

GIDEON

Never Believe God The First Time?

THE STORY:

The Reluctant Hero Who
Never Believed God the First Time
Judges 6-8

LIFE LESSONS:

- ① God always meets us **where we are**.
Judges 6:17, 27, 36-40 & 7:9-11/ Matthew 11:28-30 & 12:20/ 1 Corinthians 10:13

- ② Ministry always starts at **home**.
Judges 6:25-26/ Matthew 7:3-5

- ③ It's not a good thing to **seek a sign** when
God has **already spoken**.
Judges 6:36/ Matthew 12:38-40/ John 20:24-31/ Balaam Story in Numbers 22:4-24:25 & 2 Peter 2:15

- ④ Never confuse a **foolish risk** with a **step of faith**.
Judges 7:1-8/ Proverbs 22:3/ Proverbs 19:2-3

- ⑤ Never replace God with a **religious system**.
Judges 8:27 (1 Samuel 30:7)

TAKING IT HOME

1. Is there an area in your life where you feel the need to be “strong and courageous” that you’d like prayer for?

2. This weekend we heard five life lessons from the life of Gideon. Which one is the biggest need in your life right now? What step could you take to begin working that lesson into your life?

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God has _____.
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Growth Group Homework

For the week of May 4, 2008

QUICK REVIEW: Looking back over your sermon notes from *Never Believe God the First Time?*, what was most challenging, helpful, or interesting to you?

MY STORY

1. Has there been a time in your life when you knew God's will but were afraid to follow it? What was it that made you fearful?

2. Over the years, have there been any religious practices or traditions that you participated in or observed in others that seemed meaningless to you?

Are there any that have become meaningful to you currently in your walk with God?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Joshua is another person who was in a similar situation as Gideon. In Joshua 1:6-9 and Deuteronomy 31:7-8, what words of encouragement do Moses and God give to Joshua that you think could also help others deal with their fears?

Jesus tells us that He will be with us always in Matthew 28:19-20. How could the ongoing knowledge of God's constant presence make a difference in our attitude or actions?

2. Throughout the Bible there are numerous instances where, like Gideon, followers of God substituted religious rituals and obligations for an authentic relationship with Him. In the passages below, what rituals or obligations were they focused on instead of trusting God?

Isaiah 1:13-17

Micah 6:6-8

Hosea 6:6

Ironically, in most cases the rituals described were practices God had instructed the Israelites to do to help them focus and depend on Him. Why do you think He's now saying that He isn't interested in these things?

Can you think of any religious rituals or practices that we could become more committed to rather than having an authentic relationship with Christ?

Looking back at the passages, what could be some indicators that our religious practices have become a meaningless ritual?

3. It's comforting to know that "God always meets us where we are" but He also doesn't want us to stay there. What help do the following verses give us to enjoy God's acceptance and patience without becoming complacent?

Hebrews 5:11-13

Psalms 103:13-14

James 4:17