

LESSON 3

GOD'S MIGHTY WORK THROUGH GIDEON

OBJECTIVES

1. To learn that even though we may feel small, we can still be a mighty warrior of God.
2. To understand that we are all vessels for God's use, but we must first destroy any idols in our lives before we can be used.
3. To learn to trust in God's guidance so that He can mold us according to His purpose.

MEMORY VERSE

"The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped."

(Psalm 28:7a)

PRAYER

1. Thank You, Lord, for gathering us here today to worship You.
2. Even though we are young, we know that You can still use us to do great things.
3. Please guide us through today's lesson as we learn how You used Gideon and his 300 men for Your mighty works.



Overview

1. The Midianites Oppress the Israelites

- The Lord Appears Before Gideon
- Israel Prepares to Fight Midian

2. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—One True God

3. Life Application

- "Destruction of the Altar"
- "Vessels of God"

4. Activity—Mold Me



Background Knowledge for Teachers

The Midianites

The Midianites, desert people descended from Abraham's second wife Keturah (Gen 25:1-2), were in constant conflict with Israel. During the period the Israelites wandered the desert, they fought the Midianites and came close to destroying them completely (Num 31:1-20). However, surviving remnants of the tribe repopulated and began oppressing Israel.

In Gideon's time, the Midianites and Amalekites were camel-riding nomads. They are believed to be the first people to domesticate the camel in large numbers, which gave them greatly increased desert mobility. They preferred to attack the Israelites when harvest was ripe, crossing the Jordan River into central Canaan to plunder and destroy, causing a shortage of food in Israel. Their tactics were largely successful, and the Israelites cried out to God in their misery. In response, God raised up Gideon to deliver them.

Gideon

The name Gideon means "destroyer" or "mighty warrior". Gideon was the son of Joash, from the clan of Abiezer in the tribe of Manasseh. As is the pattern throughout the Book of Judges, the Israelites had again turned away from God following forty years of peace that had been bought by Deborah's victory over Canaan. Now, God once more allowed Israel to be attacked by the neighboring Midianites and Amalekites. He then listened to the Israelites' cry for help, and chose Gideon to free them from the attacks and to lead them back from their worship of idols.

The Midianites never recovered from the attack, and the land was at peace for forty years during Gideon's lifetime. He returned home and eventually had seventy sons by many wives. He died an old man and was

buried by his father in Ophrah. His victory over the Midianites was remembered for many generations as the "day of Midian" (Isa 9:4).

Threshing Wheat

Gideon happened to be threshing wheat in a winepress when the Angel of the Lord first appeared to him. Threshing wheat was the process of separating the grains of wheat from the useless outer shell called the chaff. Traditionally, farmers would thresh their wheat in large areas outdoors so they could toss the beaten wheat into the air, and the chaff would be blown away by the wind. If Gideon had done this, however, he would have been an easy target for the bands of raiders who had overrun the land. To protect himself from the Midianites, Gideon was forced to thresh his wheat in a winepress, likely in a pit that was out of sight of passers-by.



Reaching Out to Your Students

You're too young! You're too small! You don't know how!

At their age, your students may have heard these words countless times while attempting to help others. However, with God, no one is ever "too young," "too small," or "too weak," especially children! In fact, when Jesus was on earth, He respected children and called on others to follow their simple faith (Mt 18:3-4, 10). Explain to your students that Jesus did not come to earth as an adult. He entered our world as a baby, just like they did, in Bethlehem. The Lord knows what it's like to be a child, because He had been one, too. He knows and cares about the fears, hopes, and desires of children, and He responds to children with acceptance and love.

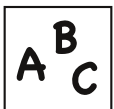


Opener

5 Minutes

Encourage your students to think of ways that the Lord can use them. Instead of dwelling on the things they can't do, the students can focus on the things they can do. Help them think of ways they can serve the Lord at home, at church, and at school with this simple exercise.

1. Draw three wide columns on the board and label them, "Home," "Church," and "School."
2. Give students a minute or two to think about all the things they can do to serve the Lord in these three locations.
3. Have the students come up individually (or several at a time, depending on your class size) to write down all the things of which they can think.
4. Have a quick class sharing about all the things they have written down. The students may be surprised to see how much they can already do for the Lord. They will find that no one is ever too young or too weak to serve the Lord. God can use the weakest and smallest in mighty ways, for He is the origin of all strength.



