

The Faith of Gideon

Today, we are going to talk about the way that a man named Gideon was called to have great faith by God in the middle of a very hard time. Gideon was part of God's people called the Israelites. The Israelites (who are God's people) had been making lots of bad choices. Because of this, there were some consequences to their sins. One of these consequences was that one of the neighboring tribes, the Midianites were treating them poorly, stealing from them and trying to harm them. The Israelites immediately went to God, told Him they were sorry and that they needed His help. God decided to call in a hero, and here enters our friend, Gideon.

Judges 6:11 The 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. 12 When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior." 13 "Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said, 'Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

14 The Lord turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?" 15 "Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." 16 The Lord answered, "**I will be with you**"

As we just read, Gideon felt he was small and unimportant. Have you ever felt this way? What about now? Do you feel like you are too little to do anything to help with the corona virus going around? Look at those words that God claimed to Gideon, and claims to you as well in verse 16. **I WILL BE WITH YOU!** Let's keep reading the story and see how God works powerfully through his chosen.

Parents, this is where you will need Page 1 and 2 of the Gideon Download

Early in the morning, Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all his men camped at the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was north of them in the valley near the hill of Moreh. 2 The Lord said to Gideon, "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.' 3 Now announce to the army, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.'" So twenty-two thousand men **left**, while ten thousand remained.

Now to grasp what this looked like for Gideon, make a cut on line # 1 of the Gideon Sheet, and keep the part with Gideon Wow! Can you believe the difference that made. Keep in mind, this is an accurate (mostly accurate as I lost count at one point), representation of the number of men. Each of those bunches you see has 100 dots representing 100 soldiers. Look how many men God took away for this battle. 22,000 men left in the first round! Look at all of those dots you cut off! Do you feel like there are any securities, things that make you feel safe and comfortable, that God has taken from you in this time? Let's continue in this passage.

4 But the Lord said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will thin them out for you there. If I say, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go; but if I say, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go."

5 So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the Lord told him, "Separate those who lap the water with their tongues as a dog laps from those who kneel down to drink." 6 Three hundred of them drank from cupped hands, lapping like dogs. All the rest got down on their knees to drink. 7 The Lord said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the others go home." 8 So Gideon sent the rest of the Israelites home but kept the three hundred, who took over the provisions and trumpets of the others.

What funny question God asks! How would you drink from the river if you didn't have a cup. Would you lap like a dog, or cup it into your hand? What would you do? By this strange question, God cuts down the size of Gideon's army yet again. Now make the cut #2 on your printout. Look how small this army is now compared to where it started!! Now take the sheet representing the Midianites and set it next to Gideon's new army. Holy smokes! Look at the difference in men!! Do you remember why God said he was doing this? Discuss your theories, then read Judges 7:2 and explore the answer. Let read the rest of the story and see what happens.

Judges 7:16 Dividing the three hundred men into three companies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside. 17 "Watch me," he told them. "Follow my lead. When I get to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do. 18 When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then from all around the camp blow yours and shout, 'For the Lord and for Gideon.'" 19 Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after they had changed the guard. They blew their trumpets and broke the jars that were in their hands. 20 The three companies blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!" 21 While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled. 22 When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the Lord caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords. The army fled to Beth Shittah toward Zererah as far as the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath.

I would be so scared if I were part of the 300 men left to fight against the still large and powerful Midianites. Yet, God in His awesome power, made it so that the men didn't even have to fight at all. By their obedience and faith, God made the bad guys confused and fight themselves and run away! How cool is that? God is showing us here, that it doesn't matter how big or powerful we are. Whether we have our earthly comforts or not, if we have God with us, we can do BIG and amazing things.

Now, lastly, I want you to take the sheet with the trumpets. These symbolize the trumpets that Gideon's army used. I want you to write on them one way that you want to help right now. Some ideas are writing a card for a neighbor, set up a window date with an elderly person and put on a puppet show, or deliver some food to your local food bank. Even though you feel small, you can make a great impact with God on your side! You can memorize the verse

Judges 6:16 "I will be with you"

The last thing I want you to do as you wrap up your bible study is go to You Tube and dance to the song, "Every Giant Will Fall" by Rend Collective. Use your trumpets to sing along and proclaim God's victory over all battles we face!