

GIDEON: A BLUEPRINT FOR LEADERSHIP

Lesson 1

Called To Greatness

(Judges 6:11-16)

God has called every believer to greatness. He has called every believer *up* in life. God will take us as far as we are willing to go. How far are you willing to go for God? We will see from the life and example of Gideon that God can take you where you could never go and make you what you could never be, if you will only yield to and obey God!

GIDEON'S SETTING

Gideon became one of Israel's 17 judges. During Gideon's day, Israel had rebelled against the LORD *again* and was delivered into the hands of the Midianites. Their rebellion against God brought a threefold judgment upon them:

- 1. Oppression-** Occupation by their enemies, the Midianites and the Amalekites.
- 2. Poverty-** Failed agriculture and business and abject poverty.
- 3. Fear-** Constant fear, which caused Israel to live like animals in caves, strongholds, and dens of the mountains.

When Israel got tired of living like this, they cried unto God. God began raising up a leader to answer their cry. His name was Gideon.

****YOU ARE THE LEADER GOD IS RAISING UP TO ANSWER SOMEONE'S CRY!****

A PROMISE FROM THE BOOK OF JUDGES

If God has called you to leadership, fear not. He has promised to be with you.

- **And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.**
Judges 2:18

The promise of God to His leaders is fourfold:

1. God will raise you up. You don't have to promote yourself.
2. God will be with you.
3. God will grant you success in your assignment.
4. You will succeed all the days of your life.

LIFE INTERRUPTED

The call to leadership, very often, comes out of nowhere when you are least expecting it. It is a sovereign act of God. One day you are busy about your work, the next day God is speaking to you about serving Him.

- **And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.**

Judges 6:11

We can see several things about the call to leadership from this verse:

- God knows where to find you. You cannot escape the call of God.
- God's calling will interrupt your plans. God is not interested in your plans for your life.
- God looks to promote hard workers. Gideon was busy working. God does not promote the lazy.
- God needs you clean. Gideon was busy threshing wheat. This is symbolic of getting sin out of your life.

THE CALLING

God's calling is always bigger than what we can see. He will always address us by His faith.

- **And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour (*thou champion, man of fearless courage*).**

Judges 6:12

God sees in us the things we cannot see. The Bible is filled with similar examples:

- Gideon was called a "man of fearless courage" when he was yet hiding from the Midianites.
- Abraham was called the "father of many nations" when he had no children.
- Sarah was called a "noble woman" even when she mocked the LORD.
- Peter was called the "rock" even though he constantly crumbled.

DISBELIEF AT THE CALL

Very few Christians will readily receive the call of God as Mary did, "be it unto me according to thy word" (**Luke 1:38**). Even Gideon struggled with the call.

- **And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.**

Judges 6:13

Gideon's response to his divine calling reveals several things to us:

- "If God be for us, why has this happened?" Gideon did not hear clearly. God is with Gideon, not the people. Not yet.

- “Where are all the miracles?” Gideon had knowledge of God and His power. He was not ignorant of the promises or the testimonies of God, are you?
- Gideon had trouble processing God’s plan. Yes, things had been bad, but God was about to use him to turn things around. Can you believe that God wants to use you to turn things around?

THE CALLING REITERATED

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. God is faithful to continue speaking to you about what He has called you to do.

- **And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?**
Judges 6:14
- God disregarded Gideon’s complaints and doubts about the past and repeated Gideon’s calling and empowerment, “Go! You are mighty! Deliver Israel!” You must forget the past and move on with God!
- God may call you to do the very thing you are scared to do or least equipped to do. Gideon was terrified of the Midianites. His calling: Destroy the Midianites.
- Our fears do not outrank God’s will and will not cause Him to change His mind. He will not change His plans to accommodate your fears or insecurities. He commands us to “FEAR NOT!”
- God declared, “**thou SHALT** save Israel.” That is guaranteed success. Know that “Thou shalt succeed!” if you obey God.

A COMMON RESPONSE

Gideon’s response to his calling and appointment is very common, even today.

- **And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.**
Judges 6:15

We learn much about Gideon’s inadequacies from this verse:

- Gideon was from the tribe of Manasseh. Manasseh was a very insignificant tribe at the time.
- Gideon’s family was poor.
- Gideon was the least of his family.
- In essence, Gideon was pointing out he was the last of the last of the last. How could God ever use him?

