bro's of the Hebrews. A nomadic people. An Arabian tribe. Joseph was sold to.

- D. Slide8 (4) Here the Midianites use there *Scorched Earth Policy*. Finally outlawed as recent as 1977 at the *Geneva Convention*. *A military strategy of burning or destroying buildings, crops, or other resources that might be of use to an invading enemy force.*
- E. Slide9(5) 1st time hear of *camels* being used in a tactic of warfare. Newest Military Advancement
1. 28-30 miles a day (but up to 100). 3 days w/o food & water.
  2. Thus, giving the Midianites an *immense tactical superiority*.
  3. Dromedaries are native to the **Arabian Peninsula** and Africa. There are close to 14 million Dromedaries, many still being used to transport people and goods across inhospitable places. Where they were once an Arabian fixture (there are **160 words** in Arabic for camel)
  4. A riding camel can travel **80 to 120 miles in a day**.
  5. Fun Camel Facts:
    - a) Difference between Dromedaries and Bactrians? *Take the first letter in their names and drop it onto its flat side.* ["D" in Dromedary has 1 hump. "B" in Bactrian has 2]
    - b) Camels have a reputation for **spitting** but they don't, it would be a waste of water. What they are actually doing is **vomiting** on you.
    - c) A camel's **poop** is **so dry** you can use it immediately to start a fire.
    - d) Q: What do you call a camel without a hump? A: **Humphrey** (Hump-free).
- F. Slide10a (7-10) Ok, I hear a **cry**...but how about a **confession**?
1. Hos.5:15 Then I will return to my place until they **admit their guilt and turn to me**. For as soon as **trouble comes**, they will earnestly **search** for Me.
  2. The Israelites problem was not their **enemies** but their *disobedient hearts*.
    - a) Hmm, *could this be our problem sometimes?*
  3. Slide10b Read Joel 2:12-14. Note: **Total heart. Torn heart. Turned heart.**

#### IV. Slide11 **2 PUSHBACKS (11-23)**

- A. Where is God - *if* the Lord is w/us...
- B. Whom am I - I'm a weak man, in a weak clan, w/a weak plan.
- C. (11) Wheat in a winepress? *Instead of* up on the hill top w/a breeze...*In* a pit on the ground where he'd be less visible/vulnerable.

- D. **Slide12** (12) **Mighty man of valor** (aka *Mighty Warrior*, where we got our HS name from *Warriors*)
1. I bet he turned around at this point to see who He was talking about.
  2. The Lord saw what Gideon would **become**, **not** as he **was**. (in *hall of faith* Heb.11:32)
  3. **So**, Gideon doesn't come on stage as a **hero**.
- E. (14) **Might of yours** - **or**, *go with the strength you have* (both NIV & NLT).
1. **Slide13a** How can we do that? because, **He is sending you**.
- F. **13b** (15) **I'm unqualified** - msg *I'm the runt of the litter*.
1. **13c** Often we're **too strong** for God to use us (**i.e.** He uses the weak).  
[actually, we **think** we're too strong]
  2. **13d** Remember there's a fine line between humility & disobedience.
    - a) **Slide14a** Balance? **Don't be full** of confidence. **Don't be w/o** confidence. **Be** full of **God confidence**...*I can do all things*...
  3. **The Christian's confidence** should rest in **God's presence & power**, not in personal abilities or resources. *Dr. David Jeremiah Study Bible notes*
- G. **Slide14b** (18) **He wants to worship Him** - before representing Him in the **public square**, Gideon needed to know him in a **personal way**.
1. Too many try to skip this step (**straight to leadership** position, **w/o** their **proving**).
  2. **God's warriors** must be w/Him in **worship before** they can be w/Him in **warfare**.

## V. **Slide15 2 ALTARS (24-32)**

- A. **Gideon's Altar** - Peace/Yahweh Shalom
- B. **God's Altar** - Sovereignty/over lil gods
1. You wanted a sign from Me...now I want one from you.
  2. Gideon was called to **deliver Israel** from the Midianites, **but 1st**, he must make a stand for God **in his own house**.
  3. **Does this have anything to do with your Christian service? Begin at home?**
    - a) Like in Mk.5:18,19 **As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon possessed begged to go with him. But Jesus said, No, go home to your family, and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and how merciful he has been.**

4. Starting at home is often hardest... *oh, not dad's shrine? They know us best.*

C. Slide16 What were altars for in the OT? *Sacrifices, gifts that were brought to be consumed by fire, as a wonderful aroma in the nostrils of God.*

1. Slide17a Altars ultimately were for **altering**. Ps.26:6,7 I will wash my hands in innocence; So I will go about Your altar, O LORD, That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, And tell of all Your wondrous works.

a) Slide17b Alter your **heart** from **guilt** to **innocence**.

b) Alter your **mouth** to *give thanks*, even for things that *didn't go your way*.

c) Alter your **thoughts** from *blaming God*, to telling others of His wondrous workings in your life.

2. What needs altering in your life today? Do you need your **heart** softened, so as to reflect God's heart? Do you need *a live coal w/the tongs from God's altar*, for your **lips/speech**? Do you need *the mind of Christ*, so you can bring *your thoughts captive*?

D. Slide17c (22) Seeing God *face to face* filled Gideon with a sense of **unworthiness**.

1. Realizing our **inadequacy & insufficiency** prepare's us to be *God's warriors*.

E. (27) **Gideon** means *hewer or hacker (cut down)*.

F. (28) Notice **when the men of the city find it?** early in the morning.

1. The *worshippers of Baal* never neglect their daily devotions. *convicting*.

## VI. Slide18 2 EMPOWERMENTS (33-35)

A. **The Spirit of the Lord Came** - Invisible/Anointing

B. **The people Came** - Visible/Encouraging

C. (32) **Jerubbaal** - Let Baal plead/conqueror.

1. This name was a reminder to Gideon of his **victory** over Baal, **because** Baal could not conqueror Gideon.

## VII. Slide19 2 SIGNS (36-40)

A. **Fleece Wet & Fleece Dry**

B. Is Gideon's fleece an acceptable way for you & I to **discern God's will** for our life?

1. Remember, Gideon **already knew** what God wanted him to do; he simply struggled w/**fear & doubt**.
  2. **So** Gideon's test was **not about** determining God's will **but** about finding the **courage to do** God's will.
    - a) God graciously accommodated his weak faith of His warrior.
  3. Let's remember, God has given us **His Word & His Spirit** to tell us what **His will is** (something Gideon didn't have, like we do). **And**, where Scripture & the Spirit seem silent, it is enough to know His character...that He will be faithful to direct our steps in His sovereign time. **We don't need further assurance than this.**
- C. So what did the *fire coming down from heaven* teach Gideon? Oh, *God is with us/Immanuel*.
- D. So what did the *protection against all the men of the city* teach Gideon? Oh, *God has not forsaken us & delivered us into the hands of our enemy*. Look, how he delivered me from these *local* enemies.
- E. So what did the *double fleece sign* teach Gideon? Oh, *God still does do miracles*.