

**JUDGES 6:17-24**  
**THE WORSHIP OF THE LORD!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to Judges chapter 6 as we continue our study through the book of Judges.

Now some of you may be thinking that this is a pretty dark book for the nation of Israel. That there is not a lot of good that comes out of this book. Let me say this. If you think what we have seen so far is bad, you ain't seen nothing yet.

In fact, the last several chapters of the book of Judges are some of the darkest chapters in the Bible. But we have a little time before we get there.

Now, in saying that, you may be thinking, ***“Why then are we even studying the book of Judges?”***

The reason is simple. There are lessons in this book that the Holy Spirit wants us to see and the Holy Spirit wants us to learn.

You see, it was dark in Israel and the reason it was so dark is because they had turned off the light you might say. And my point is this. They have moved away from God, they were worshiping the gods of the pagans and apart from God, there is only darkness.

Several weeks back someone texted me and said that it seems like you can feel the darkness in our land.

Another person texted me and said that they could not believe how evil people are.

I would have to agree with them both. I think our nation has moved so far from God that it is getting darker and darker.

The only solution is to turn on the light, to come to Jesus who is the light of this world. But, apart from Him there is only darkness.

And, like Jesus said in John 3:18-21, **“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”**

And you can clearly see the battle. The darkness hates the light. The darkness loves the darkness because their deeds are evil and they want to continue doing their evil, and it seems to get more and more depraved as time goes on.

And we have the light, Christians do, and we are trying to shine in this dark world and the world is trying to extinguish our light!

Like the children of Israel doing battle against the Midianites, we are doing battle against the darkness.

And here in Judges chapter 6, as the children of Israel cry out to God, as they have been in bondage to the Midianites for seven years, God is going to raise up a Judge by the name of Gideon.

As we have seen, as God called Gideon, Gideon had all kinds of excuses why he couldn't go and do battle against the enemy. He told the Lord, **“... ‘O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.’”**

Judges 6:15.

Now let me say this. If the Lord is going to call you to do something don't you think He is not only going to equip you to do the work but He will give you the strength to accomplish the task He has called you to do?

Of course He will and of course He does.

Let me give you an example to show you what I mean. When the Lord tells us that He will save us if we come to Him and repent of our sins, asking Him to be Lord and Savior of our lives, I would guess the most of you and maybe all of you are in agreement with that. You believe it.

But then you hear this voice that tells you that you are not good enough, that you have done this wrong and you didn't do that. And before long, you think you lost your salvation.

Now let me ask you this. What did you do to obtain your salvation in the first place? Nothing but repent of your sins and ask Jesus into your life.

So who is the One who saved you? Jesus did!

Now that you are saved, who is the One who will sustain you? Jesus will!

And in the end, who is the One who will take you to heaven? Jesus!

And yet, we doubt it because we feel we have to work our way into heaven or be good enough to get into heaven. Let me say this, you will never be good enough to get into heaven with your own righteousness, which is like filthy rags. The only way you can get in is by the righteousness of Christ imputed into your life by faith in Jesus!

One Pastor put it like this in regard to this lack of assurance we have in regard to our salvation and the reality is, if we feel that way, it is a lack of assurance in what God has told us in His Word.

This is what he wrote,

It's a heartache to me as a pastor to realize that so many Christians lack the assurance of their salvation. They lack the confidence that their sins are truly forgiven and that their place in heaven is eternally secured.

In 1654 the Puritan Thomas Brooks wrote, "Assurance is the believer's ark where he sits, Noah-like, quiet and still in the midst of all distractions and destructions, commotions and confusions. . . . [However] most Christians live between fears and hopes, and hang, as it were, between heaven and hell. Sometimes they hope that their state is good, at other times they fear that their state is bad: now they hope that all is well, and that it shall go well with them forever; [then] they fear that they shall perish by the hand of such a corruption, or by the prevalency of such or such a temptation . . . They are like a ship in a storm, tossed here and there" (*Heaven on Earth*, p. 11).

