



## Repentance Tabernacle Church

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### Gideon and the Strength of Honesty

**Focus Verses:** <sup>15</sup> And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. <sup>16</sup> And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

**Lesson Text:** Judges 6:11-21, 36-40

**Truth About God:** God will not turn us away when we express our doubts in honesty.

**Truth For My Life:** I will fight through doubt and trust God.

God called an unlikely hero, no one would have chosen Gideon to be a military leader and a national hero, but God saw what he could be and called him anyway. Only God can see beyond the evident limitations and reveal the hidden hero. For seven years the Midianites' attacks were relentless. Every season the thugs from Midian roamed the countryside waiting for the first signs of harvest. They rushed in, took what they wanted, and trampled the rest. They left nothing behind. Israel's surrounding tribes were powerless to stop them.

Then God's people cried out to God for deliverance. An unnamed prophet visited Israel and reminded them of their forefather's deliverance from Egyptian bondage and their gift of the Promised Land. He also revealed their oppression was a result of their rejecting the covenant with the Lord. They had embraced the pagan gods of the land. Their present troubles were a consequence of their disobedience to God's commandments and their failure to exclusively follow Him.

God called Gideon while he was hiding from the enemy. Gideon saw a man sitting under a tree. The man made an unusual statement, "*The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour*" (Judges 6:12). The angel told Gideon to, "*Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?*" (Judges 6:14). Gideon honestly expressed his doubts. His self-assessment was quite different than God's confident calling. All his life he had seen himself as inferior in strength and deficient in courage. The Lord promised total victory because God Himself promised, "*I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man*" (Judges 6:16).

Gideon prepared a sacrifice of worship to honor this holy moment. He prayed for the Lord to confirm His call through a test. God had worked several miraculous signs for Gideon. He sent fire to consume the sacrifice, preserved Gideon's life after he destroyed the false altars, soaked only the fleece with dew, and then soaked only the grass with dew. Gideon was finally ready to accept God's calling and commit to the task before Him. Gideon began with 32,000 warriors, God warned Gideon, "**That's too many.**" God instructed him to send home everyone who was fearful and that was 22,000 and left 10,000 men, but God warned, "**That's still too many.**" He took the remaining 10,000 men to the brook and God sent home the 9,700 who knelt on their knees to drink and only kept the 300 vigilant volunteers who lapped putting their hands to their mouth.

Expressing doubts is not a sin. God knows our shortcomings better than we do. He is aware of our inabilities, but He also knows our capabilities. When we honestly confess our concerns to God, He will assure us of His abiding presence and His path to victory in overcoming our inhibitions and fears. God cannot lie, so if He calls us mighty and gives us an impossible task, we should not question His wisdom or His assessment of our ability.

Faith in God is not blindly claiming we know everything God is doing. Rather, our faith is often shrouded in fears of our own inadequacies, timidly asking God for more assurance as we struggle with our honest doubts. Nothing is impossible with God, but we are sometimes unsure He will work through us. As God confirms His leading, we can honestly face our fears and discover new confidence in our dependence on God.

Honest acknowledgment of our insecurities will cause us to be more transparent with others and more dependent on God. When we confront our fears and admit our weaknesses, we are more likely to find support from our friends and the amazing strength that comes from God through prayer. When God is with us, we have nothing to fear. The apostle Paul said it best in Romans 8:31, "*If God be for us, who can be against us?*"