

*Get Ready!***Fear to Faith**

By: Wally Winner

**Text**

Joshua 6:11-17, 36-40; 7:1-21

Key Quest Verse

Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Zechariah 4:6

Bible Background

A leadership vacuum developed after Joshua died, and the people lapsed into idolatry that was being practiced by the tribes around them. They lacked unity, and the tribes of Israel ruled themselves separately. The Lord permitted foreign invasions and oppressions during these periods of backsliding. The Book of Judges can be summarized by the recurring cycles of sin, suffering, sorrow and supplication. Then God would raise up a spiritual leader, called a judge, to deliver them. The period of the judges extends from the death of Joshua to the beginning of the reign of King Saul over the United Kingdom, a period of perhaps three hundred years. Gideon, from the tribe of Manasseh., lived in fear of the circumstances. We immediately see this because he was threshing wheat in a winepress, not on high place where it was usually done. He didn't want to be seen by the Midianites. Gideon was not even sure the Lord was with Israel any longer. It is from these circumstances the Lord calls Gideon into service.

Get Ready!**Lesson Quest**

What I want my students to:

Know: God is bigger than our circumstances.

Feel: God's presence can dispel our fears and encourage us.

Do: Respond to God's assurance and obey.

Leader's Devotion

The Lord responds to people's sinning by punishing them, and He responds to people's repenting by delivering them. These are basic spiritual lessons and experiences that seem to need to be learned over and over again.

The Lord sees leadership potential in some people who seem to their friends to be incapable of it. God cannot use people who depend only on their human power. He will use anyone who depends on His wisdom and who obeys Him. Sometimes God directs us in astonishing fashion like He did with Gideon. After God got Gideon focused, he became a usable instrument for God's service. More times, it is as you go about your daily tasks. God is working in your life in ways you may not notice. We must not close the door on what God can do. Events do not occur by luck or coincidence. We should have faith that God is directing our life for His purpose. God has big plans for all of us.

A dedicated minority far excels a half-hearted majority. In this case, a reduction of the army to only 300 men to face an army of 135,000. God does not need men's might to do His work. Centuries later it took only 120 people in an upper room to set the world on fire for Jesus Christ.

Get Set!

**Option A**

Materials: None

Have somebody (small frame person would work best here) stand up with their back toward you or another student. Tell the student to fall backwards into your arms (or the other student). Tell them they have to trust you to catch them before they fall. Do it several times with the same person. The first few times the body will instinctively react and overrule the element of trust. You find they will do a stutter-step or put out their arms. The same is true with God. The more times we put our trust in Him, the easier and more natural it becomes.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Option B

Materials: A lump of coal

It may be hard to find a lump of coal, but explain to the students that coal was a standard in home heating in the last century. It still is used to drive some generators in power plants. Coal has a lot of potential beyond the obvious. You can get linoleum, nylon, ammonia, fertilizer, moth balls, pain thinner and many dyes from coal. A diamond is a lump of coal that handled the pressure. God can transform each of us into useful service if we yield to Him.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Get Set!

Bible Story

Advanced Preparation: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles.

Judges 7:17-22 NIV

[17] “Watch me,” he told them. “Follow my lead. When I get to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do. [18] When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then from all around the camp blow yours and shout, ‘For the LORD and Gideon.’” [19] Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after they had changed the guard. They blew their trumpets and broke the jars that were in their hands. [20] The three companies blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, “A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!” [21] While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled. [22] When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the LORD caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords.

Go!**Self Made**

OBJECT LESSON

Materials: Play Dough**Procedure:** Provide Play Dough for all the students. Let them make a bust or figurine of themselves.

Discuss the following questions:

What doubts does Gideon have about God and about himself? Why?**Do you have difficulty making up your mind?****Do you consider the consequences of your decisions before making them?****Do you change your mind after you have made a decision?****Who do you rely on to help you make decisions?****Quest Connection**

Many people today consider themselves as self-made and recognize that much of what they have accomplished has been due to their own hard work and determination. The book store shelves are full of “self help” books. You can get one for any area of your life. We certainly should not minimize the part we all must play in fulfilling God’s will for our lives. That which He specializes in is the area that is beyond our control. Gideon would never have shown up for work if God left it all to him to get ready to be a leader.

Close

Remember that sometimes we make wrong decisions. God provides forgiveness. Pray that the students will make good decisions, but ask for forgiveness for any past wrong ones.

Go!**What's My Sign****DISCUSSION**

Materials: Sheet with the shapes of road signs (may be copied out of state rules of the road book or obtained from a driving instructor) or a sheet with the symbols of the 12 signs of the Zodiac.