It doesn't have to be that way. The apostle Peter said, "Be all the more diligent to *make certain* about His calling and choosing you" 2 Peter 1:10, (emphasis added). The prophet Isaiah said, "The work of righteousness will be peace, and the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever" (Isaiah 32:17). Where God grants righteousness, He also adds peace and assurance. . . .

If you're lacking assurance - if you're plagued with doubts and have lost your joy, become useless in Christian service, empty in worship, cold in praise, passionless in prayer, and vulnerable to false teachers - whatever the problem, know there is a cure: obeying God's Word in the power of the Spirit.

- <https://bit.ly/2UDk1jH>

Here with Gideon in Judges chapter 6 we see that lack of assurance in regard to what the Lord has told him.

In fact, what we will be looking at this morning is born out of what the Lord told Gideon in Judges 6:16, “**And the Lord said to him, ‘Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.’**”

In other words, the Lord is telling Gideon, “*Chill out man! This is a done deal. You will defeat the Midianites not by your strength, but I will be with you and I will give you this victory! All you must do is walk by faith, trust in Me!*”

Now, before we get to our text, let me show you how I have broken down the verses we will be looking at this morning and in the end, and the title of this message, we will see –

***GIDEON WORSHIPS THE LORD!***

The verses break down like this:

***SHOW ME A SIGN – JUDGES 6:17***

***GIDEON WORSHIPS THE LORD – JUDGES 6:18-19***

***THE CONFIRMATION – JUDGES 6:20-21***

***FEAR OF THE LORD – JUDGES 6:22***

***PEACE OF GOD – JUDGES 6:23-24***

So with that as our introduction, let’s begin reading in Judges chapter 6, beginning in verse 17, and keep in mind that what we are reading here is born out of what we read in Judges 6:16, “**And the Lord said to him, ‘Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.’**”

VERSE 17

As we read this, we may see this as a lack of faith on the part of Gideon. I mean the Lord just told him that he was going to win this battle and the Lord was going to be the One to give him this victory, so why did he ask the Lord to *SHOW ME A SIGN?*

Honestly, I believe it was a lack of faith on the part of Gideon, and we will see that as we read on in this chapter.

Now there are those who disagree with me on this, and I will share with you what they have to say and then I will explain why I believe this is a lack of faith on the part of Gideon.

We are told by one writer,

“If You want to use me as an instrument to free your people from the Midianites, give me a sign,” Gideon said.

I think it’s a good thing when people say, “Lord, if I’m hearing You correctly, if this really is of You, give me confirmation.” I think too many people have an impression, a thought, an idea – and sometimes they’ll launch out in a way that ultimately proves to be foolhardy because, unlike Gideon, they didn’t seek confirmation. I don’t think a person should ever sell his house, quit his job, and leave the country, thinking he’s heard the Lord, without first getting confirmation. God responds to honest doubt.

- John Courson’s Application Commentary – Old Testament Volume 1, p. 747

I do agree we should have confirmation from the Lord before we do something. But here is where I disagree. When the Word of God is telling us to do something or not do something, do we need confirmation on that?

No, we don’t!

Let me show you what I mean. In Hebrews 13:4 we are told, **“Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”**

I think that is pretty clear.

Now, if you are married and you are thinking of sleeping with another woman, or if you are single and you are thinking about sleeping with a woman, and you read this verse, do you need confirmation on that?

Of course you don't!

And yet, how often today do we see Christians challenge the Word of God, debate an issue like our opinion is what matters, or even try to decide if what God has forbidden, we are thinking of saying it is not a sin?

Now please here me out on this. If you are deciding if you should get married, I think it is good to wait upon God, to seek His direction in that specific matter because I can tell you from experience, the Bible never said, ***“Joe, you are to marry Julie!”***

But there are principles in the Bible we need to listen to, and there is that time of waiting upon God to guide us and show us what we need to do!