Vocabulary

winepress: a place to crush grapes and make wine

Baal: a man-made god that people in biblical times idolized and worshipped instead of God

dew: small drops of water that form on the ground overnight

rout: to defeat decisively; to drive out



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

If you'd like, supplement the story with visuals, such as pictures of a winepress, threshers, or grain. Hand out the Bible Discovery worksheet to the students now, and allow time for the students to fill out as you go through the lesson. The answers have been underlined in this section.

The Midianites Oppress the Israelites

In today's story, we'll be learning about a man named Gideon. Now, during Gideon's time, the Israelites were being oppressed by a group of people called the Midianites. There was no peace in the land because of the Midianites, who were both powerful and numerous. They would oppress the Israelites by destroying their land and ruining their crops so that they had no food, which forced the Israelites to live in caves and mountains to avoid these ambushes. In addition to ruining all of the crops that the Israelites had planted, the Midianites would also kill their sheep, cattle, and donkeys. As a result, the Israelites were incredibly troubled, poor, and starving, until they had no choice but to call out to the Lord for help.

The Lord Appears to Gideon

After hearing their pleas for help, the Lord chose someone to lead them out of their misery. What kind of a person do you think God chose to rescue His people? [Allow students to make suggestions.] Someone who was very strong and mighty? Perhaps an experienced soldier? Or someone who was accustomed to giving commands or forming smart strategies? Well, the man God chose was someone named Gideon. Let's turn to Judges 6:1-6 and read it together.

Now, before we move on, does anyone know what threshing wheat means? Or, do you know what a winepress is? [Allow students to answer if they can.] Well, threshing wheat is a process where farmers separate the inner grain of wheat from the outer shell, which no one eats. This outer shell is called the "chaff". In biblical times, farmers got rid of it by beating the wheat and letting the wind blow the chaff away, because it was very light. A winepress was normally a pit, or inner cellar.

Let's turn back to the passage and read verses 11-12 together. How did the Angel first greet Gideon? What did He call him? He called him a "mighty man of valor." What a strange name to be calling Gideon! Here he was, threshing wheat in his cellar in order to try and hide from his enemies. Gideon probably wasn't feeling very much like a mighty warrior, and others probably didn't see him as a mighty warrior, either. And yet this Angel came along and called him one!

Let's continue reading verse 13. Now remember, the Israelites had not seen any of God's miracles for more than two hundred years, so it is only natural that Gideon should wonder why God hadn't performed the same sort of miracles to free them from the Midianites. But why is it that they hadn't seen God's power in so long? Let's skip back a bit and read verses 7-10. The answer to our question is in the very last sentence: The Israelites stopped obeying God. They had turned their worship to false idols, and had stopped following His laws and teachings, which He gave to them through Moses. It was because of this that God had allowed the Midianites to oppress His people—in order to remind them of His presence.

However, what was Gideon really asking when he questioned where all the miracles of God he had heard about were?

- He was really questioning if God really was true and if all the old stories really happened.
 - In other words, "Who are You, God?"
 - Does this remind you of someone else who asked this same question? Paul asked "Who are You, Lord" in Acts 26:15.
- What does this question mean to us today?
 - We should strive to know our Lord personally, trust in Him, obey Him, and live a life that can enable us to carry out the mission that He has entrusted us to finish.

Let's now continue our story in verses 14-16. Gideon thought of himself as weak, the least of the least. Not only was his tribe very small, but his clan and his family were also considered very lowly, and he himself was not a great man. But do you remember how the Angel of the Lord greeted Gideon? He called Gideon a mighty man of valor. He called him this because the Lord saw past Gideon's outer appearance and status—a lowly man in a lowly family in one of the smallest tribes—and instead saw what Gideon was capable of. He saw what Gideon could become, and what Gideon would be able to do for the Him. He knew that through Gideon, He would save the Israelites.

FOR TEACHERS

Give students time to finish filling in Section A. Make sure all the students have finished the section before moving on.

Gideon Destroys the Altar of Baal

When the Angel of the Lord spoke to Gideon, He told him to tear down his father's altar of Baal and the wooden

image beside it, and set up an altar to God and make a sacrifice using the wood from the image. That night, with the courage from God, Gideon did as he had been instructed. When everyone woke up in the morning to find the altar and image torn down, they all shouted for Joash to bring out his son Gideon so they could kill him. However, Joash defended Gideon's actions, telling Baal to plead for himself if he were truly a god.