GOD IS NO FOOL

God does not make mistakes when He calls someone into leadership, and there is no talking Him out of what He wants.

- **And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.**
Judges 6:16

This is the third exhortation spoken to Gideon to reassure him of the following promises from God:

- If God has called you, He has not made a mistake.
- If God has called you, He will not fail you.
- If God has called you, He has not called you to fail.

Do not be afraid of the call of God. You have *NOT* been appointed to failure, but unto great victory, in Jesus' name!!

GIDEON: A BLUEPRINT FOR LEADERSHIP

Lesson 2

Make Sure Your Calling (Judges 6:17-24)

In the previous lesson, we saw what it means to receive a call from God. Once you recognize the call of God upon your life, you must begin to act immediately. Never ignore the call of God upon your life.

- **For many are called, but few are chosen (*selected*). Matthew 22:14**

Many are called but few are selected. Be forewarned—God calls many people to leadership, but only a few are actually promoted into leadership. Do not take the call of God to heaven with you!

FACTS ABOUT GOD'S CALLING

- **Calling (*kletoi*)- To be invited. To be chosen. To be appointed.**
- A calling is like an invitation—it is a great honor! Has God honored you by inviting you to lead His people?
- Just because you are invited does not mean you will answer the invitation.
- There are three main callings in the New Testament:
 1. Called out of darkness into God's light. This is the new birth. God has called every human being to His son, the LORD Jesus Christ.
 2. Called to be a servant in the Kingdom. This calling is for every Christian.
 3. Called to full-time ministry leadership. This calling is not extended to every Christian. These are the fivefold ministers: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. These believers are twice called out.
- The *call* of God is His decision. We cannot call ourselves.
- You cannot qualify for a ministry calling. You are either called or you are not.
- Being called is no guarantee God will ever select you for leadership.
- Many Christians will never answer God's call and, therefore, never come close to being selected.

MAKING YOUR CALLING SURE

The Bible teaches us to make our calling sure. The word *sure* means *to be enduring and guaranteed*.

- **Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence (*devote your attention, bend every effort, spare no effort, endeavor through ideal acts*): to make your calling and election (*selection*) sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:**
2 Peter 1:10

This verse reiterates the fact that there is a difference between your calling and your selection. We are commanded to make both our calling and election sure.

GIDEON PROCEEDS WITH CAUTION

The first thing you must do when you believe you have been called to leadership is proceed with caution. We can learn from Judges how Gideon cautiously made sure his calling.

- **And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. Judges 6:17**

Gideon wanted proof that he was accurately hearing from heaven. Gideon wanted confirmation. He did not run off and form an army the same day the angel spoke to him. We should also seek confirmation when we believe we have heard from God. Here are a few ways we can make sure our calling:

- Believe not every spirit, but test them (**1 John 4:1**).
- There are many voices in the earth. Be cautious (**1 Corinthians 14:10**).
- Submit to those over you. Every leader needs a pastor (**Hebrews 13:17**).
- Walk patiently. Haste is the father of folly (**Proverbs 19:2**).

GIDEON'S PLAN TO MAKE SURE HIS CALLING

Gideon devised a plan of action to prove his calling.

- **Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again. Judges 6:18**
- The angel, who we know to be the LORD Jesus, promised Gideon that He would wait for him. Be encouraged, Jesus is very patient. He wants you to prove Him.
- Established leaders—be patient in helping young leaders prove their calling. Don't berate them for their inexperience or ignorance. You are called to help them.
- Gideon was called to leadership, yet he provides a present for the angel. Too often in this greedy day, people feel called and then demand someone bring them a present.
- What is your present for Jesus? Will you set it before Jesus as Gideon did?

GIDEON'S PRESENT—A SEASON OF SERVING

Gideon's present to the angel was his way of proving the calling he had just received. His present to the angel represents Christian service and servitude. Every calling in Christ is rooted in servitude. If you cannot serve, you cannot lead.