But I can tell you from personal experience, that when God speaks to your heart to do something, it is very clear. I knew exactly what the Lord was telling me to do and as I obeyed the Lord, He brought to light what needed to be seen! Yes, it is not always easy, but when God speaks, we need to listen!

Now some would argue that this was a big deal for Gideon and to go to war against an enemy that had them in bondage, was plundering their goods, that was difficult!

But here's the thing. God spoke to Gideon, it was the Word of God and Gideon was not satisfied with the Word of God, he wanted more, he wanted some kind of sign!

In Matthew 12:38-42 we are told, **“Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, ‘Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.’ But He answered and said to them, ‘An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.’”**

First of all, the Old Testament spoke of all that the Messiah would do. They had the Word of God to guide them.

Thus, as you look at the life of Jesus you see that Jesus healed the blind, opened the ears of the deaf, made the mute to speak, freed many from demon-possession, made the lame to walk and even raised the dead! Multitudes were healed by Jesus and yet we see the Scribes and the Pharisees ask Jesus, **“Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.”** Really?

His whole life was a sign to them from His birth onward! And now they ask for a sign to prove that He is the Messiah!

What more did they need to see?

And as we have read, instead of giving them a sign that was out of this world, He gives to them a sign out of the Scriptures!



And notice the greatest sign that Jesus gives to these religious leaders, the greatest sign of His Messiahship! It is the ***RESURRECTION!*** Without it our faith is empty, it is futile, we are still lost in our sins! But the resurrection did happen, the tomb is empty, and we do have the forgiveness of sins, death has no power over us!

You see, they did not need more signs, they just needed to apply what the Scriptures were saying of the Messiah to the life of Jesus and they would clearly see what they needed to do – ***BELIEVE!***

Paul, in I Corinthians 1:22-25 wrote, **“For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”**

I think this mentality of showing a sign ends up just being an excuse for not doing what the Lord is telling you. And we need to be careful here.

God has given to us what we need to live out our lives in His Word, that is not the issue. The real issue is believing and applying what God has said in His Word and walking by faith!

So when you are not sure what to do and it is not specifically given to you in the Scriptures, seek the wisdom of God, wait upon God.

But, when the Scriptures are clear, then you need to move forward and do as God has said. And when God speaks to you heart about something, you need to listen and obey!

So we see Gideon ask the Lord to – ***SHOW ME A SIGN!***

What I like next is that Gideon did not just sit back and wait for a sign. Not at all! What we see next is that – ***GIDEON WORSHIPS THE LORD!***

VERSES 18-19

I do like what Gideon does here. He is worshiping the Lord even though he does not have an answer from the Lord yet. Well, I guess he does not have a re-confirmation from the Lord yet.

Again, sometimes we read through the Scriptures and we miss what was going on. Keep in mind that the Midianites were coming in and stealing their crops, their food. They were being oppressed and thus, the bread, the meat was a valuable resource to them.

You might say it was a life and death situation for them, and yet, Gideon was willing to worship the Lord with that which was most precious, most important at this time to him.

Here we see Gideon prepare a burnt offering (the goat), a peace offering (the unleavened bread), and a drink offering (the broth), for the Lord.

We also need to understand that this was a long process; he did not run out to the local Piggly Wiggly and pick up a slab of goat, some bread and a drink. He had to prepare all of this.

Now some may look at what Gideon was doing here and see it as a waste of valuable resources.

Remember, some six days before Passover, the last one that Jesus would celebrate with His men, He went to the house of Lazarus, Mary and Martha for a meal, there in Bethany.

And we are told in John 12:3, **“Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.”**

Here we see Mary’s love for the Lord manifested in her actions. She is worshiping the Lord by what she is doing.

Now we may read what Mary did and not think much about it, but this oil of spikenard was costly.

You see, this oil was a very fragrant oil that was prepared from the roots and stems of an aromatic herb from Northern India. And yes, it was costly, 300 denarii or a year's wages!