FOR TEACHERS

Give students time to finish filling in Section B. Make sure all the students have finished the section before moving on.

Israel Prepares to Fight Midian

At that time, the Midianites and Amalekites all gathered together in the Valley of Jezreel. But Gideon was not afraid. The Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon and he sent messengers throughout Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they all came up to meet him. The Midianites had finally gathered for open battle against the Israelites. Let's continue the story and read verses 36-40 together. Gideon clearly still wasn't sure about being a "man of valor", so he asked God for two signs: first, to have the morning dew collect only on the fleece while the ground around it remained dry, and second, to have the fleece remain dry with dew on the ground all around it the following morning. Only after these signs did Gideon rise to march against the Midianites.

Let's continue the story in Judges 7:1-2. Just as Gideon was probably feeling very confident in himself, God told him something very unexpected—there were too many men! With so many, the Israelites might attribute their victory to themselves instead of to God, so He told Gideon to reduce the numbers. First, He told Gideon to tell anyone who was afraid of the battle to leave. With this, the number of men was reduced from twenty-two thousand to ten thousand. But this was still too many! So, God

ordered Gideon to have the men drink water from a stream. There, God ordered Gideon to separate the men: those who got down on their knees and put their face to the water to drink were put together in one group, while those who used their hands to scoop up the water to drink were placed in another group. Of the latter, there were only three hundred men, and it was these three hundred men that God allowed Gideon to keep!

With only three hundred men compared to the twenty-two thousand he had at the beginning of the day, Gideon's confidence probably went down quite a bit. Actually, he was very afraid! But God knew this, because He sent Gideon to the enemy camp to spy on them. And what did Gideon hear when he was there? Let's read verses 13-14. Gideon's very enemies were foretelling their own loss! This was truly God's work! Now Gideon had full confidence that God was with him, and that victory was assured.

Let's finish the story and read verses 15-22. The Israelites didn't even need to draw their own swords to win the fight! This was truly and undeniably God's own work. It was through Gideon, with this miracle, that God delivered the Israelites from the oppression of Midian.

Later on, Gideon—the same man who hid away in his winepress, and thought himself the least of the least—routed the Midianites from the land with his small army, and set up a peace that would last in Israel for forty years.

FOR TEACHERS

Give students time to finish filling in Section C. Make sure all the students have finished the section before continuing. You may choose to go over all the answers once again, or complete a lesson review at the end of the lesson.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

From Gideon's story, we discovered that...

- Gideon found favor in God's eyes, and was even called a "mighty man of valor" by Him.
When we live a life that is pleasing to God and to others, God can use us as vessels to do His great work.
- We do not need to be afraid, even if we do not think we have enough experience to do His work. **The Lord God will help and strengthen us, as long as we trust Him with all of our hearts.**
- Despite human preconceptions, three hundred was all God needed to defeat the Midianites. **God has a purpose in everything that He does, and we must obey His lead, even if it doesn't make sense to us.**
- The Israelites didn't even need to draw their swords to defeat the Midianites. God can make the seemingly impossible, possible. **It was God who gave the Israelites the victory!**

God is looking for Gideons among us today—men and women of faith who are willing to step out and do great things for God. God is not looking for perfect people. He is merely looking for people who want to be molded and made for His service. Gideon gives us all hope that we, too, can be mighty warriors, even when we think we are weak and powerless. Through Christ, we can be more than conquerors! People of fear make excuses. People of faith overcome fears and feelings, and it will amaze us when we realize what we can do for God and what God can do for us

