

## Getting Comfortable with Being Weak

Judges 7:1-8:21

*But he [God] said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 2 Corinthians 12:9 (New International Version)*

Judges 7 teaches lessons about how God's power is more fully displayed when His people are weak.

- **Lesson #1: GOD INSISTS ON THE NECESSITY OF OUR WEAKNESS SO THAT WE WILL TRUST IN HIM.** (Judges 7:1-8)

*Early in the morning, Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all his men camped at the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was north of them in the valley near the hill of Moreh. <sup>2</sup>The LORD said to Gideon, "You have too many men for me to deliver Midian into their hands. In order that Israel may not boast against me that her own strength has saved her, . . . Judges 7:1-2 (NIV)*

*But the LORD said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will sift them for you there. If I say, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go; but if I say, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go." Judges 7:4 (NIV)*

*His fame spread far and wide, for he was greatly helped until he became powerful. <sup>16</sup>But after Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his downfall. . . . 2 Chronicles 26:15b-16 (NIV)*

"You cannot be too small for God to use, but you can be too big." (Gary Inrig)

- **Lesson #2: IF WE LISTEN TO HIM, GOD WILL ENCOURAGE US IN OUR WEAKNESS AND HELP US TAKE ACTION.** (Judges 7:9-23)

*During that night the LORD said to Gideon, "Get up, go down against the camp, because I am going to give it into your hands. <sup>10</sup>If you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah <sup>11</sup>and listen to what they are saying. Afterward, you will be encouraged to attack the camp." So he and Purah his servant went down to the outposts of the camp. Judges 7:9-11 (NIV)*

*When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped God. He returned to the camp of Israel and called out, "Get up! The LORD has given the Midianite camp into your hands." Judges 7:15 (NIV)*

*For he knows our frame . . . Psalm 103:14a (English Standard Version)*

*Heroes of Faith = . . . They were weak people who were given strength to be brave in war and drive back foreign invaders . . . Hebrews 11:34 (New Jerusalem Bible)*

*Gideon said to God, "If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised—<sup>37</sup>look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said."<sup>38</sup>And that is what happened. Gideon rose early the next day; he squeezed the fleece and wrung out the dew—a bowlful of water. <sup>39</sup>Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request. Allow me one more test with the fleece. This time make the fleece dry and the ground covered with dew."<sup>40</sup>That night God did so. Only the fleece was dry; all the ground was covered with dew. Judges 6:36-40 (NIV)*

*When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the LORD caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords. The army fled . . . as far as the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath. <sup>23</sup>Israelites from Naphtali, Asher and all Manasseh were called out, and they pursued the Midianites. Judges 7:22-23 (NIV)*

- **Lesson #3: SOMETIMES WE FACE UNEXPECTED CAUSES OF WEAKNESS.** (Judges 7:24-8:21)

*Now the Ephraimites asked Gideon, "Why have you treated us like this? Why didn't you call us when you went to fight Midian?" And they criticized him sharply. <sup>2</sup>But he answered them, "What have I accomplished compared to you? Aren't the gleanings of Ephraim's grapes better than the full grape harvest of Abiezer? <sup>3</sup>God gave Oreb and Zeeb, the Midianite leaders, into your hands. What was I able to do compared to you?" At this, their resentment against him subsided. Judges 8:1-3 (NIV)*

*Gideon and his three hundred men, exhausted yet keeping up the pursuit, came to the Jordan and crossed it. <sup>5</sup>He said to the men of Succoth, "Give my troops some bread; they are worn out, and I am still pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian."<sup>6</sup>But the officials of Succoth said, "Do you already have the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna in your possession? Why should we give bread to your troops?" <sup>7</sup>Then Gideon replied, "Just for that, when the LORD has given Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, I will tear your flesh with desert thorns and briars." Judges 8:4-7 (NIV)*