

Judges, Sermon #26

Judges 7

Israel has been tormented for seven years by the Midianites.
They have ravaged the land and the people.

God has called on Gideon to be the deliverer, but his faith was weak.
God helped him survive his hometown.
God made the fleece wet and then dry.

Then God said that Gideon's army was too large and had pruned it to three hundred
men—300 men versus 135,000 Midianites.
What about Gideon's faith?

I have entitled tonight's message "God Encourages Our Faith"

Jesus was always training His disciples about faith—always challenging them and
chastising them—trusting God

Judges 7:8

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word.

Judges 7:8-15

Let us pray.

You may be seated.

God Encourages Our Faith

The Lord wanted Gideon and his 300 men to attack the camp of Midian that night. God had already told Gideon three times that He would give Israel victory (6:14, 16; 7:7) God gave Gideon another promise (v. 9).

The Lord told Gideon for the fourth time that He had delivered the Midianite host into his hand.

For the fourth time God promised victory.

After all of this divine help, Gideon should have been strong in his faith, but such was not the case.

Now, before we go getting upset with Gideon—are we not divinely helped also?—new nature—a divine nature

II Peter 1:4, *“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”*

The Holy Spirit resides in us, complete Word of God

How many souls have we won this year?

How many people have we discipled?

How much has our spiritual gift from God been used for His kingdom?

What victories can we show because of our faith?

How grateful we should be that God understands us and doesn't condemn us because we have doubts, fears, and failures!

God sympathizes with our weaknesses (Heb. 4:14-16) and keeps giving us more grace (James 4:6).

Although the battle must be fought, Israel had already won!

We have also already won the victory, have we not?

Do we behave as a defeated foe?

Do we act as though we are losing?

We are the victors; we know how this all ends.

When the fourth quarter is over, when the ninth inning is finished, and the bell of the fifteenth round is rung, Jesus Christ will be standing.

The destiny of the Devil is doom, destruction, devastation, and desolation.

Christians who believe God's promises and see Him do great things are humbled to know that the God of the universe cares about them and is on their side.

It's the unbelieving/unwilling child of God who grieves the Lord.

God encouraged Gideon's faith in two ways.

First, He gave another promise! Vs. 9

But fear still persisted in Gideon's heart.

Gideon is still a little afraid.

So, secondly, God gave Gideon another sign.

If Gideon was still hesitant, then he and Purah were to go down and scout the

Midianites – vs. **10-11**

God had given one of the soldiers a dream, and that dream told Gideon that God would deliver the Midianites into his hand.

The Lord had already told Gideon this fact, but now Gideon heard it from the lips of the enemy!

In the Biblical record, we often find God communicating His truth through dreams.

However, we must not conclude from these examples that this is the Lord's normal method of communicating with people or that we should seek His guidance in our dreams today.

The best way to get God's guidance is through the Word of God, prayer, and sensitivity to the Spirit.

What was the dream about? Vs. 13

Barley was usually the food of the poor and of the animals—it was held in low esteem. The barley was a picture of Gideon who was from a poor family in Manasseh and was the least in his family.

The barley bread pictured that which was weak destroying that which was strong. That is the picture of the Israelites.

The picture is that of a cake that could roll like a wheel

Into a tent and flatten it . . .

The tent was no ordinary tent.

The Hebrew language reads “The Tent” indicating the tent of the king or captain of the host.

Vs. 14

The man who interpreted the dream had no idea that he was speaking God's truth and encouraging God's servant.

Finally, Gideon knew for sure that Israel would defeat the Midianites and deliver the land from bondage.

After hearing the interpretation of the dream, Gideon first worships the Lord – **vs. 15a**
He puts his confidence in the Lord, not himself.

“Who am I? I need to trust You, believe in You, follow You.”

Gideon realizes God has given him the victory.

God was Gideon's source of victory and power.

He falls before God in worship.

Our faith is strengthened by our worship.

When we walk with God, when we talk with God, when we sing and join in with other believers, it encourages our faith.

How many of us have made major decisions of life in church?

And, when our faith is strengthened it shows up in our worship of the Lord.

We must worship well or we will not serve well.

Service comes from the heart.

If our heart is not right, our service will not be right.

Gideon was so overwhelmed by the Lord's goodness and mercy that he fell on his face in submission and gratitude.

It's significant that Gideon paused to worship the Lord before he did anything else.

Before we can be successful out here, we must first become sincere in here.

As we can see, Gideon was the type of man who needed continual encouragement.

Gideon returns to the camp to rally his troops for battle – vs. 15b

“Arise; the Lord **HATH** delivered the enemy into our hands.”

Gideon has total confidence in God.

Let us stand for closing invitation.

God encourages our faith.

We often need our faith strengthened and God is willing to help us—He is patient.

Hebrews 11:6-8, 22-24, 30-31

Hebrews 12:1-2