

"MIGHTY MEN OF VALOR"

Judges 6:11-16

"In the end, our worst fears are not that we cannot do something significant. Our worst fears are that we might actually be someone and have something to offer that could change this world. This represents such a weight to us that we choose not to bear it, instead, living at a level far beneath our potential." - Nelson Mandela *Gideon: A story of the Purposes of God for our lives.*

I. ENCOUNTERING GOD

A. We see Gideon threshing wheat behind the winepress:

1. Trying to make a living – and getting through life's problems
 - a. *The focus is on himself: My needs/my fears/my family...*
 - b. *We can become consumed simply with these issues*
2. But he has an encounter with God: God speaks and reveals things about his life
 - a. **He sees what you can be:** Things in you that are not yet formed
 1. *Judges 6:12 When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, "The LORD is with you, mighty warrior."*
 - b. **He sees His plans for you:** What you are to do with your life
 1. *Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."*
 - c. **He sees who you are to impact:** *V14 you will save Israel...*
 1. *God knows their names!*
 2. *God knows the cities*
 3. *God knows the nations*

B. There are some underlying foundations to these truths

1. **God has rights over your life:** God didn't ask/have him fill out a questionnaire...He decreed it!
2. **You should be useful in life:** To God/for other people

a. Life isn't about you: If it is – your life will be wasted

C. Conference is a time that we focus on what God sees: We face these issues

1. You should ask God to help you to hear His call/His will
 - a. Waken my ear!
 - b. Speak to me again: Refresh a sense of purpose and calling in me
2. You should come into conference and ask: *What do you want me to do?*

II. RESPONDING TO GOD

A. A response is required if the plans/purposes are to come to pass

1. **You must believe:** Gideon's struggle was seeing himself as God did
 - a. V15 how can I save Israel...? I don't have what it takes/not qualified
 1. Faith is a choice: God is not a liar – so I must be able to do His will
2. **You must surrender:** You have to place God's plans above your own
 - a. Being willing to alter the direction of your life
 - b. The problem is men who are willing to surrender to an eventual great purpose
 1. *I am willing to preach/to go/to travel the world doing the will of God...*
 - a. But what if you don't feel you are making progress toward the future?
 2. We see that some men aren't actually surrendered to God: They are infatuated with a dream
 - a. They can see themselves heroically walking down the aisle/reporting at conference
 3. So as soon as they don't see progress – they stop being useful!
3. **You must prepare:** *Matthew 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.* Few are ready to be chosen
 - a. You have to deal with the things that will stop you: Cut down the idols...
 - b. You have to live now – as you would live if God selected you today
 1. *What would you be doing if you were a pastor?*
 2. *How would you be reacting to certain situations if you were a pastor?*
 3. *What would you be looking for at concert/in church if you were a pastor?*

III. POWER FOR YOUR PURPOSE

A. Built in to the idea of calling & purpose is the promise of supernatural power

1. The one who plans & calls you will give supernatural ability to fulfill the plan/the calling
 - a. *Mark 1:17 Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men."*
2. Gideon experienced the supernatural power of God
 - a. Fire b. Direction c. Confirmation d. Help in the battles of life
 1. You'll never know unless you ask
 2. You'll never know until you obey