

The Molding of a Man

Restoring God's Pattern and Purposes

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, June 28th

Mankind is the crown of God's Creation! As such we're Created:

- In God's Image Gen. 1:26 *"Let us make man in our image, ... and let him have dominion!"* (rada: conquer)
- For God's Purposes. Rev. 4:11 *"thou has created all things for thy pleasure"* (thelema: Purposes)

That's why Satan hates us! 1 Jn. 2:16 reveals that he uses *"the lust of the flesh* (Passions) *the lust of the eyes* (Possessions) *and the pride of life"* (Positions) to: Diminish God's Pattern in us (Ro. 1:18-32); Distract us from God's Purposes (Mk 4:19); and Destroy our Peace (partnership) with God. (Jn 10:10; 1 Cor 3:9-15) God works to "restore" His pattern, purposes, and Partnership in our lives! This process is demonstrated throughout the Scriptures, particularly in Judges 6.

Satan seduces us to sin. (Vs 1) Sin always brings suffering. (Vs 1-5)

Suffering can lead to supplication. (Vs 6) Supplication leads to a sermon. (Vs 7-10) God's Revelation leads to Repentance! *God's Solution came in the form of Gideon. God didn't just see Gideon as he was: Fearful (11,15); Frustrated (13) Fuming (13b),*

But as he could become if God's pattern and purpose were restored! Vs 12

God saw him as a *"mighty man of valor"* (Hayil: strength, might, force, virtue)

Please consider:

1. The process God used to Transform Gideon involved:

A. A Personal Commission Vs 14 *"thou shalt save Israel, have not I sent thee"*

- 1) Like Moses in Ex 3,4, Gideon felt overwhelmed and underqualified. Vs 15
- 2) We also have a personal commission! Mt 28:18-20; 2 Tim 2:1-5

B. A Powerful Consolation Vs 16 *"Surely I will be with thee"*

- 1) This is the same promise he gave Moses. (Ex. 3:10-12)
- 2) He gives us the same promise! Mt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5

C. A Practical Commitment vs 18-24

- 1) *"Gideon built an altar and called it Jehovah Shalom"* (God is my peace)
- 2) God expects the same of us, calling it *"our reasonable service"* Ro 12:1,2

D. A Personal Challenge 25,26 *"throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and build an altar unto the LORD"*

- 1) This Led to a: Confrontation Vs 30; Challenge Vs 31; Change. Vs 32
- 2) Are there any ungodly "altars" in your home or heart God wants you to destroy?
- 3) Are there any altars "to the Lord" you should build and/or rebuild?

2. The Purpose for which God called and transformed Gideon.

A. God's Charge: To Deliver Israel 6 *"Go in this thy might, thou shalt save Israel"*

B. The Challenge: Overwhelming odds.

Vs 33 135,000 *"Midianites, Amalekites, and Children of the East pitched in Jezreel"*

- 1) They came to pillage as they had done for the past 7 years
- 2) This took the heart out of Israel.

C. Israel's Choice.

1) Since there were > 1,000,000 Israeli men, Why hadn't they fought back?

- a) Intimidation. *What can I do?*
- b) Indifference. Not my problem. *It doesn't immediately affect me.*

2) Intimidation and Indifference are ever Satan's allies.

- a) They are always in effect before any battle between good and evil.

3) This time God had a "Gideon" to work with and through! Vs 34 *"But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered after him."* (Abiezer: "Father of help")

- a) God's Spirit stirred up Gideon.
- b) A few men came to "help" him.
- c) They sent messengers to join them. Vs 35
- d) Only 32,000 came! Judges 7

3. The Preparation 6:36-7:7 Trust comes before Triumph 1Jn 5:4

A. Trust grows through tests! (James 1:2-5) Gideon's faith needed to Grow. (6:36-40)

1) God was not angry about his "trust test".

- a) In Mal. 3:8-12 God actually challenges us to "test Him" in the matter of tithing.
- b) In Lk 16:10-12 Jesus revealed that: *"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, (money) who will commit to your trust the true riches?"*

B. God's Tests are Progressive. 7:1-7

1) Began with 32,000 against 135,000. (4 to 1) 7:2 *"The people ... are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me."*

2) God weeds out the "wimps". 7:3 *"Whosoever is fearful, let him return..."*

a) There was a biblical precedent! Dt 20:8

b) With 4 to 1 odds, who wouldn't fear? (see Ps. 56:3) 22,000 men go home! (13-1 odds)

3) God whittles the warriors. vs 4 *"the people are yet too many."*

a) Vs 4-7 God whittles them down to 300, changing the "odds" to 450 to 1!

Judges 7:7 *"By the three hundred ... will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand"*

Conclusion:

- What if Gideon wasn't willing to stretch? Trust and Obey?
- What if no one was willing to overcome their intimidation or indifference?
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Application:

All of Israel benefited from the sacrifice of Gideon and his 300 men. This week we'll celebrate the freedom and independence that so many others were willing to fight for.

- 1) How would the past 250 years be different if the colonial patriots chose indifference or intimidation over independence?
- 2) Aren't you glad God found some "Gideons" in our History who were willing to put:
Principle above Profit? Conviction above Convenience? Courage above Complacency?
What will the future generations look like if God can't find men and women today who will allow Him to restore His Pattern and Purposes by molding them into *"mighty men (women) of valor"*?

Are you, like Gideon, willing to partner with God to make a difference?

"Is there not a cause?" (1 Sam. 17:29)

