

His Tender Presence: God's Promise Through Gideon

God's Promise:

The Lord is with you. (Judges 6:12)

My Promise

I will lay claim to the nearness of God.

OPENING

You are who God says you are: spiritually alive, heavenly positioned, connected to the father, a billboard of mercy, and an honored child. You are special. Special has nothing to do with how you look, or what you can do, or how smart you are. Special has everything to do with the fact none other than the Master of the universe created you as a unique individual. The same God who drew rainbows across the rain-washed skies, who paints the morning sunrise and the evening sunset, the same God who scooped out the Grand Canyon with his fingers, who molded the Rocky Mountains with his hands and threw the Milky Way into the midnight sky, that same God created you. And that same God is right beside you. Gideon learned what God wants us to learn. All we need is the presence of God. He is enough. We don't need a large army. We don't need abundant resources. His presence tilts the scales in our favor. Let's remember: one person plus God is always a majority.

THE QUESTION THAT APPLY TO ALL OF US

In the story of Gideon, we find that our human nature is fragile and that in our times of testing, affliction or adversities we ask necessary questions that reveal our internal battle.

From that internal battle, arises important questions that if we were to apply them to our personal battles we would receive an unexpected answer from a God that never leaves us nor abandons us. Gideon becomes a mouthpiece to all of us as he asked necessary questions about this internal battle.

#1 – IS GOD WITH US? – Judges 6:13a

“But sir,” Gideon replied, “if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us?”

Intellectually, we all know that God is with us. We reason that He is close by. However, something curious happens when things are not going well. We evaluate the closeness of God based on what is happening. That was Gideon’s argument when he heard that God was with him.

The answer to this first question is simple – THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND WHAT IS HAPPENING AROUND US DOES NOT DETERMINE IS GOD IS WITH US. If it were so, then we would have to ask for forgiveness with all of those that we have since been studying until now – Moses in the wilderness, Joseph in the cistern, Abraham and Sara in their old age, and Noah in the midst of so much evil.

#2 – WHERE ARE THE WONDERS OF GOD? – Judges 6:13b

Where are all His wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, “Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt?”

Sometimes we measure God’s nearness based on what we see. If there is a miracle,

God is near. If there is peace in the home, God is there. If there is money in the bank, God is still with us.

What if the “wonders” stop? If God near? These questions should create in us a new way of considering our trust and relationship with God. Gideon was asking what each of us would do because our human nature tends to hope for “wonders” as a sign that God is with us. Is it possible that we begin to see “wonders” in another way?

THE NATURAL CONCLUSION OF HUMAN BEINGS - Judges 6:13c

“But now the Lord has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian.”

How is it that we automatically think that God has abandoned us? Would it be that our human nature is egocentric and seeks its comfort? That the only thing that we hope from God is that He always does good things in our favor.

Or is our human nature unbelieving and does not believe that even in our adversities God is as real as in moments of peace and tranquility. Could we balance between two ways of thinking? I think so, because we can do all things in Christ who strengthens us.

It is certain, that if God has “given us” to something (be it a sickness, a test or a difficulty), will you not believe that He will also give us the victory.

LET US BE A PART OF GOD’S MIRACLE – Judges 6:14

The Lord turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?"

It is good to see God moving in our favor. However, there are occasions in which God wants us to act on His side. God is always near to us. The question is, Are we close to Him? If it is so, just like Gideon was told, God wants us to be a part of His salvation of the world.

Go in the strength you have - You and I have a strength given to us by God that we should accept and act upon.

Save Israel out of Midian's hand. The enemy does not matter, nor does the how fierce he may seem, when God tells us to go, He will give us the victory. The verb "save" implies that the results are sure. Maybe the problem was not the Midianites, nor God, according to Gideon, but us.

Am I not sending you? – How do you think that Gideon felt when God asked him? After having questioned God, now God does not ask him but rather in the form of a question He reveals Himself. When God sends, there is no argument or question. God is going to heal your body, God is going to save your family, God is going to answer your call, God is going to reach your city. He is sending!

Let us be a part of the miracle. Instead of questioning, let us unite with God with and Unshakable Hope that He is with us even though we still do not see Him.