Kingdom Men|Women
Gideon: Facing a Challenge • Message 5
Perry Duggar
November 1, 2026

Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- **Pray that you will trust God when you feel weak or inadequate.**
- **Ask God to help you face challenges with faith.**
- **Thank God for using ordinary people to accomplish His purposes.**

Worship Psalm:
For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.
Psalm 100:5 (NIV)

Scripture Reading:
The Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight. So the LORD handed them over to the Midianites for seven years. The Midianites were so cruel that the Israelites made hiding places for themselves in the mountains, caves, and strongholds. Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, marauders from Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east would attack Israel, camping in the land and destroying crops as far away as Gaza. They left the Israelites with nothing to eat, taking all the sheep, goats, cattle, and donkeys. These enemy hordes, coming with their livestock and tents, were as thick as locusts; they arrived on droves of camels too numerous to count. And they stayed until the land was stripped bare. So Israel was reduced to starvation by the Midianites. Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help.
Judges 6:1-6 (NLT)

A. Introduction
Judges 6:1-10. C/R: Philippians 4:13; Hebrews 11:32-34)

This is Part 5 of our series entitled Kingdom Men and Women.

We will focus on Gideon in a message I have titled *Facing a Challenge*. [APP. Are you?]

1. **Philippians 4:13 (NLT)** - *For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.*
2. After entering the Promised Land led by Joshua, the Israelites did not drive enemies out.
3. Following Joshua's death, they intermarried with enemies, abandoned God and engaged in idolatry. [Judges 1:1-2:13] [Don't partner/team up/be yoked with unbelievers. 2 Corinthians 6:14]

4. God punished Israel through military oppression by enemies. [Judges 2:14-15, 20-22][Hebrews 12]
5. When the people cried out, God sent judges to lead them militarily, spiritually and civilly.
6. 14 judges over 350 years (6 military leaders), ended with first king, Saul. [Joshua 2:16-19]
7. **Judges 6:7-10 (NLT)** - *7 When they cried out to the LORD because of Midian, 8 the LORD sent a prophet to the Israelites. He said, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of slavery in Egypt. 9 I rescued you from the Egyptians and from all who oppressed you. I drove out your enemies and gave you their land. 10 I told you, 'I am the LORD your God. You must not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you now live.' But you have not listened to me."*
   [God faithful/Israel unfaithful; chose Gideon]

[Gideon would face the enemies of Israel; we can learn from him how to face a challenge.]

B. Facing a Challenge

(Judges 6:11-8:35)

[It begins with a...]

1. **CALL.**
   (Judges 6:11-24. C/R: Matthew 19:26; 1 Corinthians 1:27-29; Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 2:13)

   [God's call to you!]

1. **Judges 6:11-12 (NLT)** - *11 Then the angel of the LORD* [Christophany/Theophany] *came and sat beneath the great tree at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash of the clan of Abiezer. Gideon son of Joash was threshing wheat at the bottom of a winepress to hide the grain from the Midianites.* [Small amount in a depression, no cow or ox] *12 The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said, "Mighty hero, the LORD is with you!"* [Hero? Coward?]
2. God sees us as what we can become, not what we are! [APP.: What's your calling?]
3. At this stage, Gideon was not a hero; he didn't trust God and was skeptical of God's goodness.
4. **Judges 6:13-19, 21-24a (NLT)** *13 "Sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn't they say, 'The LORD brought us up out of Egypt'? But now the LORD has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites."* [His faith based on circumstances.]

   14 Then the LORD [!] *turned to him and said, "Go with the strength you have* [?]*, and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!"* [APP. Required self-examination.]

   15 "But Lord," Gideon replied, "how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family!" [Humility or fear?]

   16 The LORD said to him, "I will be with you. And you will destroy the Midianites as if you were fighting against one man." [Should boost his confidence, but was it enough?]

[17] Gideon replied, "If you are truly going to help me, show me a sign to prove that it is really the LORD speaking to me. [Must have looked human.] *[18] Don't go away until I come back and bring my offering to you."...* [Response to offering would reveal identity.]

