

Bible Study

Overcoming Fear and Insecurity

Have you ever been afraid of obeying God? Have you avoided responsibility because you doubted your ability? God wants you to learn to place your confidence in Him and not in yourself. In this Bible study, you'll learn about victory over fear and insecurity through Gideon's example.

Read Judges 6-8.

A. Feeling afraid or unworthy doesn't disqualify us from being used by God.

- Briefly describe the situation in Israel in Gideon's day (Judges 6:1-6).
- Read Exodus 33:20. Why did Gideon get so afraid when he realized he was talking with God (v. 22)?

How could Gideon survive "seeing God"? Since God is Spirit (John 4:24), no man has ever seen God the Father in His *essence*. However, in Judges 6, as in other Old Testament passages, God assumes a *visible form* (Gen. 32:20; Ex. 24:9-10; Isaiah 6:1; Dan. 7:9). Some scholars believe references like this one to an "angel of the Lord" describe Jesus before He was clothed in human flesh.

- God asks Gideon to tear down His father's altar to Baal, the false god the Israelites were serving. How does Gideon approach his first assignment (Judges 6:27)?
- What does his neighbors' reaction reveal about the hearts of the Israelites at this time (v. 30)?
- What frightens you about fully obeying all God asks of you?

B. Exchanging our viewpoint for God's perspective is essential for winning our battles.

- From God's perspective, who would deliver Israel (vv. 8-10)?
- On what did Gideon focus (v.13)?
- Contrast Gideon's perception of himself with God's view (vv. 12 & 15).

By refusing to help Gideon, God's chosen deliverer, the leaders of Succoth and Penuel essentially aligned themselves with the Midianites (Judges 8).

- What does Gideon's threat to them reveal about how he viewed himself after the victory over the Midianites (vv. 5-9)?
- Name a difficulty or challenge you face. In your flesh, where do you tend to look for a solution? How do you think God wants you to approach it?

C. The Lord is willing to confirm His will.

- Initially, Gideon doesn't believe he's really talking with God. What sign does Gideon prepare (Judges 6:18-21)

When several armies of the Israelites' enemies assembled near Gideon's home, Gideon felt as if he needed confirmation that God was really going to deliver Israel from them. He asks for more confirmation, using a sheep's fleece.

- Why was his action really unnecessary? (vv. 36-37)
- Why do you think Gideon was afraid the Lord's anger would burn against him (v. 39)?

Although God was patient with Gideon, this method of determining God's will is generally not the best since it usually takes our focus off the Lord and onto a "sign," which may or may not indicate God's will accurately.

- What finally convinces Gideon that God has given the victory into the hands of the Israelites (Judges 7:13-15)?
- Describe how you know when God is leading you in a certain direction (Is. 30:21; John 10:27).

D. When we obey God despite our weakness, He gets the glory.

On his first assignment from God, tearing down the altar to Baal, Gideon acts at night, in fear.

- Why did Gideon suddenly have the confidence to assemble an army and declare himself its head (Judges 7:34)?

- Why did God want to decrease the numbers of warriors (v. 2)?
- Why do the two eliminations also make sense from a practical standpoint (vv. 3-7)?

Gideon's army attacked at night, around 10 p.m., right as the first watch was ending. The retiring guards had not yet returned to their tents and probably were mistaken for Israelites by the confused Midianites.

- Why do you think breaking the jars and blowing the trumpets was successful?
- Why couldn't Gideon take credit for what happened as a result of their surprise "attack" (v. 22)?

When the Israelites return home after their victories, the men of Israel asked Gideon to rule over them (Judges 8:22).

- Why do you think Gideon responded as he did (v. 24)?
- Gideon's disobedience in making and worshipping the ephod could have been due to ignorance or the low moral standards at the time. What were the consequences (vv. 24-27)?
- Despite the ephod, what did God do for Israel as a result of Gideon's victory (v. 28)?

Closing: What is God asking you to do? Be willing to obey, trusting that He will provide all you need. No matter what happens, you will know deep inner peace as a result of your faithfulness—the fruit of being right with the Lord.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit, Who helps me accomplish Your will. Teach me to take my eyes off of my circumstances and the solutions the world offers and look to You. I pray this in Jesus' name, amen.