Procedure: Pass out the sheets and have the students try to get as many answers right as possible. Discuss the following questions:

How are you using signs?

What is the relationship between faith and signs?

Should we demand a sign from God before we follow His will?

Are signs good or bad?

Quest Connection

When we look in the Bible we see signs are used frequently. There seems to be some basic functions of signs in the Bible. They are used to impart knowledge, protect, motivate, to recall, to witness, to confirm and to illustrate. However, we must couple the Biblical use with such passages as Matt. 16:1-4, John 4:48 and I Cor. 1:22.

Close

Pray for God's assurance and encouragement in the lives of your students stressing that our faith is in God, not in signs.

Go!**Toying Around****OBJECT LESSON**

Materials: A selection of toys and sports items like rattle, bottle, blocks, dolls, bat, soccer ball, tennis racket, golf club, checkers, etc.

Procedure: Hold up the items and have the students tell the age that it best fits (baby, kid, teenager, adult). Have them give a reason for the age they select and why it wouldn't be appropriate for a younger or older age group.

Quest Connection

The things God calls us to do in life are just as important as what God called Gideon to do. However, we cannot accomplish them if our spiritual life gets stunted. Maybe one of the greatest difficulties in God's service is people whose spiritual life is arrested and they remain on the same spiritual level for the remainder of their life.

Discuss the following questions:

Does our spiritual service change through life or is it always the same?

How do we find out what God wants us to do in His service?

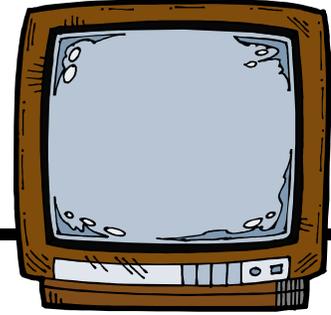
Does God always provide the tools to do the specific job He asks to be done?

Does God call people to do a job that they could not accomplish?

What is God looking for in our lives?

Close

Pray that all students will spend time with God so that they will exhibit continuous spiritual growth.

Go!**Bout With Doubt****VIDEO**

Materials: TV, VCR/DVD and a copy of Any Griffith Show Episode “Mr. McBeevee”

Procedure: Play the episode for the students. Andy tries to get Opie to admit that a new found friend is imaginary. Even with evidence, Andy doubts Opie until his own personal experience.

Quest Connection

Although we don’t talk about it much, doubt and skepticism are normal. Often it is the bout with doubt that produces the strong faith. No faith is required if you are absolutely sure about something. We need somebody and some place where we can honestly express our doubts and work them through. Discuss the following questions:

Are doubts about God normal?

What do you learn from Gideon about dealing with your doubts?

What do you learn about God from the way He relates to Gideon and his doubts?

Will God reject us or love us less for doubting?

Should we act on the Word of God alone or seek a fleece?

Close

Spend time in prayer thanking God for taking our doubts seriously and offering evidence about Himself to encourage us.

Go!



Human Bean

GAME

Materials: Two bowls per team, two tablespoons per team and some beans.

Procedure: Dive the class into teams. Groups of four or five might be a good size. Place a bowl full of beans for each team on one end of the room. Place an empty bowl for each team at the other end of the room. Give each team two tablespoons. Instruct them that they have to transfer every bean in the full bowl into the empty bowl. Give them one minute to meet as a team to devise their strategy. Notice who takes charge in each group. These are the natural leaders. Call them back together and start the contest. Most will assume that they must make the transfer using the spoons. See who is the first to realize they can simply pick up the one container and dump the beans in the empty one. This is thinking outside the box. That is one quality of a leader.

Quest Connection

Most teenagers struggle with being a leader and blending in. The reality, however, is that all of us, whether we admit it or not, are followers on some level. We can't all be the leaders all the time and we can't all be followers all the time. Time times and situations cause roles to change. Discuss the following questions:

What might be some characteristics of good leaders?

Does everybody have the potential to be a leader?

What one thing would you change if you were in charge at home?

School? Church? The country?

Name some people who are leaders.

Would it be better if we didn't have any leaders?

Close

With help from the students, make a prayer list of leaders. Spend time in prayer for those leaders.

Go!**Who's Afraid****VIDEO**

Materials: TV, VCR/DVD, copy of the movie “Psycho”.

Quest Connection

Procedure: Play the shower scene from Psycho. You may need to set it up. Some may never have heard of the movie and never seen it. Discuss the following questions:

What phobias do you have?

Is fear good or bad?

Fear is the first quality we are introduced to in Gideon. How did fear eventually help him?

