

=LITTLE-KNOWN BIBLE CHARACTERS=

Lesson 5

Gideon

SCRIPTURE: Judges 6 and 7.

AIM: to teach my pupils the one great requirement for being a successful Christian worker: Trust the Lord, not your own judgment.

POINT OF CONTACT: Ask your pupils if they know the background of some of the great Christians of the past. For instance, Dwight Moody was a shoe salesman; Scofield, the man who headed in the compiling of the Scofield Reference Bible, was a drunken lawyer; Mel Trotter was a skid-row barber; and Paul was a great persecutor. See if there is any other great Christian whose background your class members could describe.

- I. GIDEON'S EXPLOITS. Compare Judges 6:1-7 with Judges 7:24, 25. Notice the plight of the Israelites at the hand of the Midianites. Judges 6:7, "And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD because of the Midianites." The Israelites were in bondage. They were overrun by the Midianites in a land roughly the size of Texas, and they were hiding in caves. Bear in mind, these were God's chosen people. Then God called a man to lead in battle. Read about his victory over the Midianites in Judges 7:15-25. Gideon is noted for the fact that he was the leader of the people who removed the Midianites from the land of the Israelites and eliminated their bondage. Gideon freed a nation!
- II. GIDEON'S EXPERIENCE FOR THE JOB.
 1. His family. Read Judges 6:25. We find he came from an ungodly family.
 2. His finances. See Judges 6:15. We find that he was broke.
 3. His failures. Notice Judges 6:11. We find that Gideon had never done anything worthy of note in the past.
 4. His friends. In Judges 7:3 and 5, we find that he was surrounded by faithless people.
 5. His fear. Read Judges 6:11, 23, 27, 36-40. We find that Gideon in each of these verses is spoken of as being a fearful man.

It would seem that a man with this type experience would never be a success in anything.

- III. THE EXPLANATION OF GIDEON'S SUCCESS.
 1. He was willing to trust the Lord. The only logical explanation in spite of all the drawbacks and hindrances to his being a success is that he had faith. In Hebrews 11:32-34, Gideon is called a man of faith. He is recounted among the heroes of faith. So, apparently the reason that God blessed Gideon was that in spite of all the hindrances, all the drawbacks and all the reasons why he should not have been a success, he was willing to do that which the Lord would have him do. He was willing to put his fear in the background and do what the Lord said. He was willing to forget all of his hindrances and follow the Lord.
 2. He was willing to try a new method. Who would have thought that taking pitchers, lamps and trumpets and then going out and breaking the pitchers and blowing the trumpets could defeat the Midianites! Yet in Judges 7 we find this was the way the Midianites were defeated.
 3. He was willing to be alone. We find in Judges 7:3, 5, 6 that many of the people left him; many of the people departed.

CONCLUSION: Gideon had the great requirement for being a successful Christian worker. Gideon was more willing to trust the Lord than he was to trust his own judgment.