

GOD CALLS GIDEON

Joshua 6-7

Pastor Alan Dionson

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INTRO:

1. The **elapsed** time from Joshua to Gideon
2. The **effects** of living securely:
 - **Apostasy**
 - **Bondage**
 - **Cry**
 - **Deliverance**
 - **Ease**

A. THE GOD WHO CHASTISES

1. God **allows** challenges to come in our lives (6:1-6)
2. God **admonishes** our shortcomings (6:8-10)

B. THE GOD WHO CARES

1. God **approaches** us where we are (6:11-12)
2. God **assures** us from all our doubts (6:13-16)
3. God is **adamant** to be with us (6:33-40)

C. THE GOD WHO CONQUERS

1. God's **promise** (7:1-7)
2. God's **presence** (7:9-15)
3. God's **power** (7:16-22)
4. God's **people** (7:23)

CONCLUSION

TABLETALK QUESTIONS

1. What are some words to describe how we feel when our difficulties pile on in layers? What are some things you've found helpful when facing many troubles all at once?
2. Read Judges 6:1–5. But even before that very first Midianite attack, trouble had been in the air. Judges 6 begins with these eight sobering words: “The Israelites did evil in the Lord’s sight.” Through their sinful choices and actions, the Israelites removed themselves from God’s protection and put a target for enemy aggression on their own backs.
 - Have you ever noticed how we humans often make our own wrong choices, and then blame God when harsh consequences follow?
 - Why do you think we do that?
3. Read Judges 6:6–10. On the very brink of starvation, Israel cried out for help to the God they had forgotten. However, instead of just offering a quick fix to the symptoms brought on by Midianite oppression, the Lord went to the real source of their troubles. He sent an unnamed prophet to remind them of their history with Him. They had no business turning to idolatry and worshipping the local gods in the culture where they lived. It’s easy to imagine the divine sadness behind God’s words in verse 10: “But you have not listened to me.” When we ask God for help, it’s important to be honest with Him about our part in the current circumstances. We might struggle to even recognize how we are contributing to our situation, so we need God’s help to show us.
 - What keeps us from really listening to Him these days?
 - What are some consequences of not listening to God?
4. Read Judges 6:11–12. For the first time in this biblical account, we meet Gideon, the man who would play a major role in delivering Israel from the Midianites. One day he would serve as a judge-leader of his nation. But like so many of his fellow Israelites, Gideon was in hiding when the angel of the Lord came to him. The bottom of a winepress was not the place someone would normally go to thresh wheat. Still, the great God of the universe connected with Gideon where he was and called out an unlikely greeting, especially improbable to someone who was hiding just to thresh grain: “Mighty hero, the Lord is with you!”
 - How has the truth that God meets us where we are played out in your life or in the life of someone you know?
 - What impact does the knowledge that God meets us where we are have on us when we or someone we know is scared, guilty, confused, or hurting?
5. Read Judges 6:13–14. The angel of the Lord has just shown up at Gideon’s hiding place with an unexpected salutation. Two parts to this greeting, no doubt, seemed quite unlikely to Gideon: first, that he was a “mighty hero,” and second, that the Lord was with him. In verse

13, Gideon posed some questions many of us ask in times of extreme trouble: If God is with us, why has all this happened? Where are the miracles former generations experienced? Why did He rescue them, but not us? Has God abandoned us to our oppressors?

- Do you think God is offended by our hard questions? Why or why not?
- Why is it important to express our honest questions, even the hard ones, to God?

6. Read Judges 6:15–16. In these verses, Gideon goes back to the first part of the strange greeting from the angel of the Lord where he was called a “mighty hero.” That raised even more questions for Gideon, who wondered how in the world he could rescue Israel since he’s the weakest family member in the weakest clan in the tribe of Manasseh—the weakest of the weak.

- God seems to delight in using weakness. Where else, in Scripture or in life, have you seen God use weakness, weak things, and weak people to do amazing things?

7. Read Judges 6:36–40. Leading up to these final verses of this chapter, Gideon had started making baby steps toward becoming the “mighty hero” God had called him to be. In obedience to God, he knocked down his family’s altar to Baal where idol worship was practiced (6:25–26). He made a sacrifice to the living God instead—though he did those things at night. He also put out a call for other warriors to join him in a fight against Midian. Things were moving in the right direction, but what would happen next was a big deal with momentous consequences. Gideon needed double reassurance. And he found his reassurance through a request to God, a wool fleece, and a miraculous dew.

- How does it make you feel to know that even “mighty heroes” need reassurance?
- Can you think of a time when you asked God for reassurance before making a decision or taking some action? What happened?
- God meets us where we are, as the story of Gideon shows so clearly. Where do you need God to meet you today? What can help you be alert, watching for Him to show up in your life?