

GOD DEVELOPS CHANGEMAKERS,
COOPERATE!

APRIL 16, 2023

WORSHIP

Forever, God my Rock, God is Able, Lamb of God, What He's Done

WELCOME

Think of one example of how God brought about a positive change in your life out of a very challenging situation.

WORD

JUDGES 7:4-8
(READ THE REST OF
CHAPTERS 6-7)

⁴ Then the LORD said to Gideon, "The people are still too many; bring them down to the water and I will test them for you there. Therefore it shall be that he of whom I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go with you; but everyone of whom I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go." ⁵ So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, "You shall separate everyone who laps the water with his tongue as a dog laps, as well as everyone who kneels to drink." ⁶ Now the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was ³⁰⁰ men; but all the rest of the people knelt to drink water. ⁷ The LORD said to Gideon, "I will deliver you with the ³⁰⁰ men who lapped and will give the Midianites into your hands; so let all the other people go, each man to his home." ⁸ So the ³⁰⁰ men took the people's provisions and their trumpets into their hands. And Gideon sent all the other men of Israel, each to his tent, but retained the ³⁰⁰ men; and the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

We have been going through the series CHANGEMAKERS – people who make a difference in the lives of others. We are to make a difference – a positive difference – that is God's plan for our lives! Are you intentional in wanting to be a changemaker? How does God develop changemakers? He is at work – the question is, are we willing to cooperate?

1. GOD USES PROBLEMS

Why do you think God uses problems? Problems are meant to create holy discontent. It is given to get our attention, or to wake us up. Many times, we don't pause and reflect until we face big problems and start looking for God. See problems in the perspective of God! God uses problems to sanctify us and make better persons out of us. **Judges 6:1-2** tells us that when the people started doing evil in the sight of the LORD, He gave them to the hands of the Midianites for seven years. God's people were brutally treated, and it caused them to cry out to the Lord (**v.6**).

What prevents us from calling out to the Lord? It's our self-sufficiency. Even in the New Testament, we see this truth stated – in **Hebrews 12:5-6**, the author wrote about the discipline of the Lord, and that He does this for those whom He loves. When we have problems, we might think God does not love us anymore. But **Hebrews 12:7-10** gives us the picture of the fatherly kind of love that involves discipline, securing the believers in a way that shows HE is involved, and He cares. **Hebrews 12:11** tells us that discipline

may not be pleasant; it can be painful, but it shall bear the "peaceful fruit of righteousness"!

2. GOD SEES YOUR POTENTIAL

God does not see you as you are now. He sees your potential in Christ! We must also see people that way – God can change people, and that's what He did with Gideon. In **Judges 6:12**, God took the initiative and called Gideon a "valiant warrior" – despite Gideon being a coward and lived as a farmer – never been into any battle! Gideon was very sincere in his reply – asking God his questions, feeling abandoned by the Lord in their circumstances. God wanted to use Gideon, seeing him as having strength (**v.14**), but Gideon was so insecure and looked at his identity as being the "least" and the "youngest" (**v.15**). God assures Gideon in **Judges 6:16** by letting him know His presence will be with him. Are we on God's side when we face our battles? Or do we stand opposite Him in the things we are dealing with in life?

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 puts it beautifully – God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise – for what purpose? That no man may boast before God! Do you realize the people God used? Noah got drunk, Jacob was a schemer, Peter denied Jesus, Paul was a persecutor – these people were changed and used by the Lord mightily!

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3. GOD TRAINS US PROGRESSIVELY

People are trained for sports step by step progressively. It's the same thing with God! That's why Paul encourages in **Philippians 1:6** – “He who began a good work” in us “will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus”! It means God is going to complete His project in your life. God is very efficient – He will use you, but you have to do it step by step. **Judges 6:25-26** shows us how God gave Gideon a mission to train Gideon into obeying God carefully step by step – and facing the risks in doing so. To be used by God, you've got to remove idols – get rid of the Baals in our lives! In the progressive training of God, He desires for us to get rid of idols. **DM Lloyd Jones defines idols as “anything in our life that occupies the place that should be occupied by God alone.** Our idols have morphed and changed today – from idols made with gold, silver, or wood, it is now money, relationship, self-centeredness and self-sufficiency. The secret to real happiness is HOLINESS. When you are set apart from God, happiness comes as a by-product. Elizabeth Elliot said that Christian life is a process of God breaking our idols one by one. Even ministry can become an idol. Let God work in our lives and allow Him to train us progressively.

4. GOD WANTS US TO PARTNER WITH HIM

Partnership with God would mean He is the BIG BOSS – it means you are committed to God's WILL, God's WAY, God's TIME, and God's POWER – and it would all lead to God's VICTORY and GLORY.

In **Judges 6:34**, the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, who mobilized an army to follow him. He was not going to do battle in his own strength, but in the Lord's. In **Judges 6:36-37**, Gideon confirms multiple times God's partnership with him. Gideon was not testing God; he wanted to ask for confirmation. He had to trust that God will see him through the task. In **Judges 7:2** onwards, Gideon was able to raise an army, but God told him it was too many. 22,000 left because they were afraid, and Gideon was left with 10,000 men. But God still noted it was still too many! God didn't want ISRAEL to become too proud and think their own power has saved them. Our part is to listen and obey! He reduced Gideon's army to 300 men.

That obedience led to a great victory for the Israelites. How did God transform people to become changemakers? He takes us into a process by which we will submit to His lordship and follow Him every step of the way!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

What is a challenging situation you are facing right now? What has been your perspective and response?

2. Setting It Right.

What struck you the most about God's work through Gideon? How can you relate this with your present situation?

3. Living It Out.

What has God convicted you to change or continue in your perspective and response to your present challenges?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray in faith to God who developed and delivered Gideon and the Israelites from certain defeat and destruction. Pray for family, friends, co-workers, etc. who are facing impossible situations in their lives, that God will show Himself great and come to their help. Share the gospel of Jesus Christ, the only One who can truly change our lives for God's glory.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort for the Jewish people and other nationalities who have experienced terror attacks in Israel in recent days.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; escalating tension in East Asian countries to stop.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, dleaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

MEMORY VERSE

JUDGES 6:12

¹²The angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, “The Lord is with you, O valiant warrior.”