[19] Gideon hurried home. He cooked a young goat, and ...baked some bread without yeast. Then, ...he brought them out and presented them to the angel... under the... tree.

... [21] Then the angel of the LORD touched the meat and bread with the tip of the staff in his hand, and fire flamed up from the rock and consumed all he had brought. And the angel of the LORD disappeared. [Display of divine power. APP.: Have you experienced?]

[22] When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he cried out, "Oh, Sovereign LORD, I'm doomed! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!" [God said to Moses at Sinai that no one could see His face and live at Exodus 33:20.]

[23] "It is all right," the LORD replied. "Do not be afraid. You will not die." [24] And Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and named it Yahweh-Shalom (which means "the LORD is peace"). ... [Gideon had seen God and did not die but may also refer to Israel.]

6. APP.: What is God calling you to undertake for Him? Professional, personal, or moral?

[God will issue a...]

2. <u>CHALLENGE.</u>

(Judges 6:25-32. C/R: 2 Corinthians 12:9; Hebrews 11:6; James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6-7)

1. God issued a task to Gideon to test and grow his faith. [And He does to us!]
2. **Judges 6:25 (NLT)** - *That night the LORD said to Gideon, "Take the second bull from your father's herd, the one that is seven years old. Pull down your father's altar to Baal* [supreme god of Canaan, sun and storm god, produced crops and provided children]*, and cut down the Asherah pole standing beside it."* [Canaan goddess of love and war represented by a carved wooden pole or limbless tree.]
3. Worship of Baal and Asherah, who were fertility gods, involved ritual prostitution, sexual perversion, human sacrifice of the firstborn child, divination and fortune-telling.
4. **Judges 6:26 (NLT)** – "*Then build an altar to the LORD your God here on this hilltop sanctuary, laying the stones carefully. Sacrifice the bull as a burnt offering on the altar, using as fuel the wood of the Asherah pole you cut down."* [Open display of faith.]
5. Gideon was forced to choose between God and his father's idol. [APP.: Have you chosen?]
6. **Judges 6:27-32 (NLT)** - *[27] So Gideon took ten of his servants* [wealthy] *and did as the LORD had commanded. But he did it at night because he was afraid of the other members of his father's household and the people of the town.* [Obeyed hesitantly and w. support.]

[28] Early the next morning, ...someone discovered that the altar of Baal had been broken down and that the Asherah pole beside it had been cut down. In their place a new altar had been built, and on it were the remains of the bull that had been sacrificed. [29] The people said to each other, "Who did this?"... they learned... it was Gideon... [who?]

[30] "Bring out your son," the men of the town demanded of Joash. "He must die for destroying the altar of Baal and for cutting down the Asherah pole." [opposition to faith]

[31] But Joash shouted to the mob that confronted him, "Why are you defending Baal?... If Baal truly is a god, let him defend himself and destroy the one who broke down his altar!" [32] From then on Gideon was called Jerub-baal, which means "Let Baal defend himself," because he broke down Baal's altar. [Seems Joash may have doubted Baal.]

7. Gideon had to take a stand for God and even oppose his father and the idolatrous town.
8. APP.: God expects a public stand for Him, rejecting offensive people and practices. [altar]

[God will enable the...]

3. <u>CONQUEST.</u>

(Judges 6:33-8:3. C/R: Proverbs 3:5–6; Matthew 4:7; Romans 8:31; 2 Corinthians 5:7;
2 Timothy 1:7)

1. **Judges 6:33-35 (NLT)** - *[33] Soon afterward the armies of Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east formed an alliance against Israel and crossed the Jordan, camping in the valley of Jezreel.* [8th annual invasion during wheat harvest in May/June.] *[34] Then the Spirit of the LORD clothed Gideon with power.* [!] *He blew a ram's horn as a call to arms, and the men of the clan of Abiezer came to him.* [Gideon's clan] *[35] He also sent messengers throughout Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, summoning their warriors, and all of them responded.* [Four nearby tribes most affected. 32,000 warriors arrived! Judges 7:3]
2. The Midianite army numbered 135,000 (Judges 8:10); Gideon asked for another assurance.
3. **Judges 6:36-40a (NLT)** - *[36] Then Gideon said to God, "If you are truly going to use me to rescue Israel as you promised, [37] prove it to me in this way. I will put a wool fleece on the threshing floor tonight. If the fleece is wet with dew in the morning but the ground is dry, then I will know that you are going to help me rescue Israel as you promised." [38] And that is just what happened. ...* [Jesus said only evil unbelievers ask for signs; Matthew 12:38-40]

