

I. Intro

A. We kicked off our study of Judges last week

B. Chapters 1-5 reminded us:

1. Walk in total obedience to God, because partial obedience is no obedience
2. Be more mindful of what God is doing, and not just what is happening

C. Let's continue our study with Judges 6-7

II. Text

**A. Judges 6:1-10**

1. The cycle of sin started again

- a) This time, instead of God sending a deliverer, He sent a prophet
- b) The prophet came to convict the people of their sin
- c) Which is weird, because they just cried out for help
  - (1) Isn't crying out repentance? No.
  - (2) Their cry to God was regret, not repentance

2. Regret vs Repentance

- a) Both are characterized by deep sorrow, but only one leads to heart change
  - (1) **2 Corinthians 7:10** *"For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death."*
- b) Regret is sorrow over the consequences of sin, not the sin itself
  - (1) If there was no consequence, there would be no sorrow
  - (2) There is no sadness over the broken relationship between you and God
  - (3) Regret is only concerned with the horizontal impacts of sin, not the vertical
  - (4) Regret does not become disgusted with sin, so the root of sin remains
  - (5) Regret is all about you: how you are hurt, how your life is ruined, how your heart is breaking
- c) Repentance is sorrow over your broken relationship with God
  - (1) Repentance doesn't wait for your sin to be found out by others
  - (2) Repentance is concerned with the vertical impacts of sin
  - (3) Repentance is pulling sin out from the root

- (4) Repentance is about changing the goal from "I don't want to sin anymore" to "I want my desires to change so they match Jesus' desires"

**B. Judges 6:11-18**

1. A *messenger* visits Gideon
  - a) The word *angel* means *messenger*
  - b) A *messenger* of the Lord speaks with Gideon, and Gideon calls Him "Lord"
  - c) Gideon also asks the *messenger* to accept an offering of worship
  - d) This evidence shows us that the *messenger* is Jesus
    - (1) John 1 tells us that Jesus has always existed
    - (2) This is a moment in the Old Testament where Jesus is at work with Israel
2. Let's examine the conversation between Gideon and Jesus
  - a) The Lord says "The Lord is with you!" but Gideon responds "If He is then why..."
    - (1) ...do we have all this trouble?
    - (2) ...do we not have a savior?
3. This conversation reveals a misunderstanding in Gideon that also lives in us
  - a) We confuse our troubles and turmoil as evidence that God has left us
    - (1) God has not left you
    - (2) God is using the turmoil to reveal your weakness and His strength
  - b) We wait for someone to fix things for us or ask God to remove our problem
    - (1) God rarely removes our problem, because He wants you to change into the kind of person who can handle the problem
    - (2) Like Gideon, maybe God isn't sending someone to fix things for you because it's time for you to get to work
4. \*Disclaimer\*
  - a) Don't confuse yourself with Gideon, you aren't Gideon in this story
  - b) Jesus is our better Gideon and Jesus saves his people
  - c) But, there are aspects of Gideon's humanity that we share
    - (1) God is inviting Gideon to change just like Jesus is inviting you to change

C. Judges 6:19-40

1. Gideon presented an offering before the Lord, and the Lord consumed it
  - a) The Lord told Gideon to tear down the altar of Baal...that his father built
  - b) Gideon was afraid, so he did it at night, but everyone found out who it was
2. This shines a light on Israel's issue with sin
  - a) Gideon's dad worshiped God AND had idols to Baal; this was common
  - b) Israel's main sin was combining the worship of God with idols
  - c) This practice continues in many churches today
    - (1) We show up on Sundays to worship Jesus AND the production value of worship
    - (2) We worship Jesus and our hobbies, freedom, politics, or personal preference
    - (3) We worship Jesus and our children, spouse, or family
    - (4) We turn our Sunday mornings into an infomercial for graduating seniors, valentines day, the newest Netflix show, or candidate running for office
  - d) Can the world see Jesus clearly when our lives are so cluttered with the world?
    - (1) Many of you grew up in a culture where the cross stood next to something else, and it is time to tear down some Baals in your life
3. Chapter 6 ends with Gideon and the fleece
  - a) Gideon used a fleece of wool to ask God questions about His plans
  - b) The Old Testament is full of things that happened, but not necessarily things that should have happened
    - (1) I mean that some things are a record, not a blueprint
    - (2) I believe this falls into that category
  - c) Gideon was asking for clarity because He did not have the Holy Spirit
    - (1) We do, so things are different for us
    - (2) We can still ask God for clarity on specific things, but you shouldn't tie random events to answered prayer
      - (a) For example, it is Biblical to pray a prayer like "God, if my season at this job is over, open the door for another one"

(b) Do not pray a prayer like, "God if I hit every green light on Monroe street, I will marry my girlfriend."

(3) We have the promised Holy Spirit living us, we are passed using the Urim and Thummim like priests in the Temple

#### D. Judges 7

1. Gideon gathered a large army of 32,000 men and God reduced their numbers
  - a) The first reduction was by 22,000 men
  - b) The second reduction left the army with only 300 men
2. Gideon split the men into groups of 100
  - a) They grabbed lanterns and shofars
  - b) At night, they smashed the lanterns (revealing the light) and blew the trumpets
  - c) The result made it look like there were thousands surrounding the Midianites
3. The Midianites were sent into a panic and began attacking each other
  - a) The Lord delivered Israel using their weakness and His strength
  - b) This is our final lesson for today

#### III. Conclusion

##### A. Paul talks about this dynamic of weakness in **2 Corinthians 12:8-10**

1. *Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

##### B. You are always at your strongest when you are weakest

1. This is why God reduced the numbers in Gideon's army
2. This is why Paul was content with insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities
3. This is why we get honest about our own hearts and deal with sin...it exposes the real, weak you and shows you His strength
  - a) If you convince yourself that you are fine, you have no need for Jesus