

BELIEVE!

Scripture used: [Judges 6:12 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

In our Scripture today, God calls Gideon to take on a leadership role in saving the people of Israel. Gideon responds by asking for a sign from God, because he feels like the challenges of the present circumstances are a sign that God has abandoned them. God hears them, but because of His Presence with Gideon, he is calling Gideon to “Believe”. He gives him a mission and a promise : “You will destroy the Midianites as if they were one person.” God intends this word, “believe,” to be the centerpiece of our journey as well. It’s particularly relevant on this New Year’s Day, coming out of a challenging year, and dealing with the unexpected and unknowable circumstances of this coming year. Through our belief, we recommit to God and rediscover resilience and tenacity. Pastor Hurmon invoked the “Rocky” films, where the protagonist is always fighting against the odds, yet always finds a way to get back up. In the same way, we must raise our level of belief to be able to get back up.

KEY POINTS

1. [Judges 6:11](#) shows that Gideon is hiding. What does it say about his state of mind? It shows he has little faith or trust because he is discouraged by his circumstances. Gideon is reminded by God that he is a part of something bigger. Our fate cannot be determined or limited by the challenges of the past years. The past season is past. In our story, people constantly move between faithfulness and unfaithfulness. God says He has not given up on them. He created and placed potential in them, and in us.
2. [Judges 6:12B](#): “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.” These are almost like the words of the angel to Mary during the Annunciation. The key message is that we are stronger than we think and we are more than what we can imagine because of God’s Presence with us. Helen Keller (1880-1968) was a small child in rural Alabama when she caught meningitis and was left completely deaf and blind. Growing up, she was “at sea in a dense fog.” She could have been a total isolated outcast. When she was seven years old, 20-year-old teacher Anne Sullivan arrived at her house to teach her how to communicate. Helen Keller ended up having a long, powerful, and impactful life, doing the totally improbable and unprecedented. At the center of her resilience was her faith in Jesus and belief that God had His hand on her life.
3. There is darkness in the world, and certainly in the human heart. God gives us grace so that the darkness can be pushed out of us. Then we are called to do His work in the world. We become what we wish others could be. God is commissioning us. He’s telling us we are made for this season. “With me” is an omnipresent phrase in the Bible. God tells us that, with Him, we can be much greater than our circumstances. This is sometimes just a whisper from God, but it can have the impact of a giant roar.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Sometimes the idea of “belief” has a negative connotation in our culture, as if it is blind belief or untrue belief. But belief is a necessary precursor to vision, big dreams, and passionate pursuit of significant goals. What are your most deeply held beliefs or convictions? How have your beliefs shaped the choices you have made in life?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [Judges 6:11-15](#). Put yourself in Gideon’s shoes, and his frame of mind. Do you think Gideon has valid reasons for having doubts of God’s calling on his life? What are the circumstances that would cause Gideon to be hesitant? Consider how Gideon’s frame of mind might be similar to our frame of mind at times. Are there things that God is calling you to that feel bigger than you are able to handle or overwhelming? How did God intend for Gideon to move from a place of fear and doubt to a place of faith and courage? What would allow us to also move to a place of faith and courage?
- 3) **DO** - Spend time praying this week that God would strengthen our sense of faith, or belief, in God’s Presence with us and His ability to strengthen us to do all that He is asking us to do. Consider this new year of 2023 and affirm that you will say “yes” to tackling big challenges with God. Join us next Sunday as we begin a new series, “Made for This.” We’d love to see you in-person in Redwood City or San Jose at 11 AM, or online at 9 AM or 11 AM Pacific Time.