**The Call of Gideon**

(10/16/22; Dr. Baines, Jr.)

**Read:** Judges 6:1-2, 7-16a

**Summary Highlights:** In vss. 1-2 the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord. The Lord gave them over to Midianites’ oppression for seven years. The Israelites had built shelters in the caves and clefts.

In vss. 7-16a the Israelites cried to the Lord. The Lord sent a prophet to remind them of God’s goodness and call for faithfulness, but the people were not faithful. The angel of the Lord meets and calls Gideon into service. The call is extended despite Gideons concerns about God not delivering and Gideon’s low status among the Israelites.

**Introduction:** A key idea in today’s lesson is that God called Gideon despite Gideon’s shortcomings. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to discover and carry out God’s will for our lives despite our short comings.

**Applications:**

**1. Evilness in the eyes of the Lord.** Notice in vss. 1-2 that the Israelites were doing evil in the eyes in the Lord and were living uncomfortably among the caves. First, as in the text, we should be concerned with what is evil in the eyes of the Lord. Society changes its list of what is evil is what is righteous. But God’s lists are stable and found in His word. Second, the consequence of doing what is evil in the eyes of the Lord is often divine punishment and discomfort. God can use people and circumstances to bring discomfort into our lives. Our lives are complicated enough without God’s punishment. *Let’s work on living right in God’s eyes.* This calls for the prayerfully study and obedience to His word in every area of our lives.

**2. Crying because of the pain.** Notice in vss. 7-10 that the Israelites cried to the Lord because of the Midianites. God sent a prophet to remind them of how they got to where they were. First, it is sad but true that too many people come to God as their way of dealing with the pain in their lives. In other words, we want to avoid pain more than simply draw closer to God because He deserves it or because of His promised blessings. We should grow to obey God because He is worthy and because of His blessings more than simply to avoid pain. Second, as in the text, God wants us to be mindful of His goodness towards us and our disobedience towards Him. We have Bibles, the Holy Spirit, and Pastor/preachers to help us stay mindful. *Let’s work on being obedient because God deserves it and because of the promised blessings.*

**3. A hiding mighty warrior.** Notice in vss. 11-12 that the angel of the Lord called for Gideon a mighty warrior despite his hiding in a winepress. First, it is good to see that Joash owned the land and tree. Too many people don’t own anything that goes up in value. We should strive to be wise stewards of what God has placed in our trust. Second, as in the text, God has a way of calling us in the midst of whatever else is going on. It is rare for us to have everything together and then God calls. He tends to call in midst of our other responsibilities. We should make sure that we are available to do God’s will whenever He calls us. Third, just as the Lord saw Gideon as a mighty warrior who had the Lord with Him despite Gideon hiding in the winepress and having concerns about God’s timing and fairness, God can look past what we see today and see what He is calling us to be. We should respond to God’s call, no matter how we feel about our readiness. God can make us ready, if we would be willing. *Let’s work on letting God use us, right now.*

**4. God’s abandonment.** Notice in vs. 13 that Gideon voiced his concerns about God’s apparent abandonment and the disconnect between God’s historic goodness and Gideon’s current trouble. There will likely be times in our lives when we feel like Gideon. There will likely be times when God doesn’t seem to be doing what we expected Him to do. On one hand, we can voice our concerns with God. And we should do so with respect. On the other hand, we should remember that as bad as things may be, they could have been worse, and they will get better. *Let’s prayerfully make our way through our seasons of disappointment and challenges.*

**5. God’s response to our questions.** Notice in vs. 14 that there is no direct answer to Gideon’s questions. He is simply given instructions to move forward with God’s calling. Notice the mention of the Lord instead of angel of the Lord. As in the text, God may not answer the question that we ask as directly as we want Him to do so. However, we should continue to focus on obeying God’s will as we know it. It is dangerous to not obey God because we don’t like His answer or lack of answer to our questions. This is a sin of omission. *Let’s work on hearing and obeying God’s will for our lives, no matter how God responds to our questions.*

**6. Moving forward with the Lord.** Notice in vss. 15-16a that Gideon voiced concern about having such low status among the Israelites. The Lord affirms that He will be with Gideon. On one hand, there is some merit to being concerned about how much influence you will have and respect you will be given as a leader. Unfortunately, there are too many who will only follow when they know, like, and trust you enough to follow you. This is as opposed to following you because it is God’s will. But on the other hand, when God is with you, He can turn the hearts/minds of the people towards you. *Let’s work on obeying God’s will despite our concern with our shortcomings.* Can make up the difference in all of our lives.