- **And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah [22 lbs.] of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it unto him under the oak, and presented it. ²⁰And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. Judges 6:19-20**

Gideon demonstrated he was a servant by preparing this offering. Much can be learned from this passage:

- His offering represents a season of servitude. Every leader must expect to be proven by God in a lengthy season of servitude. Leadership begins with followship.
 - Part of proving your calling includes an intense season of being a servant.
 - Gideon's offering took many hours to prepare.
 - How long does it take to butcher a goat and cook it?
 - How long does it take to bake 22 pounds' worth of flour?
- This time of proving his calling was very costly to Gideon. **Judges 6:4** and **6** indicate how poor Israel was during this time. Gideon's gift was very valuable. He spared no expense to prove his calling.
- Your season of proving your calling will cost you greatly as well. If it has not cost you anything, you may not be ready for the calling.
- Gideon was commanded to pour out the broth. This was a libation offering, an offering that represented the fruits of the worshipper's labor. Do you have anything that proves you have labored for God? The libation offering was also a promise of eventual victory.
- Gideon took this time to humble himself and serve someone mightier than him to prove his calling.

THE LORD ACCEPTS GIDEON'S OFFERING

Gideon prepared his offering in order to prove his calling. He wanted to know if the LORD would really accept him by accepting his offering. Don't forget Cain was rejected because of his offering (**Genesis 4:7**).

- **Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.**
Judges 6:21

Gideon's offering is supernaturally accepted. This was the confirmation Gideon was looking for. Your offering will be Christian servitude. Will God accept your service? Here are ways we can ensure that our offering will be accepted:

- Make yourself servant to all (**1 Corinthians 9:19**).
- Serve joyfully, as unto the LORD, not as a man-pleaser (**Colossians 3:23**).
- Serve with all of your might (**Ecclesiastes 9:10**).
- Endure hardship like a good soldier for Christ (**2 Timothy 2:3**).
- Learn to be faithful with delegated authority (**Matthew 8:9**).
- Witness the fire of God in your life as the confirmation that God's hand is upon you.

GIDEON ACKNOWLEDGES THE CALLING

When Gideon realized the severity of the LORD's calling on his life and that God Himself was speaking with him, he became very frightened. We too, should have a healthy amount of fear for the calling of God.

- **And the LORD said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die. ²⁴Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovah-shalom: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.**

Judges 6:23-24

We can learn several things from Gideon's altar:

- By building an altar to Jehovah God, Gideon was declaring his allegiance to serving Him.
- Building an altar in Gideon's day would be the equivalent of dedicating your entire life to God.
- This type of Old Testament altar was a monument erected at the time and place where the individual gave their heart to God.
- This altar represents Gideon answering the call of God on his life.
- Gideon called the altar Jehovah-shalom: *The LORD send peace*. In obeying God, Gideon found peace in time of turmoil.
- The only place we can find perfect peace is in the center of God's perfect will for our lives.
- Don't run from God! Embrace the call of God and receive the peace of God!

THE THREE MAIN OLD TESTAMENT OFFERINGS

Under the Old Testament, there were three main sacrifices, offered in the following order:

1. **The Sin Offering-** Offered to atone for sin. This offering produced forgiveness.
2. **The Burnt Offering-** An animal was completely burnt upon the altar to represent complete consecration to the will of God. This offering demonstrated consecration.
3. **The Peace Offering-** A symbolic meal was offered before God consisting of a lamb, bread, and a drink. This offering was symbolic of fellowship with God. If God had accepted your sin offering and your burnt offering, He would supernaturally appear by fire to *eat* the peace offering. This offering proved God had placed grace and peace upon the individual giving the offering.

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Lesson 3

God's Proving Ground Of Consecration

(Judges 6:25-32)

Consecration (*hagiazō*): *to formally dedicate to divine purpose; to set apart for the holy use of God; to cleanse externally; to separate from profane things and dedicate to God; sanctify.*

The root word for *hagiazō* is *hagios*. *Hagios* is the Greek word for *saint* and *holy one*. We can infer from the Greek language that it would be difficult for one to be considered a *saint* or a *holy one* without being consecrated.

Every Christian must live a consecrated life. Leaders must live an even greater life of consecration. The calling of God for leadership does not alone qualify you for leadership. Consecration is one of the most vital ingredients to fulfilling the call of God. Consequently, the quickest way to disqualify yourself from leadership is through sin.

