

Judges Ch 6-8:3

“But the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.”

Daniel 11:32

This verse breaks up into three traits that are vitally important to God's people.

1. As a group, chat through what each statement means and how we make these things a priority in our lives.

- the people who know their God
- shall stand firm
- take action

2. Why is it important that we implement all three statements and not two out of the three?

Five things we notice from the Gideon story

1. What we learn about God (His Grace)

Notice again the disobedience of the people. We read in Ch. 5:31 that the land had rest for forty years. However, look at Ch 6:1

3. What did the people do?

4. Read Ch 6:8-10. Note all that God had done for the Israelites, How did they respond? (:10)

Sadly the background to his grace is our sinfulness.

5. In light of the peoples disobedience, should God have heard their cry (:7) and raised up Gideon as a deliverer?

6. What one word describes why God responded?

7. In v. 13 Gideon is sure that God has abandoned the Israelites. How is this inaccurate? How do we guard ourselves from misrepresenting how God has dealt with us?

8. God makes Gideon go public with his faith. He has to destroy the idols before he leads the people against the Midianites. What ways has God called us to go public in our faith?

2. What we learn about God (His Call)

9. Discuss briefly as a group, how God's command to Gideon to destroy the altar(public declaration of his faith) is connected with the call Gideon received?

Pastor Don was making the point that God didn't answer Gideon's questions, rather he gave him a job to do.

You see Gideon's questions in v.13-16. God doesn't answer his questions but rather calls him (:14) and gives him promises. (:16)

10. Why is it vital that every Christian realizes that God calls them to a task?

11. Why are the promises of God more valuable than having all our questions answered?

12. Discuss with the group if you have had a time in your life when you have been frustrated by unanswered questions? Has you been able to look back and see that God knew best?

3. What we learn about God (Holy Spirit)

	Old Testament	New Testament
Extent	Limited: (came upon just a few)	Unlimited: (every believer is indwelt)
Purpose	Limited: For Special Service	Unlimited: (Service +character+ helper)
Time	Limited: Not permanent	Unlimited: Holy Spirit is with us forever
Effect	External: Not heart change. Holy Spirit comes upon	Internal: Spiritual change, new birth, dwells within

13. Read through Eph. 5:18 and Col. 3:16.

- Identify what these verses say about Holy Spirit
- Think through how does the “Word of Christ dwell in you richly”

4. What we learn about God (His will and plan)

The fleece Ch. 6:36-40

14. I’m sure you have heard preachers encourage people to discern God’s will by the “fleece method” Why is it not wise to test God in this way?

15. Gideon already knew God’s will (:36), he had a promise from God (:12,14,16) & God had shown Gideon his miraculous power (:21). Why did he need another confirmation?

16. Rather than evidence of Gideon’s faith, what does it seem to reveal?

A couple of other pitfalls with the fleece method to discuss are:

laziness: God does all the work. Show me a sign while I sleep.

misunderstanding: As events happen, we misinterpret them as a sign leaving us confused and frustrated

Deceived heart: We decide we want something to happen, then create fleece like experiences to justify the thing we wanted in the first place.

General guidelines for discerning God’s Will:

- 1.The Bible: Look for direct commands and general principles. (Look on the website for last weeks study material)
2. The Bible seems to focus on how we make wise God honouring decisions. A good question to keep in mind is “In light of what Scripture teaches, what is the wisest decision I can make?”
3. Remember that God is not trying to hide his will from you. We are not searching for something that is hidden, rather he wants us to live God honouring lives.
4. Psalm 23:3 - He guides and leads for his name sake. Keep the focus on God not ourselves.

17. Discuss Pastor Don’s illustration of the difference between getting a map we interpret for guidance or having a tour Guide to walk with you on the journey.

5. What we learn about God. (His Strength/ Our weakness)

Gideon's army is too big. It sounds crazy. However we see this picture in Scripture many times. He unfolds life in such a way so as people can not take the credit. Only God could have won the victory.

18. 2 Cor. 12:9 is a support verse for this. What does it mean that his strength is made perfect in weakness?

19. Pastor Don concluded with the value and importance of brokenness, what did he mean by this?