

**Read: Judges 6:12–16** *And the angel of the LORD appeared to him {Gideon} and said to him, “The LORD is with you, O mighty man of valor.” 13 And Gideon said to him, “Please, my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian.” 14 And the LORD turned to him and said, “Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?” 15 And he said to him, “Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.” 16 And the LORD said to him, “But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man.”*

Tonight, Melissa will share with our children a teaching on Gideon. There are many stories we could look to. For the adults, I want to consider the first 5 verses of his journey. The entire story is found in Judges chapters 6-8. It would be great if you privately studied all of his story, but for now, let’s concentrate on the five verses listed above and see how they apply to us.

**The Angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon<sup>1</sup>:** Gideon was a boy hiding in a wine press in order to gather and glean grain. The Midianites were treating Israel ruthlessly. They were stealing the Jews’ harvest and food to keep the nation weak. Gideon was hiding in a hole in the ground to separate the wheat from the chaff so his family could eat.

**What attributes does this reveal?** Would you select Gideon to lead a mighty army? Does he appear confident, courageous, or charismatic? Does he act like a warrior?

*And Gideon said to him, “Please, my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian*

Gideon asks, “Where is God in all this? Where are the promises of his favor?”, and he states, “The Lord has forsaken us”.

**Point 1:** It is extremely easy to look at difficult circumstances and doubt God.

Sometimes, when we are hurting, suffering, or experiencing difficulty, we tend to suspect or blame God for our problems. We can act like God has abandoned us. Worse, we can think it! We can allow the junk of this world to define our faith in God!

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<sup>1</sup> In this specific case the Lord himself appeared. That is an entirely different lesson, but for now, know most theologians agree that this appearance is a pre-revelation glimpse of Jesus. If you’d like to know more about this subject email me at [prayforme@live.com](mailto:prayforme@live.com)

Gideon allowed his physical circumstances to define God, *in Gideon's mind*. Gideon went so far as to question why a God who brought Israel out of Egypt would turn the people over to the Midianites. The truth is, God was disciplining the nation for their idolatry. God promised to use the enemies of Israel to enslave Israel if they abandoned their lofty position as the people of God. God does what He promises, even if it causes temporary pain. He does this to lead us to repentance.

**WARNING:** Not every difficulty is punishment. Some difficulties are so God can display his power in miraculous ways. Some difficulties allow God to lead us in a new direction. Some are part of basic mortality; but every difficulty is part of God's plan to sanctify you and to perfect you into the full image of Jesus Christ.

We all will grow old and die. We will all face storms. Yet, some people use difficulties to blame God as if to say, "Where are the promises?" What I want you to grasp is in every circumstance God wants to teach you about him and cause you to grow into a warrior of faith.

Perhaps you are hiding in a winepress, or a doctor's office, or at a bank pleading for a loan. I'd like you to consider, if you allow Christ to reveal himself to you in this storm, you will be on the pathway of Spiritual Courage. You will inherit the promises behind the storm.

**And the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?"**

**Point 2:** Though Gideon was weak, he had might that he possessed. He just didn't realize what was his! His strength rested in his God, his calling and his position in God's plan.

As Christians we have the favor of God on our side. This favor is greater than our enemies. Though we possess it, we often live like we are forsaken, struck down, and too small to ever rise. The truth is God wants to do something in your life and with your story. The only way to realize the path of blessing is to trust in what God says and act according to God's instructions. In Christ, you are given unimaginable power to do good.

**Point 3:** Though Gideon possessed favor, if he had refused to follow God's will, he would not have inherited the blessing.

Many of us fight our battles with our own flimsy strength. Many of us turn from God and use our logic, schemes, or even sinful ways to secure what we want. I warn you, if you live like this, you will not inherit the blessings God has reserved for you. To receive the blessing, we must live by faith in God's person, character, and favor towards us.

**And Gideon said to him, "Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house..."**

**Point 4:** When our eyes are on ourselves, we are the weakest of all people.

Perhaps you look at yourself and ask, “How can I bring healing to my family? How can I break this curse?” God wants your inability and weaknesses to cause you to rely on him. God doesn’t want you depending on your strength, but only on the strength He provides.

The truth is, if you trust in anything but God, you will not inherit the fulness of God’s promises. **It is a blessing to be weak.** Strong people, rich people, or mighty people have a hard time trusting in God alone. It is better to be poor and feeble yet trusting in God, than a rich warrior trusting in self. Thank God for your poverty for it is designed to cause an overflow of faith in your life! Allow your poverty to lead you to true riches, the fullness of Christ!

And the LORD said to him, “But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man.”

**Point 5:** God is with his people and his people should be united.

The greatest truth is, “If God is for us, who can be against us”? It’s so wonderful that God doesn’t leave us alone and hiding in our little holes. Even when we obey, God doesn’t step away saying “*now go get ‘em*”. God goes with us. He leads the way!

We have also been given the body of Christ to unite with. God did not send Gideon off the battle by himself, God was with him and God gave him brothers to journey with.

Whatever battles you face, know God is with you. Follow him. Lean on him. Rely upon him. Additionally, join with your Christian brothers and sisters in wars against the flesh and ministries in the world. It is an honor to be counted as God’s children; as his offspring we must stay united together for we live in a darkened world.

**Conclusion:** I recommend you read all the story of Gideon. Ask why God used such a small number of people to win such a decisive victory. Ponder the many lessons Gideon and his men learned. See the foolish mistakes he made, even at the end of his story, and resolve internally to fully serve and worship God, while trusting God to be your victory.

*“Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” (1 John 4:4)*

*“To the saints God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.” (Colossians 1:27–28)*