



GIDEON

FAMILY DEVOS

The Failure

Scripture: Judges 8:22-35

Memory Verse: Matthew 6:21

“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

For My Family

The Israelites had been delivered from the oppression of Midian, and there should have been no question that the Lord had delivered the people. After all, there were only 300 soldiers who went down to face Midian, and even then they barely did any fighting. The glory should have been God’s alone. Alas, it was not so. The people of Israel came and praised Gideon, not the Lord. They cried out for him to become a king and rule over them. Gideon turned the people down, telling them that the Lord was the true King, and He would rule over them. Gideon didn’t want to rule over the people, but he did want one small favor.

Gideon asked for the earrings from all of the soldiers who were defeated, and of course the people agreed to give their hero such a small, insignificant request. You see, the Midianites all wore earrings that were made out of gold, and because there was a such a vast number of them who had fought against Israel, when all of those small pieces of gold were added up together, it was actually a great fortune, over 50 pounds of gold!

Gideon collected the gold, melted it down, and made it into an ephod. An ephod is a kind of special shirt or jacket that is worn by the priests (Exodus 28). It’s difficult to know why Gideon made this, but whatever the motivation, we know the result. Gideon hung this golden ephod in his city, and the people, even Gideon himself, began to worship it as an idol.

How sad! Gideon, who had been used so mightily by God, made a golden object that caused the people to turn away from the One who had saved them. This story reminds us of Aaron and the golden calf, when after God had shown Himself to be so powerful, the people took out their earrings and forged them into a golden idol to worship. It is no surprise to us that after Gideon’s death, the people would turn away from God completely and worship Baal. At the end of his life, Gideon could only look back to see any good work done for God. Where he started out so well, he ended so sadly.

The life of Gideon teaches us that God can take anybody and use them to do His work. It also teaches us that we must be careful to give all of the glory to God. We need to guard our hearts from pride and greed, and be careful to honor the Lord with everything we have and do. Like Gideon, let’s learn to trust the Lord in all things. Unlike Gideon, let’s do our best to keep doing that our whole lives through.

Questions for Young Children:

Why did Gideon ask for the earrings?

What did Gideon make out of the gold?

After Gideon died, what did the people of Israel do?

Questions for Teens and Pre-teens:

What did Gideon do right in this story?

What did Gideon do wrong in this story?

How can we learn from those things?

In Matthew 6:21, we read, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." How does this apply to Gideon? How does this apply to us?