The more consecrated you are, the more God will use you. God does not use dirty vessels, rather, He commands us to purge ourselves from those who are dirty and dishonorable (**2 Timothy 2:20-21**).

The life of Gideon teaches us about God's expectation of consecration from His called leaders.

GIDEON'S CONSECRATION

Though God had called Gideon, and Gideon had answered the call in his heart, God still had to prove Gideon through consecration. Consecration is the act of God proving you.

- **And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it: ²⁶And build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this rock, in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down. Judges 6:25-26**

God wasted no time proving Gideon. The same day Gideon accepted God's call on his life, the LORD gave him an assignment. We can learn a few things from this passage:

- God's plan for consecration began immediately.
- God's plan for consecration began in Gideon's home.
- God's plan for consecration may call for you to stand against your own family.
- God's plan for consecration attacked idolatry first. Idolatry is of the heart (**Ezekiel 14:3-4**).

- Consecration will replace carnal idolatry with the worship of the true and living God. To successfully consecrate yourself to Jesus Christ, you must replace your sinful ways with His holiness.
- **Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. ¹⁸And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the LORD Almighty. ¹Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. **2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1****
- **For this is the will of God, even your sanctification (*consecration*), that ye should abstain from fornication: ⁴That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification (*consecration*) and honour. **1 Thessalonians 4:3-4****

Consecration is still expected of us today!

GIDEON'S OBEDIENCE

Though God wasted no time in testing him, Gideon, likewise, wasted no time in obeying God. We should also learn to be quick to obey, especially in the matters of consecration.

- **Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the LORD had said unto him: and so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night. **Judges 6:27****
- Don't wait to get sin out of your life and home. Act quickly as Gideon did. Gideon obeyed immediately. He didn't make excuses to disobey God's command.
- Obey God even if you are afraid. God will be with you. Obedience to the Word of God is often very intimidating; however, disobedience is dreadful.
- Know that God will give you companions and helpers. Gideon had help.
- Don't despise the day of small things (**Zechariah 4:10**). Gideon's first task was a small one. He was scared. He obeyed in the darkness and he only had 10 men to help him. God will prove you in the small things. You must believe in the increases of God.

PREPARE FOR BACKLASH

Obeying God will always draw the devil's attention. Be prepared for an attack of new proportions, perhaps even from other Christians.

- **And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built. ²⁹And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they inquired and asked, they**

said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing. ³⁰Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son that he may die: because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it. ³¹And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? Will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar.
Judges 6:28-31

This is a fascinating passage. We can glean many truths from it:

- The men of Gideon's city didn't like having their sin exposed. Backslidden Christians don't like being convicted or having their sin exposed either.
- Gideon's consecration brought potentially deadly persecution... from his brethren. Imagine being persecuted by your brothers in Christ for being cleaner than them.
- Consecration not only sets you apart, but it also has the potential to set your brethren against you:
 - Cain was set against Abel because he gave a better offering (**Genesis 4:5**).
 - Joseph's brethren were set against him because their father loved him more (**Genesis 37:3-4**).
 - Stephen's brethren were set against him because he preached the truth (**Acts 7:2, 57-60**).
 - Paul was counted an enemy by some of the Galatian brethren because he stood for the truth (**Galatians 4:16**).
 - Your friends and brethren may also turn against you for becoming "too" holy and on fire for Jesus Christ.
- Gideon never defended himself. His own father spoke up for him. Know that you will not have to defend yourself. The truth needs no defense.

EARN A NEW NAME FOR YOURSELF

Consecration will cause you to be known in your community. Gideon's consecration earned him a new name among the people. A life of evident consecration will do the same for you.

- **Therefore on that day he [Gideon's father] called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down the altar.**
Judges 6:32

Though Gideon's first test was to clean his house and stand against his father's idolatry, his father was his first convert. This verse should encourage us:

- His father, Joash, changed his name from Gideon to Jerubbaal, meaning *opponent of Baal*.
- Because he had attacked Baal, Gideon was known as Baal's opponent the rest of his life. Are you known as sin's opponent or are you known as sin's best friend? What's your reputation as a Christian?



God selects His leaders from the pool of consecration. Will you be found washing in the pool of consecration?

