



“Breaking the Cycle with Grace”

Lesson 3: Salvation of a Patient God (Part 2)

January 21

Introduction

Unilateral vs. Bi-lateral covenants.

Read Deuteronomy 28:29-31. What could covenant law breakers expect?

“Two Minute” Talks

Chapter 6

1. (6:1-24) Gideon must have assurance of the Lord’s promise (v. 16), but when the assurance comes, it terrifies him rather than fortifies him (v. 22). Is this reaction difficult for us to understand in our day? Why or why not?

2. (6:25-40) It is important to destroy the idols in our hearts if we are to be successful in carrying out the Lord’s work. Think about this for your own heart at home. But for now, in your groups, answer: What idols threaten the church (both church body and your church!) from “successfully” moving forward with the Lord’s work?

Chapter 7

3. (7:1-8a) Describe the process that the LORD used to whittle down the number of Israelite soldiers. We have a tendency to steal God's praise. This teaches us that sometimes God can't trust us with this work unless we realize how inadequate we are to do it. The glory is his! How do you see this truth played out with aspects of salvation? (cs. Ephesians 2:8-9)
4. (7:8b-15) There is a certain irony here: God's Word comes through the oddest channel – a Midianite private. I suppose this shouldn't surprise us. Can you think of any other examples when God used unlikely messengers to deliver his truth? (both in the Bible and in your own life)
5. (7:16-25) The victory is the Lord's! However, even from a human perspective, there is genius in the timing and action of God's army. Explain the significance of the timing of the attack and the manner in which Israel "attacked." (Imagine what we going through the Midianite's mind during the attack!)

Chapter 8 (If we get there...)

6. What are some examples of how pride (*Ephraim's sin*) or the pursuit of security (*Succoth's and Peniel's sin*) on our part might weaken the church's ability to carry out its mission?

Conclusion and "Homework"

The account of Gideon convinces us that we need to alter our stereotypes of what a servant of Christ is like. We are duped into thinking that a real servant of Christ is dynamic, assured, confident, fearless, witty, glamorous, fit for the Christian TV network...you get the idea! Don't think you are unusable because you don't have that air about you.

- At home (or in your groups after this study), consider this scenario. You know someone who tries and tries with everything they do, but are constantly disappointed in their "performance" and are never satisfied with their efforts for work, church, family, etc. Use 2 Corinthians 12:9, Hebrews 11:32-34, Psalm 115:1, and the account of Gideon to speak with that person.
- If God wills it, we will attempt to cover Judges 9-11 next time. Please feel free to read it through before next week. God's blessings on your week!