

PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. Where do you see your vision being tested by “temporary” setbacks? Why do you think God allows such setbacks?

2. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt inadequate and “on your own”? How did you feel and what did you do?

3. Have you ever made an important decision in your life without inquiring of the Lord? What was the result?



Gideon: From Zero to Hero

WARM-UP

What is your favorite war movie?

WORD

³²And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, ³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies.

Hebrews 11:32 – 34

¹¹The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. ¹²When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, “The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.”

Judges 6:11 – 12

God chooses unlikely people to do His work – just like you and me. Can you imagine having Gideon’s problem? Gideon was a farmer who was tasked to deliver Israel from Midian. Gideon certainly did not see himself as a leader, much more so as a mighty warrior. To Gideon, the odds were in favor of the Midianites, but to God Gideon was a mighty warrior who would lead Israel to the most lopsided victory in the nation’s history. Can you see yourself in God’s eyes?

PRAYER

On the space provided below, record prayer requests and answers to prayers.

The Fearful

After recruiting thirty-two thousand men from every tribe of Israel to fight against the Midianites, the Lord instructed Gideon to send home those who are afraid to go off to war. God knows that fear is contagious. Ten thousand remained after twenty-two thousand fearful men left. Are you filled with fear when facing your life's battles? We can overcome fear by remembering God's greatness.

The Foolish

For the second time, God said to Gideon that there are still too many men. This time God sifted them for Gideon. Gideon was instructed by God to send home nine thousand seven hundred foolish men who came down to the river lapping the water like dogs. And the ones who drank from their own hands while looking around were asked to stay. Are you someone who is carelessly aggressive in your actions? It is foolish to believe we can live apart from God.

Gideon questioned God several times before he was finally convinced to do the task at hand. With unbelief and doubt, Gideon asked God three times for a sign, but once he was convinced, he obeyed God with zest, resourcefulness and speed. How do you respond to God's call to serve Him?

¹³*Gideon arrived just as a man was telling a friend his dream. "I had a dream," he was saying. "A round loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the Midianite camp. It struck the tent with such force that the tent overturned and collapsed."*

¹⁴*His friend responded, "This can be nothing other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite. God has given the Midianites and the whole camp into his hands."*

¹⁵*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."* ¹⁶*Dividing the three hundred men into three companies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside.*

Judges 7:13 – 16

The Faithful

A mere three hundred were left. Here was the original 300. The only difference was, this outnumbered army came home in victory. Why? Because God Himself brought the result! The faithful experienced watching the Midianites flee. God always has a remnant of faithful followers. Are you among them?

Coming from the weakest clan in Manasseh, Gideon progressed from being the least in the family to a mighty warrior – leading Israel victoriously against the Midianites. Despite being outnumbered, inexperienced, and unarmed; Gideon's 300 came out victorious. Gideon, slow to be convinced at first, eventually obeyed and put his trust in God. He acknowledged God as his *Commander-in-Chief*.

Recruiting thirty-two thousand people to battle and face imminent death was no easy task. How much more motivating them to fight against one hundred thirty-five thousand Midianite bullies who had been terrorizing and oppressing them for the past seven years? Had Israel won the battle under such circumstances, they could have been bloated with pride in taking the credit for the victory.

An attitude of self-sufficiency and pride are some of our worst enemies. To prevent this attitude among Gideon's men, God reduced their number from thirty-two thousand to three hundred. No one attains true spiritual leadership if he thinks his power is his own or that past victories are due to his own genius.

Where are you in your walk with God? Are you self-sufficient or do you rely upon Him to fight the battles for you? Who gets the credit for your victories?

Faith, despite our weaknesses, brings victories that glorify God.