And Mary took this flask, broke it and anointed the head of Jesus as Matthew and Mark tell us, and I believe it came down upon the feet of Jesus as John tells us.

Mary is showing us that there was nothing that she had that was too valuable to give to Jesus. Her life was a living sacrifice unto Him. And that should be our passion, to give to the Lord all we have, our entire being.

You see, He is worthy of everything we have and everything we are! May we give it to Him, lay it down at His feet to be used for His glory.

Now Mary does not stop there. She then takes her long hair and wipes the feet of Jesus with her hair. What was that all about?

Mary was a worshiper and that is what we are seeing here. A woman's hair was her glory and yet Mary laid her glory down at the feet of Jesus!

And what happens to a person who worships God like this? They take on the fragrance of Jesus, and, not only that, but the house where she was at also permeated the fragrance of Jesus, wherever she went, the fragrance of Jesus went with her.

But again, there are those that would look at what Mary did as wasteful, that she should not have done that.

Look at what we are told as we read on here in John chapter 12. We are told, "**But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, 'Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?' This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.**" John 12:4-6.

Here we see the heart of Judas in comparison to Mary and the heart of a true worshiper of God. And the contrast is like comparing night and day.

You see, Judas was not interested in Jesus, but in money. In fact, we are told that he kept the money bag. And he not only kept it, but he put his hand in the money bag and took money for himself.

Now the problem. Here goes all this money being poured out! He saw this money just fly out the window instead of entering his pocket!

But keep in mind that evil hearts try to cover their evilness and that is what we see Judas doing. He tries to hide his darkness with the cause of the poor.

He says, “**Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?**”

That sounds so good and yet, he was not interested in the poor, not at all. This was money that was being taken from him, even though it was the Lord’s, he didn’t see it that way. And as he poured out these heart wrenching words, people were listening!

And guess what happened when Judas said this? The other disciples of Jesus joined in and agreed with Judas. Do you see how contagious evil can be? Who are you hanging out with because it will determine what fragrance you are emitting from your life!

Before we read on, imagine the atmosphere at this point.

There is Mary, after she has poured out this oil on Jesus.

There is Judas who rebuked her for doing that and the disciples of Jesus joined in with Judas.

I am sure there was silence, so much so you can hear a pin drop. What is going to happen next?

Listen to what we are told, **“But Jesus said, ‘Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.’”** John 12:7-8.

When others were criticizing Mary for what she did, who comes to her aid? Jesus does. Make no mistake about it, our family, our friends, those in the church and those outside the church can criticize us but if we love and worship Jesus, He is not going to criticize us for that.

But Judas, who was not loving the Lord, he was full of criticism for those who loved the Lord. Be careful what flows from your lips!

First of all, Jesus says, **“Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial.”** How did she know that Jesus was going to die? Because she was not only a worshiper of Jesus, but she listened to what He was saying.

I wonder all that we miss that Jesus has for us because we don't take the time to worship and listen to what He is showing us through His Spirit!

It is never wasteful to worship Jesus – *NEVER!*

And our worship of Jesus is costly. Listen to what Paul said in Romans 12:1, **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”**

Listen to how The Amplified Bible puts this verse, **“I APPEAL to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship.”**

And listen to how J. B. Phillips translates Romans 12:1, I think it is a great translation, it really makes the point, he drives it home. **“With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give Him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to Him and acceptable by Him.”**

The word **“therefore”** introduces the key point of *DEDICATION* or *DEVOTION* to God here in Romans 12:1.

You see, if you look at all that God has done for us, therefore we should dedicate or devote our lives to Him!

Paul tells us that we are to be a living sacrifice unto God. That is our lives are to be placed on the altar to be offered up as a burnt offering, totally given to God, and it will be a sweet-smelling sacrifice unto God as we do.

Too often we give God portions of our lives but not our entire being. He wants it all and as we do, He gives it back to us so we may bring Him glory! And many times, because we are living sacrifices, we jump off the table and run away!