Gideon trusted in God wholeheartedly. Despite his inexperience and small army, God delivered Gideon and His people from the hands of the Midianites. Likewise, the Lord Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah when He came to this world to save us from sin and grant us salvation. The salvation that the Lord Jesus brought to us is a manifestation of God's love. It is through Jesus that we have the hope of everlasting life in His glorious kingdom. He is the one true God and our Savior who will help us, as long as we trust in Him, obey His commands, and live a Christian life.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **What nation was oppressing the Israelites during the time of our story?** The Midianites.
2. **What were these people doing to the Israelites?** They were ruining their crops and killing off their cattle/animals.
3. **What name did the Angel of the Lord use to greet Gideon?** Mighty man of valor.
4. **Why hadn't the Israelites seen any of God's power or miracles for such a long time?** They had turned aside from His laws and worshipped idols instead.
5. **What two signs did Gideon ask for before battling the Midianites?** First, that dew be on the fleece he had placed on the floor, but not on the ground around it. Second, that dew be on the ground all around the fleece, but not on the fleece itself.
6. **How many men did Gideon initially have? How many did he have when he went to battle?** Twenty-two thousand. Three hundred.
7. **Why did God say that Gideon had too many men?** Because with so many men, they might attribute the victory to themselves instead of to God.
8. **What steps did God take to reduce the number of men in Gideon's army?** He first told Gideon to allow those who were afraid to leave, then He told Gideon to ask the remaining men to drink from a stream. Those who scooped up the water from their hands to drink stayed to fight, but those who bent down on their knees and put their faces to the water to drink were sent home.
9. **What tools did Gideon and his men use in the battle?** They brought torches, pitchers, and trumpets, and shouted with very loud voices.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. False; He called him a mighty man of valor.
2. True
3. True
4. False; He allowed Gideon to use three hundred men.
5. Mighty man of valor
6. First, that dew be on the fleece he had placed on the floor, but not on the ground around it. Second, that dew be on the ground all around the fleece, but not on the fleece itself.
7. Because with so many men, they might attribute the victory to themselves instead of to God.
8. He first told Gideon to allow those who were afraid to leave, then He told Gideon to ask the remaining men to drink from a stream. Those who scooped up the water from their hands to drink stayed to fight, but those who bent down on their knees and put their faces to the water to drink were sent home.
9. Answers may vary. Possible answers: Television shows, music, movies, books, our friends, the Internet, etc. We can destroy these idols by limiting our time with them and using the time to worship God instead.



Life Application

10 Minutes

1. DESTRUCTION OF THE ALTAR

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #1 to the students. Have the students complete the first section, and then discuss their answers as a class. Once the first section has been finished, move on to the next section. Ask the students to read each scenario and write down the verse that follows.]

Before He even began to gather an army to face the Midianites, God gave Gideon a very important task. Let's read Judges 6:25-27. How very strange! Gideon's very first task was not to battle the Midianites, but to destroy Baal's altar.

In the Bible, there are many verses that teach us about the harm of worshipping idols. **Read the following verses and write down what each verse teaches us about why worshipping idols is wrong.**

1. Ezekiel 14:3

"Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. Should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them?"

Worshipping idols is a sin.

2. Deuteronomy 32:21

"They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God; They have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation."

Worshipping idols angers God.

3. 1 Chronicles 16:25-27

"For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is also to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and gladness are in His place."

God deserves our praise, but worshipping idols causes us to forget God and His sovereignty. There are no other gods that should come before Him.

4. Hosea 4:12

"My people ask counsel from their wooden idols, and their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray, and they have played the harlot against their God."

Worshipping idols causes us to stray from God.

5. Psalm 106:36

"They served their idols, which became a snare to them."

Idols deceive us. Satan uses idols as a trap to lure us away from God and into the world.

In our lives, we may not physically worship idols made of gold or silver, but we may find ourselves placing other things above God. This is just like worshipping idols, because we may spend more time watching TV or going on the Internet than praying or reading the Bible. So, how do we tear down our idols?

- Step 1: Recognize that idols have no value in the eyes of God.
- Step 2: Recognize that worshipping idols is sin.
- Step 3: Repent and turn away from idols.
- Step 4: Destroy our idols.

Read each scenario, and then turn to the verse that follows and write it down in the space provided.

Scenario 1

On his 12th birthday, Rudy was given a smartphone. He was so excited to actually own one since all his friends at school already had one. He couldn't wait to start playing games and surfing the Internet! On the first day, Rudy spent two hours playing with all the options on his new phone and downloading all the latest applications. In the coming weeks, he started to spend more and more time on his phone, playing games and chatting with his friends.

Toward the end of the school semester, Rudy's parents found out that his grades were suffering. They weren't sure what had happened since he was usually a diligent student, but they suspected it was caused by his newfound addiction to his phone. They also realized that Rudy was spending less time with God. His religious education teacher told his parents that he was often distracted during religious education classes and frequently checking his phone, even during class and services. His parents decided to have a chat with Rudy.

When they sat down with him, they explained to him that although he was not bowing or offering things to his phone, he was still treating it like an idol, because it made him forget about God. Rudy had not even realized the problem until his parents pointed it out to him, and he reluctantly agreed to cut down his phone time. Rudy and his parents worked out a timetable where he would only be allowed to use his phone once he had completed his homework and his Bible studies. After a couple months, Rudy found that he was voluntarily spending less and less time on it, sometimes even forgetting it completely. He also realized that his relationship with God had improved, and that his time at church was once again meaningful and precious to him.

