

GIDEON: THE STRENGTH OF FAITH

Part Three: Faith Expects Opposition, but God Leads You to Greater Faith in His Promises, as He Overcomes Obstacles

Judges 6:28-40

- **God Builds Faith by Letting People Stand for Him Against Idol Worshippers.**

v. 27

1. Gideon had just cut down his father's idols.

- Before you will be ready to meet the enemy oppressing you, you must remove completely all idols that stand between you and a holy Jesus Christ. At times, you must even remove the idols that cause others to hope falsely that anyone but God can deliver them. Sometimes, God will use you to stand up for Him by cutting down idols valued by others.

v. 28

2. The men of the city of Ophrah saw their idols destroyed and replaced by Yahweh's altar and sacrifice.

- **Never let peer pressure stop you from faith in Jesus Christ.** Gideon feared the men of Ophrah, but he still cut down the idols. Compare verse 27. He came at night for fear, but God had taken care of Gideon's fear in verse 23.
- **You will never be ready to exercise your faith completely until you replace idols with sacrifices acceptable to God.** Remember Romans 12:1-2. The

men of Ophrah knew about Gideon's faith in Yahweh by seeing Gideon's sacrifice to Yahweh. Notice that the second bull was offered on the altar which had been built. God had carefully constructed this image for all the idolators of Ophrah to see and believe in Him alone. Some statements of faith will stimulate the faith of others. Consider Hebrews 10:24.

v. 29

3. God uses your acts of faith to stimulate questions in others. The men of Ophrah questioned the destruction and sacrifice to Yahweh.
 - **God creates faith in you to display to others His great power.** Gideon knew that consequences would flow from cutting down the town shrines. The men of the city would come looking for him.

• God Strengthens Faith in You by Withstanding Opposition to Him.

v. 30

1. Gideon's Father faced an angry crowd of men because Gideon had cut down the altar of Baal, and the Asherah which was beside it.
 - **Doing God's will, by exercising faith and following Yahweh's explicit directions, will arouse great opposition. Do not be surprised by opposition, even from your friends.** The men of the city knew precisely what went wrong with their idolatry and that Gideon had done it. They wanted Gideon delivered to them.

v. 31

2. Gideon's father, Joash, stands against the idolators and challenges Baal to defend himself before Yahweh.

- **God had changed Joash from a Baal builder to a faith follower.** Something has happened already with Joash to replace the need for the idols with a staunch defense of the Gideon and his actions.
- **Faith moves people to stand for God and oppose idolatry.** Joash said whoever would plead for Baal will be put to death by morning.

v. 32

3. Gideon received a new name: "Jerubbaal." It means let Baal contend.

- **Faith means you trust Yahweh to contend against idols.** You fight by faith, but God fights the battles and contends through you.

• **When Opposition Builds, God Creates Faith To Break Oppression**

v. 33

1. The Midianites, Amalekites, and the sons of the east, crossed over and camped in the valley of Jezreel.

- **Always expect that the forces of evil will oppose God and His people of faith.** Compare Ephesians 6:12.

v. 34

2. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called together to follow him.

- **The Spirit of God uses faith warriors.** God had strengthened Gideon and the men of the city. Now Gideon will assemble warriors.

v. 35

3. Gideon sent messengers throughout Manasseh to follow him. Gideon sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali and met Gideon.

- **Faith means that you count upon Yahweh to marshal His forces.** Gideon called upon the tribes to follow Yahweh.

vv.36-40

4. Gideon used a fleece to verify his faith. Having gathered all the people, Gideon still needed further confirmation of His faith and God answered.

- **Faith means that you want to know that Yahweh will do what He has promised.** Gideon wanted God to display His power again, just for Gideon. Gideon first laid out the fleece and found it full of water, while the surrounding ground remained dry.
- **Faith means that you expect God to lead you. You will not look to anyone else.** Gideon spoke with God to confirm His faith. Always avoid testing God by imposing your will above His. Gideon wanted to be sure he was following God's directions. Compare Matthew 4:5-8.

Application. Faith expects opposition, but trusts God to overcome all oppression. Gideon had to withstand opposition at home before God could use him to lift national oppression. Faith allows you to believe God will keep His word and confirm His personal leading in your life. God communicates to you primarily through the Bible as He reveals His will for your life. God also directs you as you pray to Him for guidance. He wants to lead you by faith alone.