To be totally consecrated to God means every day we must, in light of all that God has done for us and especially because we now belong to Him, we must first present our bodies to God! Let me give you a few verses to show you what I mean.

In Romans 6:13 Paul wrote, **“And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.”**

Once again, this tells me we have a choice to make, how we present ourselves.

And yes, in the Old Testament the sacrifices were dead; they were not living when they were placed on the altar to be given to God.

But here Paul speaks of us being living sacrifices and that means as living sacrifices, we must place ourselves on the altar and offer ourselves to God.

And the sacrifice that Paul is speaking of, I believe, is the burnt offering, which was totally given to God as a sweet-smelling sacrifice, and it speaks of totally consecration to God.

As we give ourselves to the Lord, as we lay our lives down upon the altar of sacrifice, Paul tells us that it is our “**reasonable service**” or literally our “*spiritual worship*.”

Let me explain this, because I do believe this is important.

First of all, the word “**reasonable**” comes from the Greek word, LOGIKOS, (log-ik-os’) and it can also be translated “*of the word*” just as it is in I Peter 2:2.

Also, the word “**service**” in the Greek is LATREIA, (lat-ri’-ah) and it speaks of the worship of God.

Thus, what is our reasonable, our logical service unto God?

Listen carefully; it is a life of worship that is according to God’s Word!

Again, if you don’t have the right doctrine you are not going to be able to live a life that is pleasing to God, I don’t care what people will tell you today!

I think that Paul makes this point very clear!

Jesus said that we are to worship God in *SPIRIT* and *TRUTH!*

In other words, we must be saved, and we must worship Him according to His Word!

And that is what we see Gideon doing here, giving all that he had to the Lord as a picture of worship. It cost him deeply and yet, he was willing to worship the Lord without complaining, he freely gave this all to the Lord.

So we see here that *GIDEON WORSHIPS THE LORD* and out of this worship we see *THE CONFIRMATION OF THE LORD* to Gideon.

VERSES 20-21

Here we see that as Gideon brings his sacrifice before the Lord, the Lord touches it with the end of his staff and the sacrifice is consumed in the fire.

Can you imagine the face of Gideon as this took place? I mean, what more could Gideon ask for, this was a spectacular sign and along with all he has heard, this must be the Lord.

I am sure Gideon is ready to go forward and deliver the children of Israel from the oppression that the Midianites have brought upon them.

Well, not exactly as we shall see as we go through this chapter!

Today, there are so many Christians that are seeking after this sign and going after that sign, but we have the Word of God and the Spirit of God to guide us in all that we do.

Remember during the forty years of wandering in the wilderness the children of Israel had the Shekinah glory to guide them.

It was the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day, it was the Lord guiding them where they should go and when they should go.

When the pillar of fire rose up, so did the children of Israel. When it stopped, they would stop and set up their camp.

But then, under the leadership of Joshua, something changes.

As they are preparing to cross over the Jordan River, the priests are told to take the Ark of the Covenant and step into the Jordan River and as they do the River will dry up and they will now cross into the Promise Land on dry ground!

And that is exactly what happened.

What is my point?



My point is this. Inside the Ark of the Covenant was the Word of God, the Ten Commandments.

Thus, it was the Word of God that will lead them now and there was to be some distance between the Ark and the people so the people could clearly see the Ark or clearly be led by the Word of God.

Thus, in Joshua 1:7-9 we are told, **“Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”**

Did you notice that now the Lord is not telling Joshua to let the Shekinah glory guide him, but the Word of God guide him?

His strength, his direction, his life is to be according to the Word of God, allowing the Word of God to direct His paths.

Thus, we need to trust God’s Word and be sensitive to His voice as He speaks to our hearts and then believe what He is telling us and walk by faith!

Let me show you how important God’s Word to us in guiding us. We are told,

A ship’s mate once challenged a chaplain with the question, “How is it that you are always talking to my men about Jesus Christ? Did you ever see Him?”

“No, I never did.”

“Then how can you tell a man to trust in someone you have never seen? I can’t see any sense in that.”