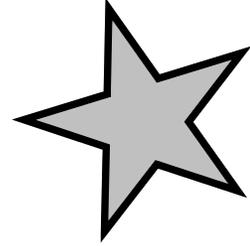
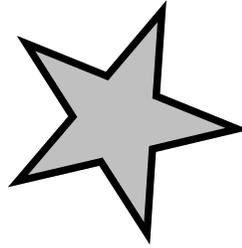
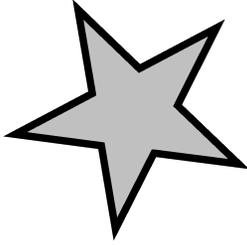
What enables believers to overcome fear and even obtain enough courage to stand alone?

Throughout the Bible we find the phrase, “Don’t be afraid”. God wasn’t trying to scare people. He does want people to respect Him and serve Him, but not be immobilized out of fear. It is a matter of believing in God’s promises and His greatness.

Close

Spend time in prayer for God’s help in overcoming fear when it is necessary to please God.

To be of the best service to God requires you simply give Him permission to change your heart and then to obey Him. You may already be responding to Him in some areas, but you know some areas you have given over to God's control. Check the areas where you feel you are doing God's will. Then put a star on just one area you want to start turning over to God right now.

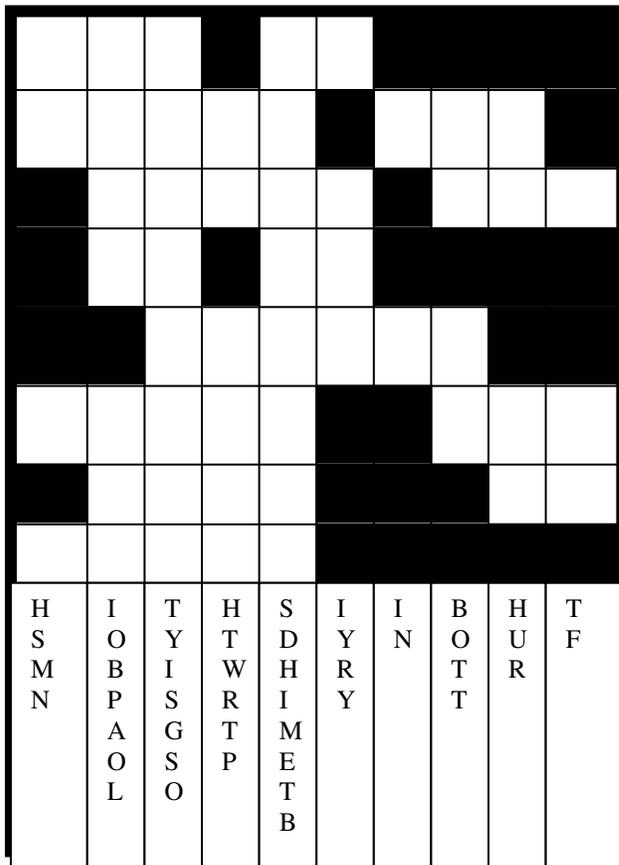


DOING

WANTING

_____	MY THOUGHTS	_____
_____	WHAT I READ	_____
_____	RELATIONSHIP TO PARENTS	_____
_____	WHAT I LISTEN TO (MUSIC)	_____
_____	WHAT I WATCH (TV, MOVIES)	_____
_____	MY FRIENDS	_____
_____	HOW I DRESS	_____
_____	MY SOCIAL LIFE	_____
_____	WHAT I SPEND MONEY ON	_____
_____	MY FREE TIME	_____

“Mighty God”



The letters in each vertical column go into the squares directly above them, but not necessarily in the order they appear. Black squares divide the words. When a letter has been placed correctly you will have an important instruction to remember.



KNOW ME

We need to know ourselves. From time to time we need to evaluate who we are, where we are going and how we intend to get there. Along the way, we must realize there are people who challenge us to develop. God uses them to motivate us to spiritual service. Answer the following questions. If you are not sure, ask the person/persons involved.

What do your parents expect of you?

What do your school teachers expect of you?

What does your Sunday School teacher expect from you?

What does your youth leader expect of you?

Does your pastor expect anything of you?

What does God expect of you?

Now ask yourself:

“Are these expectations realistic?”

“What choices do I have to make to accomplish these expectations?”



God doesn't call the qualified, but qualifies the called.
Everybody has to make a decision on how they will respond to the call of God.
Search the Scriptures and find a few struggling Biblical characters.
Write down their name, their situation and how they handled it.



Biblical Character:

Situation:

How they handled it:



Biblical Character:

Situation:

How they handled it:



Biblical Character:

Situation:

How they handled it: