

Lesson

Engaging Introduction

Good morning, everyone! I'm so excited to share with you a story from the Bible about a man named Gideon, who found himself in a big adventure with God. This story can be found in the book of Judges, chapter 6.

Now, imagine for a moment you're playing outside and suddenly, a big group of bullies come and take all your toys. That's similar to what was happening to the Israelites in our story. They lived in the land and they grew their food, but then the Midianites, an enemy group of people, would come every year and take all their crops and animals. It was like having a picnic and suddenly a huge swarm of hungry ants show up!

The Israelites were scared and didn't know what to do, so they started asking God for help. Imagine you lost your favorite toy, and you really want it back, so you ask your parents for help. That's kind of what happened here.

God hears their cries, and He chooses the most unexpected person to help them. This is someone who feels small and thinks he can't make a difference. Have you ever felt like that? Maybe during a game or at school, you thought you couldn't do something important? Well, let's jump into the story and see what happens when God chooses Gideon to lead the way.

Main Teaching Points

1. God Hears Our Prayers:

The Israelites were living under a lot of pressure from the Midianites, who kept intruding and taking all their food. After seven long years, the Israelites cried out to God for help. God always hears us when we pray, just like a loving parent listens to their child. It's important to remember that God listens to us and wants to help when we're in trouble.

2. God Uses Ordinary People:

Gideon was just an ordinary person, like you and me. When we first meet Gideon, he is hiding in a winepress to avoid being seen by the Midianites. He probably felt scared and weak. But God sent an angel to tell Gideon that he was going to be a mighty warrior. Isn't it amazing? Sometimes we think we have to be superheroes to make a difference, but God shows us that even ordinary people can do extraordinary things. Gideon's story reminds us that God can use anyone, no matter how small you think you are.

3. God's Assurance:

When the angel tells Gideon that he will save Israel, Gideon is doubtful and asks for a sign. Have you ever been unsure about something, like whether you can complete a big puzzle or win a game? Gideon was unsure too. God understands our fears and doubts, and He was patient with Gideon, giving him a sign to reassure him. God asks Gideon to prepare a meal, and when Gideon does, the angel touches it with the tip of the staff, and it's consumed by fire. God's miraculous sign was like saying, "I've got your back."

4. Obeying God's Call:

After God reassures him, Gideon starts listening to God and doing what He says, even when it's hard. One night, God tells Gideon to tear down his father's altar to Baal, a false god, and to build

an altar to the one true God instead. It was a difficult task because it wasn't popular, and Gideon did it at night because he was afraid of the townspeople. But he obeyed. Sometimes doing the right thing can be daunting, like standing up for a friend who's being teased. It takes courage to follow what God wants us to do.

5. Building Our Confidence in God:

Gideon, still worried, asked for another sign. This time, he placed a wool fleece on the threshing floor, asking God to make the fleece wet with dew while keeping the ground dry overnight. And God did it! Then he asked for the opposite, the fleece dry and the ground wet, and God did that too! Through these signs, Gideon learned to trust that God was with him. Just like when we practice for a sports event or rehearse for a school play, our confidence builds each time we try and succeed.

Personal Application for Elementary Students

Gideon's story might seem like a big, ancient tale, but it has a lot to teach us about our lives today. Let's think about some personal ways we can learn from Gideon and apply his story to our own lives.

First, remember that God hears you when you talk to Him, just like He heard the Israelites when they were in trouble. Whether you are feeling sad, happy, scared, or grateful, God wants you to share those feelings with Him through prayer. Imagine God as your best friend who is always there to listen.

Second, know that you are important and can be a hero in your own way. You might not see yourself as a leader, but just like Gideon, God can use you to make a difference. You could be a leader by showing kindness in small ways, like helping a classmate who is having a bad day or standing up for someone who needs help.

Third, when you're afraid or unsure, remember that it's okay to ask God for help and reassurance. Just like Gideon asked for signs, we can ask God for strength and confidence to face challenges. If you ever face a scary or new situation, try saying a quick prayer asking God to help you be brave.

Finally, remember to obey God even when it seems hard. Doing the right thing isn't always easy, but when you make choices that honor God and show love to others, you are doing something powerful and good. The next time you have to make a choice, like whether to include someone in a game or speak kindly rather than argue, think about what God would want you to do.

Interactive Discussion Questions

Let's talk about Gideon's story and see what we've learned. I'll ask some questions, and I'd love to hear your thoughts.

1. Why did God choose Gideon?

- God chose Gideon because He saw potential in him, even though Gideon didn't see it in himself. Have you ever done something you didn't think you could? Let's share some of those stories. (Encourage students to think about their own abilities and how they might be better than they realize.)

2. How can you be like Gideon in your everyday life?

- Think about moments when you needed courage, like making a new friend or trying something new. How did you find the courage to do it? (This opens conversation about facing fears and looking to God for strength.)

3. What should we do when we feel scared or unsure like Gideon did?

- Besides asking God for help, what are other ways to feel better? (Encourage practical strategies like talking to a trusted teacher or parent, or recalling a time they tried something challenging and succeeded.)

4. Why is it important to obey God even when it's tough?

- Just like Gideon tore down the altar, think of a time when doing the right thing wasn't easy for you. Why was it hard, and how did it make you feel afterward? (Help students understand the importance of making good decisions, even when faced with pressure.)

Remember, everyone can be brave and do great things with God's help, just like Gideon did. Sometimes we need to look beyond what we see and trust that God knows our true potential. I hope each of you feels encouraged to trust God and rely on Him, just like Gideon did.