Eze 14:6

"Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Repent, turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations."'"

Scenario 2

Charlene was the "new kid" at school. She had no friends and was really lonely. One day, she met a pair of girls in the lunchroom who invited her to sit with them. Charlene was so overjoyed! She couldn't believe this was happening. They were the coolest friends in the world. The three of them started to hang out a lot, going to the mall after school. They always went to look for fashion bargains and listen to the newest music.

Charlene felt right at home with her new friends, but her church friends started noticing that Charlene would miss Friday night services. They weren't sure why, but thought it might have something to do with the new friends Charlene had talked about so often. One day, two of Charlene's church friends spoke to Charlene in private and told her how genuinely concerned they were. Charlene had no idea that her new school friends were having such a profound effect on her. Charlene realized that she had been slacking in her Bible reading and devotions to God. Charlene knew she had to give up something.

Her church friends prayed with Charlene on one Saturday afternoon. After the prayer, Charlene knew that she had to turn things around and spend less time with her friends at school. In the coming weeks, Charlene started to associate less and less with her newfound friends. She would still eat lunch with them at school, but she told them that she had to keep up with her studies during the weekdays. After a month, not only was she no longer feeling lonely at school, but she also felt that she was now a lot closer to God than she had been before.

1 Thess 1:9

"For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."

2. VESSELS OF GOD

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #2 to the students. Go over the scenarios and the following questions as a class.]

Do you know what a vessel is? A vessel is a container, such as a vase or bowl, which holds liquids or other contents. In the case of the Bible, a "vessel" is often used to describe someone whom God chooses to use for His purpose. Gideon was one such example of God's chosen vessels. However, Gideon thought that he was not strong enough and not worthy to serve the Lord. In the end, the Lord had a great purpose for Gideon, which was to defeat the Midianites and restore peace to Israel. Likewise, we are crafted specifically for His service, to fulfill our purpose that God has planned for us.

*"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us."
(2 Cor 4:7)*

Read the scenario below and then answer the questions that follow.

Trevor grew up in True Jesus Church, Denver and always loved to be around church. He loved going to RE classes and listening to sermons. He is an avid linguist and speaks Spanish fluently. One day, his J1 teacher asked him if he would like to start interpreting Friday night sermons into Spanish since recently there had been many Spanish-speaking friends attending services. Even though Trevor knows how to speak Spanish, he has always shied away from public speaking and giving presentations. He also felt that he was not good enough and was afraid that he would say the wrong words on the pulpit. He told his teacher that he had to think and pray about it. What if he made a mistake or two in front of the congregation and they laughed at him? What if the sermon speaker used a really hard word that he had never heard before? Trevor was really confused and didn't know what to do.

Trevor decided to talk to his RE teacher and tell her that he was very nervous. She told him to pray about it for a few days and see how he felt afterward. So, for the next few days, Trevor prayed to God for guidance, explaining how he felt and why he was so doubtful. Towards the end of the week, he realized that he felt a lot more calm and comforted about the decision. In fact, he also felt a little more courage and strength about the whole matter. So, on Saturday, Trevor told his RE teacher that he would like to give it a try. After all, God was by his side!

- 1. Have you ever felt like Trevor before? What feelings did you experience?** Answers may vary. Feelings may include anxiety, excitement, shyness, fear, nervousness, etc.
- 2. If you were Trevor's friend, what kind of advice would you tell him?** Answers may vary. You could suggest that he pray and ask God for help, fast for God's guidance, attend more Spanish-language and public speaking workshops, interpret in front of a few friends, etc.
- 3. Refer to 2 Corinthians 4:7. How can this verse encourage those who are starting out in holy work?** We may think that we are useless and unworthy to serve in church, but the reality is that the Lord knows what is in store for us. We just have to trust Him and let Him lead so that He may utilize us to serve Him for His great purpose.
- 4. From a spiritual standpoint, what can we do to gain more courage?** Pray and ask God for more courage. Read the Bible for spiritual encouragement. Ask others to pray with you.
- 5. Have you ever wondered what God's purpose is for you? What must we first do in order to fully know His plan for our lives?** Answers may vary. We must be willing to follow Him, obey His word, and live a Christian life.

