How God Makes Men – Session 4

**Gideon - The Principle of the Unexpected Leader**

How God Changes a Man’s Fear and Weakness into Strength

**Lesson text: Judges 6 to 8**

***Has God presented you with a calling, task, or mission so daunting that it raises all kinds of doubts and fears?***

For instance, maybe a Pastor or a leader in the worship organization comes to you and explains to you that they want you to head a ministry and you say to yourself that “I do not know how to do this?”

“I want you to take on this project.” And you thought, But I’ve never done that.

“We really need you to be a small-group leader.” And you thought, But I don’t know how to lead a group.

“You’re being promoted to floor manager.” And you thought, But I’ve never managed people before.

God doesn’t seem to mind teaching His disciples how to swim by throwing us into the deep end of the pool. He doesn’t mind tapping us for tasks that are way beyond our depth.

***God makes men by turning our weakness into strength in such a striking way that only He can get the glory.***

***∞***

Gideon also named Jerubbaal and Jerubbesheth, was a military leader, judge and prophet whose calling and victory was over the Midianites.

Gideon was the son of Joash, from the Abiezrite clan in the tribe of Manasseh and lived in Ephra. As a leader of the Israelites, he won a decisive victory over a Midianite army despite a vast numerical disadvantage, leading a troop of 300 'valiant' men.

God had allowed the Midianites to raid the crops and destroy the food supply of the Israelites because they had started to worship other gods. Some people even had to flee from their homes to hide in caves. Midian ravaged and impoverished the land for seven years until the Israelites cried out to God for help.

As God does many times when turn back to Him in an humble prayerful way, he sent them a man. Not a man that you would expect, one that has been in the church for years, out front singing, praying, preaching, and teaching.

Gideon lived like a refugee (a person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster) in his own home. Gideon turned a winepress into a hideout where he could prepare food for his family without it getting confiscated by the Midianites.

Judges 6:11-12 - 11 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.

12 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

God has a way of seeing what we cannot. God sees the future us, and does not focus on the current us.

Can you state what did Gideon do after the Angel call upon him to lead? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Have you found yourself at one point doing the exact same thing? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Look at verse 13, and see what Gideon’s response was to the Angel of the Lord.

***Our worldview is limited to what we can see and our own power and strength, those questions make all the sense in the world.***

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It seems that the amazing thing about God is that when He makes men He does not argue with you. He simply gives you His marching orders as in verse 14, “The Lord turned to him and said, ‘Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?’”

Verse 15 shows that Gideon was very aware of the fact that the clan he belonged to was the weakest in Nanasseh, and that he was the least in his family.

God used the weakest man from the weakest clan so that there would be no confusion about who was doing the delivering.

***I will be with you***

***∞***

In the 16th verse God tells Gideon that He will be with him. You should know that as well. God is stating to you as He gives you the assignment that He will be with you.

Haven’t we all, like Gideon, thought the Holy Spirit was speaking to our hearts, but still we weren’t 100 percent sure? We wondered, Is that really You, Lord? At this point in Gideon’s story, it would be nice and tidy if he simply accepted God’s promise and marched out to do battle. But if he had, then we probably wouldn’t be able to relate to him very well, would we? So instead, the Lord lets us see that He allowed a doubt-plagued Gideon to ask Him for a sign, something that would boost his confidence: “If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me” (verse 17). And God graciously did exactly that. So Gideon sent out a call to arms, and men throughout his clan responded, bolstering his courage. Sometimes a small step is needed to give us enough confidence to take a big step. But even then Gideon still had doubts. So he put out the famous fleece questions. He said to God, If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised—look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said. (verses 36–37). And it happened just like he asked. Then Gideon said to God, “Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request. Allow me one more test with the fleece. This time make the fleece dry and the ground covered with dew.” (verse 39) And it happened again just as he asked. What a gracious God! Finally this reluctant man began to feel the butterflies starting to settle down. Finally his doubts started to give way to faith in the unexpected call God had placed on his life—the call to be a leader. Gideon had said, “I could never do that.”

So if you need a sign, ask. It is the regular practice of God to confirm what He wants us to do. In fact, guidance is one of the main roles of the Holy Spirit. Jesus put it like this: “The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26).

**For Reflection and Discussion**

1. If applicable, what has God called you to do that you have been reluctant or felt inadequate to pursue, and why? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Has anyone ever told you, “You’re a leader”? Describe the impact that hearing, or not hearing, that statement has had on you. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_