“Well,” replied the chaplain, “when you head for a place of refuge in a storm, what sense is there in telling your men to let go the anchor when they cannot see the ground? On what principle do you trust your ship and your life to ground you have never seen and never can see?”

“Oh,” said the mate, “we go by our chart.”

“Exactly,” replied the chaplain, holding up his Bible, “and I, too, go by a chart, and it is an infallible one, while yours is not. It tells me of the only sure ground of my salvation - the atoning work of Christ upon the cross. My faith, like your anchor, takes hold of this unseen but real ground, and so rides out the storm of life in peace and safety.”

- Illustrations of Bible Truths

How true that is. God’s Word is our chart to navigate through this life and we must trust what God has written to us and walk by faith.

Peter put it like this in II Peter 1:2-4, **“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”**

God confirms how we are to live out our lives by His Word and through His Spirit. And please understand this. The Holy Spirit will never contradict what the Bible says. I know that some have believed that, but the Holy Spirit cannot contradict the Scriptures, never.

Either we can trust all of God's Word or we can trust none of it. Either God is right in what He has said, or He is totally wrong and if He is wrong, then there is no reason to be here and study His Word. We might as well just fellowship and eat because if the Bible is wrong, why study it?

Let me say this. The Bible is not wrong and if you think it is, you are wrong! Jesus said in John 17:17, "**Sanctify them by Your truth, Your word is truth.**"

And please understand that this is a recurring theme in the Bible, that we are to follow God's Word, that it is a light to our path, it will show us where to walk and when to walk. I love that.

It is as Peter said in II Peter chapter 1, that He "**has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness . . .**" And those things are the precious promises that He has given to us in His Word to guide us and direct us.

Let me put it like this. We are told,

The Bible provides a reliable yardstick by which to measure our claims to be guided by the Holy Spirit through circumstances or feelings. If, for example, you think that the Spirit is leading you to do something the Bible prohibits, you can be sure that your spiritual lenses have become foggy.

Throughout history, people have committed blatant sins under the claim God's guidance. But since the Spirit inspired the writers of Scripture, that same Spirit can be guaranteed not to lead us to contradict the plain direction of Scripture.

Earlier in this series, I referred to a friend of mine, I'll call him Bill, who claimed that God had brought him and a married woman together to deliver her from a terrible marriage. I think Bill actually believed this.

Unfortunately, Bill's claim to be led by the Spirit to commit adultery contradicted the clear teaching of Scripture in many places, including such "minor" passages as the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. No matter how much circumstances seemed to weigh in Bill's favor, and no matter how much his feelings led him toward an intimate relationship with a married woman, he was misconstruing God's guidance. According to Scripture, adultery is wrong, plain and simple.

There is a positive side to scriptural discernment of circumstantial guidance. If events in your life seem to point you in a certain direction, you can be more confident about that direction if it leads you to do that which Scripture affirms.

This isn't foolproof, of course. For example, if someone loses a plane ticket to Indonesia and you find it, you shouldn't interpret that as proof that God wants you to evangelize in that country, even though sharing the gospel is consistent with God's Word.

It's much more likely that God wants you to turn in the ticket so the rightful owner can use it. But if, on the other hand, events in your life give you an opportunity to share your faith with your neighbor, the fact that Scripture teaches you to do this very thing makes the probability of divine guidance in that direction more likely.

The Bible gives us much more than the ability to evaluate the spiritual significance of circumstances. It is the *primary source for divine guidance* in our life.

The Spirit who inspired the biblical writers also works in our hearts to help us understand what God wants to say to us through the Bible. One of the chief functions of Scripture is to reveal God's will for our lives. . . .

Yes, there are those times where we just second guess God or we are not sure if this is of God or not, and we may say, ***SHOW ME A SIGN!***

And then we wait upon God and waiting upon God we should – ***WORSHIP THE LORD!***

And I truly believe as we are seeking God, as we are worshiping Him, we will have – ***THE CONFIRMATION OF THE LORD*** regarding what we are seeking!