GIDEON: A BLUEPRINT FOR LEADERSHIP

Lesson 4

Selected To Lead (Judges 6:33-35)

As we have seen, God calls many men and women to leadership roles in His Kingdom, but He chooses only a few for actual service. We have studied how to recognize the calling of God, how to prove the calling of God, and how to consecrate ourselves for the calling. We will now study what it means to be selected by God. There *is* a difference between calling and selection.

FACTS ABOUT GOD'S SELECTION

- **Chosen/Election/Selection** (*eklektos*)- *To select. To elect. To choose.*
 - Of military usage in reference to the choosing of an individual or group for special duty.
 - Also of political usage used in connection with a person elected to an office or duty.
 - In these such elections, the background of the candidate and his qualifications were the basis of election, not popular vote.
 - The election furnished the individual with the authority necessary to accomplish the office.
- Your election is your responsibility. You must qualify to be selected.
- **For many are called (*invited*), but few are chosen (*eklektos, selected*).**
Matthew 22:14

HOW DOES GOD MAKE HIS SELECTION?

A calling is unprofitable if you are never selected to use it. So how does one qualify to be used of God and *answer the call*?

- **Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.**
Romans 11:5

According to this verse, God *picks or selects* His leaders based on the presence of grace in their life. Grace can be simply defined as *heaven's help*. It would only make sense that God is going to choose people who have *heaven's help* already working in their life. These individuals are already accustomed to trusting in God and requiring His help.

Also notice, it is a remnant that is chosen. This is in line with **Matthew 22:14**, only a few are chosen. So to whom does God give grace?

- **But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.**
James 4:6

- **Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.** 1 Peter 5:5

God selects people based upon the grace in their life, and grace is based upon a person's humility. God will not promote the arrogant and prideful. We must keep ourselves humble under the mighty hand of God that He might exalt and promote us in due time (**1 Peter 5:6**).

GIDEON'S HUMILITY

The divine appearance of an angel, alone, was proof that Gideon had found favor in God's eyes (**Judges 6:17**). However, Gideon demonstrated the vital leadership quality of humility in several ways:

- By living a life of self-examination. **Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress (Judges 6:11)**. Humility always examines itself (**1 Corinthians 11:28; Ecclesiastes 4:13**).
- By showing diligence to work. Gideon was not lazy.
- By submitting to the stranger, the angel, and calling him *Lord*.
- By preparing a selfless and elaborate meal-gift for the angel (**Judges 6:19**).
- By allowing the angel to direct him with the gift (**Judges 6:20**).
- By building an altar and surrendering his life to the LORD (**Judges 6:24**).
- **Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:** 1 Peter 5:6

God selected Gideon because of his hard work ethic, clean living, and humility. Do you share these characteristics with Gideon?

THE NEED FOR A LEADER

Gideon was being prepared for leadership just in time to lead Israel against the Midianites.

- **Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel.** Judges 6:33

Gideon was raised up because there was a need for leadership. The need for leaders is greater now than ever before. Are you willing to do what it takes to be a leader?

GIDEON'S SELECTION

Gideon was not only called, but he was also selected. Gideon's life changed drastically once he was called. The Spirit of God came upon him in a mighty way.

- **But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered (*assembled together*) after him. ³⁵And he sent**

messengers throughout all Manasseh; who also gathered after him: and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.
Judges 6:34-35

Before Gideon was selected, he could only draw 10 men to himself (**Judges 6:27**). After his consecration and selection, God drew, not just the city of Abiezer, but four tribes (Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali) to Gideon's calling and cause. Let us notice some things about being selected:

- Selection is supernatural promotion. It will activate the calling of God on your life. Once you are selected, God will draw the people to you that you need to accomplish the work.
- Gideon began with 10 servants in his home. After his consecration and selection, God drew 32,000 men to his aid. This number was quickly adjusted to just 300.
- The anointing of God will draw people to you, but your character is critical to retaining them.
- Gideon's life was changed forever. His life would never be a simple farm life ever again. He would now live to serve the Kingdom.

CONCLUSION

Through obedience, Gideon went from being a scared farm boy to a great military and national leader. He went from secretly tearing down an altar at night to publicly tearing down a tower in Penuel. If you will whole-heartedly obey God, He will take you from obscurity to a place of great prominence in the Kingdom, for His glory!!