   [39] Then Gideon said to God, "Please don't be angry with me [!]*, but let me make one more request. Let me use the fleece for one more test. This time let the fleece remain dry while the ground around it is wet with dew." [40] So that night God did as Gideon asked....*
4. APP.: Have you ever put out a fleece? *Putting out a fleece* displays a lack of willingness to trust God's clear communication in the Bible or spoken directly.
5. It is wise to observe circumstances to confirm God's direction, which is different from making arbitrary demands on God because you don't trust His Word. [Be careful! Crow]
6. Gideon either received sufficient encouragement or was afraid to disobey God.

7. **Judges 7:1-22a (NLT)** - [1]*So Jerub-baal (that is, Gideon) and his army got up early and went as far as the spring of Harod. ...* [Reassured or afraid to disobey?] *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.* [APP. God may reduce your resources so you depend on Him, not yourself!] [3] *Therefore, tell the people, 'Whoever is timid or afraid may leave this mountain and go home.' " So 22,000 of them went home, leaving only 10,000 who were willing to fight.* [APP.: Would you?]

[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.* [5] *...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."* [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."* [Were they more cautious and alert?] [8] *So Gideon collected the provisions and rams' horns of the other warriors and sent them home. But he kept the 300 men with him.* [Gk. *kept* implies retained against their wills.]

[9] *That night the LORD said, "Get up! Go down into the Midianite camp* [4 miles N]*, for I have given you victory over them!* [4th promise][10] *But if you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant* [armor?] *Purah.* [11] *Listen to what the Midianites are saying, and you will be greatly encouraged. Then you will be eager to attack."...*

... [13] *Gideon crept up just as a man was telling his companion about a dream. ..."...in my dream a loaf of barley bread... hit a tent, turned it over, and knocked it flat!"*

[14] *His companion answered, "Your dream can mean only one thing—God has given Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite, victory over Midian and all its allies!"* [4th sign]

[15] *When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship before the LORD. Then he returned to the Israelite camp and shouted, "Get up! For the LORD has given you victory over the Midianite hordes!"* [Finally!] [16] *He divided the 300 men into three groups and gave each man a ram's horn and a clay jar with a torch in it. ...*

[19] *It was just after midnight, after the changing of the guard, when Gideon and the 100 men with him reached the edge of the Midianite camp. Suddenly, they blew the rams' horns and broke their clay jars.* [20] *Then all three groups blew their horns and broke their jars... and they all shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!"*

[21] *Each man stood at his position around the camp and watched* [didn't fight!] *as all the Midianites rushed around in a panic, shouting as they ran to escape.* [22] *...the LORD caused the warriors in the camp to fight against each other with their swords. Those who were not killed fled...*

[This was God's victory! Involved Israel's soldiers to teach them!]

8. **Romans 8:31b (NLT)** - ... *If God is for us, who can ever be against us?* [Proverbs 3:5-6; 2Corinthians 5:7]
9. APP.: What are you facing? Watch God at work. He can do what you can't! Pray & watch.

[But we must carefully avoid...]

4. **<u>COMPROMISE.</u>**
   (Judges 8:4-35. C/R: Exodus 20:4-6; Joshua 24:14-15; James 4:4-6; 1 John 2:16)

1. There was peace in the land for Gideon's lifetime of about 40 years [Judges 8:28]; however, he set a *trap* for himself, his family and Israel by collecting gold plunder from soldiers, which he fashioned into an ephod or idol, though 2nd Commandment forbids idols. [v.27]
2. Israel *prostituted themselves by worshiping it* [v.27]; after Gideon's death, they rejected God and worshiped Baal. [vv.33-34]
3. APP.: Even when we achieve a great challenge with God's help, we must completely remove all idols from our lives and remain solely committed to Him!