To truly realize our potential in the Lord's eyes, we must empty ourselves as vessels and submit ourselves to the Lord. When we trust Him wholeheartedly, He will guide us and allow us to become great workers for Him. Many times when we are asked to perform tasks that are beyond us, such as in Gideon's case, we grow fearful and tend to shy away because of our lack of confidence. However, the antidote to our anxiety is to simply trust God, for He will take care of everything and guide our service.



Activity

Mold Me

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To reinforce that God has a purpose for each and every one of us and will mold us for His great work.

Materials

- Five or six tubs of modeling clay
- List of useful objects

Preparation

Before class, come up with a list of tools or every day objects that people can use to help others. Examples may include the Bible, a pencil, a notebook, a broom, a pot, etc. There are endless possibilities, but come up with objects that students in your class will be able to mold.

Instructions

1. Divide the students into even groups.
2. Give each group a tub of modeling clay.
3. Ask one student in each group to come up to the front of the class, and show them one object from the list. Students are to go back to their group and try to mold the object for their teammates to guess.
4. When a team has correctly guessed the object, the members of that team must share with the class at least one way that people can use that object to help others.
5. If no team correctly guesses the object within a reasonable amount of time (to be determined by the teacher), then the teacher can simply stop and either move on to the next object, or tell the students what the object was. If the teacher chooses to tell the students the object, the teacher can ask for volunteers to share how they, or someone they know, can use the object to help others.
6. Continue, with a new object each round, for as long as time allows. Remember to rotate the students that mold the object so that each student gets to mold.

GIDEON: A MIGHTY MAN OF VALOR

A. The Lord Calls Gideon

During the time of Gideon, Israel was currently being oppressed by the _____. These people would _____ their land and _____ their crops, making it difficult for the Israelites to find food.

In response, an Angel of the Lord came to call for Gideon. The Angel of the Lord called Gideon a _____. However, Gideon was actually someone who was also very afraid. At the time, he was threshing _____ in a winepress, hiding from the raiders.

Instead of immediately accepting his calling, Gideon questioned why he had not seen any of God's _____ in his lifetime. Today, we should strive to know our Lord Jesus _____. We must _____ in Him and _____ Him so that we can accomplish what He has asked us to do.

Gideon also saw himself as a _____ person, and did not understand how God could save the Israelites through him. By calling to him and asking him to serve boldly, God was challenging Gideon to view himself as God viewed him.

B. Gideon Timidly Works for the Lord

Gideon might have been timid, but he was willing to obey and trust in God.

God instructed him to tear down his father's _____ of Baal and the wooden _____ beside it, and set up an altar to _____ and make a _____ using the wood from the image.

So, Gideon did as instructed. However, Gideon was still timid in his calling, so he tore down the altar at _____, when no one could see him do it.

Gideon may not have been a mighty man up to that time, but later, he fought enemies in the broad daylight. God will always encourage us to become the type of person He has destined us to be. God called Gideon a "mighty man of valor" because that is what Gideon would become.

C. Gideon Bravely Conquers His Foes

Now, Gideon was ready to fight the Midianites and the _____.

Everyone gathered together and was ready to fight, but Gideon asked God for two _____. He was still unsure about his leading role. God answered with the signs, and Gideon was ready to fight.

Still, there was one more thing Gideon had to do before going into battle. Gideon had gathered _____ men, but God did not want that many to go into battle, unless the _____ boasted that they had won the battle on their own.

In the end, only _____ men went into battle, and without even lifting their _____, they were able to win the battle. God's glorious work was definitely demonstrated in this victory, and through _____, God delivered the Israelites from the hands of the Midianites. From that day, they enjoyed _____ for forty years.

God will never use a secret saint to win His battles. We need to be bold and brave, and take our stand, regardless of cost or consequences.

DESTRUCTION OF THE ALTAR

Before He even began to gather an army to face the Midianites, God gave Gideon a very important task. Let's read Judges 6:25-27. How very strange! Gideon's very first task was not to battle the Midianites, but to destroy Baal's altar.

In the Bible, there are many verses that teach us about the harm of worshipping idols. Read the following verses and write down what each verse teaches us about why worshipping idols is wrong.

1. Ezekiel 14:3

"Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. Should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them?"

2. Deuteronomy 32:21

"They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God; They have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation."

3. 1 Chronicles 16:25-27

"For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is also to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and gladness are in His place."

