

When God Calls the Underdog

Lessons from Gideon for the moments we feel too small

Time:

7-10 minutes

Focus:

Insecurity, Purpose,
Leadership

Scriptures

Judges 6:12-16

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Hebrews 11:32-34

Ecclesiastes 11:4&6

Parking lot

Write down distracting thoughts here:



Settle in

Take a deep breath. Turn off notifications on your phone. Ask God to help you overcome your fear and insecurity so that you can respond to his calling.



Thought starter

God isn't looking for perfect people; he is looking for willing people. He takes ordinary, unsure, "underdog" people and gives them strength they didn't know they had. Gideon was a guy in the Bible who had underdog energy, but God still chose him to lead and save his people.

Just as God told Gideon, "Go and save Israel," he tells us today to go and bring people the hope and life Jesus offers.

Here's what we'll learn in this Quick Quiet Time:

- God doesn't define us by our feelings or fears.
- God's power shines brightest in our weakness.
- God calls us to move forward rather than waiting to feel ready.



Meet Gideon, the Bible's classic underdog.

Judges 6:12-16 NCV

The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon and said, "The Lord is with you, strong warrior!" [13] Then Gideon said, "Sir, if the Lord is with us, why are we having so much trouble? Where are the miracles our ancestors told us about? They said, 'The Lord brought us up out of Egypt.' But now the Lord has left us and has handed us over to the Midianites." [14] The Lord turned to Gideon and said, "Go with the strength you have and save Israel from the Midianites. I am the one who is sending you." [15] But Gideon answered, "Lord, how can I save Israel? My family group is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least important member of my family." [16] The Lord answered him, "I will be with you, so you will defeat the Midianites as easily as if they were only one man."

Let's break down Gideon's story.

- **God called him "strong warrior."** Gideon was hiding, scared, and insecure—but God spoke to his identity, not his insecurity.
- **Gideon asked the hard question:** "If God is with us, why is life so hard?" God didn't rebuke him for honesty; he met him in it.
- **God gave purpose, not explanations.** God didn't answer Gideon's "why" question. Instead, he said, "Go with the strength you have." This tells us that God uses what we already carry rather than focusing on what we do not have.



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Notes:

- **Gideon said he's too weak.** Weakest family, least important—classic underdog.
- **God answered with presence.** “I will be with you.” That’s the real power source.

Sometimes we feel like we aren’t good enough—our family, our background, our story. When we look at our troubles and feel like the weakest one in the room, we start wondering, “If God is really with me, why am I going through all this?”

 Nerd note — The Hebrew context

The Hebrew word for “weakest” is [dal](#), meaning lean, impoverished, poor, or thin. Gideon wasn’t exaggerating. He felt emptied out.

Gideon looked at his situation and felt small, weak, and unimportant. He didn’t think he had what it took to do anything big for God. But he was honest with God, and God met Gideon right in that place of doubt and insecurity. He did not wait for Gideon to feel strong. God did not tell Gideon to “try harder” or “be braver.”

Instead, God said:

“I’m with you.”

“Go with the strength you already have.”

“I’m the one sending you.”

 Truth bomb:

- God calls us by our future, not our fears.
- Weakness is not a disqualifier. It’s the setup for God’s strength.
- God doesn’t always answer our “Why?” questions, but he always answers with “Who” will be with us.
- Gideon’s excuses did not scare God. Instead, God canceled these excuses by promising his presence.

 Metaphor moments

Gideon is like the kid nobody picks for the team—until the coach points at him and says, “You’re starting.” God chooses based on purpose, not popularity.

Gideon was hiding in a winepress—the ancient version of working in a basement. God pulled him out of the shadows and into the spotlight because calling doesn’t wait for confidence.



Reflect

Have I been hiding from something God is calling me to do? Have I been holding back like Gideon, trying not to be noticed, not to be chosen, or not to lead?



Meet Gideon, the Bible’s classic underdog.

2 Corinthians 12:9–10 NCV

My grace is enough for you. When you are weak, my power is made perfect in you... For when I am weak, then I am truly strong.

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Notes:

Hebrews 11:32-34 NCV

Do I need to give more examples? I do not have time to tell you about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. [33] Through their faith they defeated kingdoms...[34] ...They were weak, and yet were made strong...

These verses echo Gideon's moment. God's power shines brightest in our weak or "thinned out" moments. Hebrews 11 references the Bible's "hall of faith"—which includes Gideon. The Bible itself confirms God turns weakness into a powerful weapon.

 For God, our "yes" is enough.
Ecclesiastes 11:4, 6 ERV

...You must take a chance. If you wait for perfect weather, you will never plant your seeds. If you are afraid that every cloud will bring rain, you will never harvest your crops. [6] So begin planting early in the morning, and don't stop working until evening. You don't know what might make you rich. Maybe everything you do will be successful.

**Lightbulb moment:**

We don't have to wait until we feel like "strong warriors" to start doing what God has put in front of us.

- Gideon's "small" status made him the perfect candidate.
- Availability is more important to God than ability. He doesn't need our talent. He needs our "yes."
- Waiting for everything to feel perfect will only keep us stuck. God calls us to plant seeds now, not when the conditions look ideal.
- He wants us to move forward in faith, knowing he calls us to sow even when the path feels uncertain.

**Reflect**

- If I knew for a fact that God was standing right next to me, what is one "scary" thing I would finally have the courage to start?

 Final thoughts

God does not define us by our feelings, and we shouldn't either. God called Gideon a "strong warrior" while he was still hiding. Our feelings don't change God's label for us.

God does not always give us an explanation, but he gives us his presence. We may not always get a "why," but we will always have the "who"—and that changes everything.

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