But we are not done yet. Look at what we are told in Judges 6:22.

### VERSE 22

This is kind of funny to me and yet, it does hit home.

Back in Judges 6:13 we are told, **“Gideon said to Him, ‘O my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, “Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?” But now the Lord has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.’”**

Here we see that Gideon did not see the hand of the Lord upon his life or the life of the nation. And he is fearful.

Now, listen again to what we are told here in Judges 6:22, **“Now Gideon perceived that He was the Angel of the Lord. So Gideon said, ‘Alas, O Lord God! For I have seen the Angel of the Lord face to face.’”**

You have to love Gideon. ***“Lord, give me a sign so that I know it is You and You have called me to do this work!”***

And what does the Lord do, He gives Gideon this sign and now Gideon says, ***“It is the Lord and I have seen Him. I’m dead meat! How can I see God and live?”***

You may be wondering where I got the idea that Gideon thought the Lord was going to kill him, since it is not in this verse. But if you look at the next verse, Judges 6:23 the Lord says to Gideon, “**. . . do not fear, you shall not die.**”

So Gideon is fearful that the Lord is going to kill him.

And think about this. Back in Judges 6:13 he was fearful because he did not see the hand of the Lord upon his life or the life of the nation. But now, here in Judges 6:22 he sees the hand of God upon his life and he is afraid. I have called this verse – ***FEAR OF THE LORD!***

But I don't mean this in a good way. It is not a referential fear of the Lord that is based in reality. Yes, he is fearing the Lord because he can't believe that he is going to live because he has seen the Lord.

But here is the thing. Who called Gideon to this work?

The Lord did!

Think of it like this, “***Gideon, Gideon, God called you to a work and you wanted a sign and He gave it to you and now you think He is going to kill you, come on! God is not going to destroy you; you have a wrong perspective of God!***”

So, do you think the Lord is like, “***Oops, sorry Gideon. I did call you for this work, but you saw me so, you are the weakest link – you are dead!***”

We laugh at that, but we do the same thing.

God calls us to do a work and we see that this is the hand of God upon our life. We know for certain that God has called us to do this.

And then, “***I am dead! How in the world am I going to accomplish this? I can't do this! I am not equipped to do this! No way!***”

What is the problem with that statement, I mean the main problem?

It is the word “**I**.”

If God has called you to do a work, He will equip you and He will see you through. It is not going to be done in your strength or your ability, but in the Lord’s.

But it is easy to become distracted from the work when the task before us is so big!

Let me share this with you and I want you to listen to some verses to encourage you not to fear but to walk in faith where God has called you. We are told,

When it comes to living out your calling, what is it that you fear? Rejection? Failure? Not being good enough? Criticism? Do you fear that people will judge you? I personally have fear of *all of these*. But I’ve learned to not let those fears hinder me. I don’t want the enemy to defeat me with my fears. But I remember that God is **BIGGER** than *all of my fears* and He will always deliver me from them.

It is normal to have fear because we are human. While experiencing fear is not a sin, we sin when we let fear control us and keep us from doing the will of God. . . .

**I want to leave you with these verses:**

- Psalm 27:1 “The LORD is my light and my salvation - whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid?”
- Psalm 118:6 “The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”
- 1 Chronicles 28:20: “David also said to Solomon his son, “Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the LORD is finished.”
- 1 Peter 3:13-14 “Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.”
- Hebrews 6:12 “We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.”

- Deuteronomy 10:12 “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”

- <https://bit.ly/2UAsXGh>

If you have this fear, and I think we all do from time to time, I want you to see how the Lord responds to this fear of Gideon. And it may surprise some of you, but, as you will see, this is just our God.

And you will see us move from the ***FEAR OF THE LORD*** to the ***PEACE OF GOD!***

### VERSES 23-24

Did you see that the Lord does not rebuke Gideon! The Lord does not mock Gideon for his lack of faith. The Lord does not put Gideon down.

