

A CHALLENGE TO THE AMERICAN CHURCH
THE JUDGES SERIES #7
September 9th, 2018

TEXT: Judges 7:1-23

CONSIDER THIS: GOD HAS SOMETHING FOR YOU TO DO AND HE WILL HELP YOU DO IT ...

SO WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH YOUR LIFE? This might seem like an odd thing upon which to focus when this series is based upon the Old Testament book of Judges and we are currently studying the life of Gideon. However, these things do tie together in very significant ways. To study Gideon is to see an imperfect man to whom God entrusted an important job – just like us! Many Christians have an incomplete or non-existent understanding of the centrality of serving God in the Christian life. But once we discover the full meaning of serving God, life will be filled with a purpose and a satisfaction the world will never know.

REVIEW: When we first met Gideon he was a fearful man (6:27) lacking in faith (6:14-15), shallow in his understanding of God (6:13) and slow to embrace God's calling upon his life. But God doesn't wait until we are "perfect" and spiritually mature in our faith before He will enlist us into His service. God looks at the direction of our life and not the perfection of our life. By the end of chapter 6 Gideon is finally ready to know and to do God's will. It is common today for Christians to misunderstand God's will for them. A simple formula is 95% - 5%. If we focus on obeying the New Testament commands then we have 95% of what we need and we are already in the center of God's will. The remaining 5% (circumstances and life decisions that affect our daily affairs) will be guided by God (Psalm 37:4) and He gives wisdom to all who seek to obey Him (Psalm 119:97-105). Now may our study of Gideon deepen our understanding of God's will for our lives ...

**GOD HAS SOMETHING FOR YOU TO DO
AND HE WILL HELP YOU DO IT!**

I THE GOD WHO HELPS US

- A) Remember, the Midianites were a lot tougher than the Israelites (6:1-5)
- B) "*Gideon, you have too many men!*" (7:1-7)
 - 1. The LORD is the promise-making and promise-keeping God.
 - 2. It is not about man's strength (7:2)
 - 3. It is not about man's glory (7:2)

II GIDEON: THREE STEPS FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

- A) Gideon, ***IF you are afraid*** (7:8-11). "*If*" was a pattern for Gideon (6:13, 17, 36-37).
- B) Gideon was still afraid (7:11)

- C) The patience of a faithful God who is helping Gideon grow (7:12-14). The LORD is our God too.
- D) Gideon steps up – an instrument in the hands of the Redeemer (7:15-18)
- E) Notice that for Gideon nighttime had once been where fear wins (6:27). Now nighttime is where Gideon's courage wins (7:17-18). This is by God's design, for we see it repeated in Peter's life. In John 18:17-19 Peter's greatest failure took place at a **campfire**. After the resurrection, Jesus restored Peter at a **campfire** (John 21:7-9). These 2 events are the only place in the Bible this particular word for fire is used. This is God sending us a special message. He meets us at our point of failure and defeat and restores us. He still has something for you to do.

NOTE: A huge factor in this text is easy to overlook. In 7:1 Gideon is referred to as Jerub-Baal, based on the events of 6:31-32. The battle against the Midianites was actually an inner battle in the hearts of Israel against their own idolatry. What is the message for us? Christian, get rid of the idols of your heart. Quit depending upon people, relationships, material things or circumstances to provide you with the sense of well-being only God can give.

III GOD HAS SOMETHING FOR YOU TO DO (and He will help you)

- A) Being called by God to serve Him, to do the tasks to which He has called us, takes on a beautiful and wondrous sense when we consider the greatness of His character as revealed in Gideon's story (see Ephesians 2:10; 4:11-16).
- B) The LORD was with Gideon (Judges 6:14-16). But Christian, God has given you both the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-20; Romans 5:5; I Corinthians 6:19) and a spiritual gift to be used in service for Him **AND HIS CHURCH**.
- C) There are no insignificant jobs when doing them for the God of the universe and for His Son who died for us in the nature of a servant/slave (Philippians 2:5-11). Changing a diaper in the nursery, setting up chairs on a Saturday morning, listening to AWANA children recite a Bible verse, serving tables at the LIFE Pregnancy Center banquet – these are every bit as significant as Gideon's defeat of the Midianites. Jesus Christ said the 2 pennies given by the widow (Mark 12:41-44) far surpassed the large amounts given by others. Others overlooked what she gave, but the Lord **never overlooks** what we sincerely do for Him.

Christian, what are you doing for Him,
 the One who loves the church and gave Himself for her?
 Apart from this we can never truly be in the center of God's will ...
 and the center of God's will is the best place in the universe!