

Trust
August 9, 2026
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Judges 7:1-8, 19-23

It's Care Group Sunday so here is a brief lesson on Gideon – “the rest of the story.”

- Last week we met Gideon. He was cowering in a wine press threshing grain to hide from the Midianites whom God was using to punish Israel for their sin.
- The angel of the Lord (looking toward God's plans) called Gideon a “mighty warrior.” Gideon objected: *“My family is the weakest of the weak and I'm the weakest in my family. You have the wrong guy!”*
- Last week we learned that God delights in calling ordinary, unlikely people. Gideon simply made himself available, and God supplied everything else.
- Now in Judges chapter 7, at Lord's direction (and with supernatural reassurance) Gideon gathered 32,000 reluctant Israelites to attack the Midianites.
- ² The Lord said to Gideon, “You have too many warriors with you. If I let all of you fight the Midianites, the Israelites will boast to me that they saved themselves by their own strength. ³ Therefore, tell the people, ‘Whoever is timid or afraid may leave...and go home.’”
- 22,000 of them went home, leaving only 10,000 who were willing to fight. ⁱ
- ⁴ But the Lord told Gideon, “There are still too many! Bring them down to the spring, and I will test them to determine who will go with you and who will not.”ⁱⁱ
- God used a very strange test based on how the men drank water. Don't get caught up looking for a hidden meaning; accept it simply as God's method.
- Divide the men into two groups. In one group put all those who cup water in their hands and lap it up with their tongues like dogs. In the other group put all those who kneel down and drink with their mouths in the stream.”ⁱⁱⁱ
- ⁶ Only 300 of the men drank from their hands. ⁷ The Lord told Gideon, “With these 300 men I will rescue you and give you victory over the Midianites. Send all the others home.”^{iv} (32,000 to 22,000, then only 300 vs 135,000 Midianites (8:10).
- Despite those odds, Gideon prepared for an ambush. Still there was fear in his heart so the Lord gave him some additional reassurance:
- ⁹ That night the Lord said, “Get up! Go down into the Midianite camp, for I have given you victory over them! ¹⁰ But if you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah. ¹¹ Listen to what the Midianites are saying, and you will be greatly encouraged. Then you will be eager to attack.” ^v
- Gideon overheard a Midianite describing a bad dream. The meaning of the dream: *“God has given Gideon...the Israelite, victory over Midian...”*^{vi}
- The text seems to indicate that after overhearing about the fear in the Midianite camp there was a NEW Gideon. His fear gave way to confidence.
- The battle plan was also a strange one. The 300 were to take with them what I call God's “weapons of mass confusion”: A horn, a pitcher, and a torch.
- Gideon's instructions: ¹⁸ [When we] blow the rams' horns, blow your horns, too, all around the entire camp, and shout, ‘For the Lord and for Gideon!’ ” ^{vii}

- At midnight, “all three groups blew their horns and broke their jars...held the blazing torches...and they all shouted. “A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!”^{viii}
- The Midianites, imagining a huge Israelite army, rushed around in a panic.
- “The Lord caused” the [Midianite warriors] to attack each other with swords. Those who were not killed fled. God had given Israel the victory as promised!
- A fascinating account of history but what does it mean for followers of Christ?
- The Point: God will sometimes direct us to do what doesn't make human sense. He may even remove our what makes us feel secure so we know the outcome came from Him and not from anything we accomplished. He does this to teach us not to trust what we can see and control, but to trust what only He can do.
- That naturally brings up some very real questions:
- Q: Does this mean God may strip away what makes me feel secure?
 - Sometimes He does. Not because He enjoys making us uncomfortable or because He is punishing us, but because He loves us too much to let us place our ultimate trust in anything but Him.
 - Sometimes God reduces our resources, options, or self-confidence so that we discover His sufficiency.
- Q: Does this mean we should live recklessly and expect God to bail us out?
 - Absolutely not. Scripture consistently teaches us to plan wisely, work diligently, save responsibly, and prepare for the future.
 - Faith is not abandoning wisdom. Faith is depending on God after we have done what wisdom requires.
 - Important Note: Gideon didn't charge into battle because it was his own idea. He followed God's specific instructions. That is the key!
- Remember, last week I said, if we sense God calling us to do something we need to make sure it is a “long distance call”. His direction not just our idea.
- Some may say, “*You skipped over the whole wet/dry fleece in chapter six!*”
- “*Should we ‘put out the fleece’ to get reassurance from God?*” In a word: “No.”
- Here's why: Modern Christ-followers have the scripture, prayer, wise counsel, and the Holy Spirit's guidance. After we've exhausted those, God might speak in an unusual way but demanding a “sign” (telling God the conditions He must meet before we obey) could be evidence of unbelief and pride.
- Instead of demanding signs, we should “stand on the promises” of God in scripture, then trust and obey!

So, What's the Takeaway?

- Sometimes God intentionally makes the odds impossible, so the outcome is unmistakably His. He wants us to be completely dependent on Him through faith. That means trusting Him more than our own resources or capabilities.
 - Ask yourself, “Where is my confidence really resting—in God or in what I can see and control?”
- If God directs us to do something that doesn't make sense or feel comfortable...
 - Seek His confirmation not with “signs” but through His word.
 - Prepare wisely but move forward faithfully trusting Him for the resources we lack and the power we need to carry out His calling.
 - Move ahead with confidence trusting God to do what only He can do.

ⁱ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Jdg 7).

ⁱⁱ *ibid*

ⁱⁱⁱ *ibid*

^{iv} *ibid*

^v *ibid*

^{vi} *ibid*

^{vii} *ibid*

^{viii} *ibid*