In fact, what we may do many times to others, the Lord does the exact opposite!

Gideon is fearful and because of that the Lord tells him, “**Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die.**”

And it is out of that we see Gideon worship the Lord; he worships the God of peace. In fact, Gideon recognizes that God is the one who not only brings peace to his life but the life of the nation. He truly is peace!

I don’t know where you are at this morning, if you are fearful because of what the Lord has called you to do and you are hesitating doing it.

But, wherever you are at, if fear is causing you to stop what you are doing, you need to worship the Lord and let Him give you the strength to go forward and then you need to walk!

You see, in this life we are living, we can be anxious, fearful, without peace and that is not what God wants for us.



Let me give you this perspective to think about. We are told,

During the retreat of the Allied forces after the battle of Mons, a French officer fell wounded in front of the trenches. The enemy's shrapnel was bursting all around him where he lay entirely unprotected.

Seeing his danger, a fellow soldier crawled out from the trench and dressed his wounds as best as he could; then, placing himself in a protecting attitude, he whispered, "Don't fear. I'm between you and the shells. They've got to hit me first."

This is literally true of us and Christ. What is the meaning of Calvary?

This, that Christ whispers to us, "I'm between you and the death your sins have brought on."

We live - now in fellowship with God, hereafter in His presence, because Jesus bent over us and caught the death that would have been ours.

- Practical Bible Illustrations from Yesterday and Today

If Jesus did that for our sins, don't you think He will protect us from all that will come upon us as we are serving Him? Of course He will. I am not saying it will be easy. I am not saying that there is no danger. What I am saying is that in the midst of these storms nothing will happen to us that the Lord is not aware and that He is not allowing. He has a plan and a purpose for all of us and thus, we need to walk by faith.

Remember in John 16:33 Jesus tells us, **"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."**

And in John 14:27 Jesus said, **“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”**

Yes, we will have tribulation in this world, that is a given.

But we can enjoy peace in Christ, peace through the storms of life as we look to Him. He can be, **“the-Lord-Is-Peace”** to us if we look to Him!

Look at what we have seen this morning in the life of Gideon and then I will close.

Gideon asked the Lord – ***SHOW ME A SIGN!***

And out of that we see that – ***GIDEON WORSHIPS THE LORD!***

And as Gideon is worshiping the Lord, we see the Lord affirm the work that Gideon was to do – ***THE CONFIRMATION OF THE LORD!***

And as Gideon gets this confirmation from the Lord we see - ***THE FEAR OF THE LORD!***

And out of that fear that Gideon had to serve the Lord we see the Lord give to Gideon the – ***PEACE OF GOD!***

What a wonderful place to be.

As I close this morning, I want to encourage you to go forward to where the Lord is calling you. If you don't, well, let me close with this. We are told,

Henry Fairlie of the Washington Post, writing in the Tulsa World, states that the “fear of risk is killing the American Spirit.”

He points out our overreaction to Three Mile Island and the engine on one DC-10. He believes that the nation that won't build a dam because of a small snail darter, or that will delay a carriage to the stars because it might fall like Skylab is in deep trouble.

He asked, "Was the Mayflower seaworthy?" He contends that a group of Americans today would not have the heart to cross the Rockies as our forefathers did years ago. It would be too risky!

There is a lesson here for the church of our Lord. Many good works go wanting for fear of the risk involved. Some Christians will not become soul winners because of the risk of being hurt. Others have never given liberally to God because of fear of poverty. Elders refuse to become involved in domestic and world evangelism because they might not succeed. Another won't defend truth for the same reason. No doubt but what the "fear of risk" has killed many good programs in the church.

There is no "fear of risk" for Christ. He knew that He came into the world to die for all. He asked his followers to deny themselves daily and take up their crosses and walk! There will always be some perils, but think of the risk if we don't!

- A Treasury of Bible Illustrations

Remember our God, He is ***The-LORD-Shalom!***