4. Hosea 4:12

"My people ask counsel from their wooden idols, and their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray, and they have played the harlot against their God."

5. Psalm 106:36

"They served their idols, which became a snare to them."

Read each scenario, and then turn to the verse that follows and write it down in the space provided.

Scenario 1

On his 12th birthday, Rudy was given a smartphone. He was so excited to actually own one since all his friends at school already had one. He couldn't wait to start playing games and surfing the Internet! On the first day, Rudy spent two hours playing with all the options on his new phone and downloading all the latest applications. In the coming weeks, he started to spend more and more time on his phone, playing games and chatting with his friends.

Toward the end of the school semester, Rudy's parents found out that his grades were suffering. They weren't sure what had happened since he was usually a diligent student, but they suspected it was caused by his newfound addiction to his phone. They also realized that Rudy was spending less time with God. His religious education teacher told his parents that he was often distracted during religious education classes and frequently checking his phone, even during class and services. His parents decided to have a chat with Rudy.

When they sat down with him, they explained to him that although he was not bowing or offering things to his phone, he was still treating it like an idol, because it made him forget about God. Rudy had not even realized the problem until his parents pointed it out to him, and he reluctantly agreed to cut down his phone time. Rudy and his parents worked out a timetable where he would only be allowed to use his phone once he had completed his homework and his Bible studies. After a couple months, Rudy found that he was voluntarily spending less and less time on it, sometimes even forgetting it completely. He also realized that his relationship with God had improved, and that his time at church was once again meaningful and precious to him.



Eze 14:6

Scenario 2

Charlene was the "new kid" at school. She had no friends and was really lonely. One day, she met a pair of girls in the lunchroom who invited her to sit with them. Charlene was so overjoyed! She couldn't believe this was happening. They were the coolest friends in the world. The three of them started to hang out a lot, going to the mall after school. They always went to look for fashion bargains and listen to the newest music.

Charlene felt right at home with her new friends, but her church friends started noticing that Charlene would miss Friday night services. They weren't sure why, but thought it might have something to do with the new friends Charlene had talked about so often. One day, two of Charlene's church friends spoke to Charlene in private and told her how genuinely concerned they were. Charlene had no idea that her new school friends were having such a profound effect on her. Charlene realized that she had been slacking in her Bible reading and devotions to God. Charlene knew she had to give up something.

Her church friends prayed with Charlene on one Saturday afternoon. After the prayer, Charlene knew that she had to turn things around and spend less time with her friends at school. In the coming weeks, Charlene started to associate less and less with her newfound friends. She would still eat lunch with them at school, but she told them that she had to keep up with her studies during the weekdays. After a month, not only was she no longer feeling lonely at school, but she also felt that she was now a lot closer to God than she had been before.



1 Thess 1:9

VESSELS OF GOD

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”
(2 Cor 4:7)

Read the scenario below and then answer the questions that follow.

Trevor grew up in True Jesus Church, Denver and always loved to be around church. He loved going to RE classes and listening to sermons. He is an avid linguist and speaks Spanish fluently. One day, his J1 teacher asked him if he would like to start interpreting Friday night sermons into Spanish since recently there had been many Spanish-speaking friends attending services. Even though Trevor knows how to speak Spanish, he has always shied away from public speaking and giving presentations. He also felt that he was not good enough and was afraid that he would say the wrong words on the pulpit. He told his teacher that he had to think and pray about it. What if he made a mistake or two in front of the congregation and they laughed at him? What if the sermon speaker used a really hard word that he had never heard before? Trevor was really confused and didn't know what to do.



Trevor decided to talk to his RE teacher and tell her that he was very nervous. She told him to pray about it for a few days and see how he felt afterward. So, for the next few days, Trevor prayed to God for guidance, explaining how he felt and why he was so doubtful. Towards the end of the week, he realized that he felt a lot more calm and comforted about the decision. In fact, he also felt a little more courage and strength about the whole matter. So, on Saturday, Trevor told his RE teacher that he would like to give it a try. After all, God was by his side!

1. Have you ever felt like Trevor before? What feelings did you experience?
2. If you were Trevor's friend, what kind of advice would you tell him?
3. Refer to 2 Corinthians 4:7. How can this verse encourage those who are starting out in holy work?
4. From a spiritual standpoint, what can we do to gain more courage?
5. Have you ever wondered what God's purpose is for you? What must we first do in order to fully know His plan for our lives?

E2 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 3—God's Mighty Work through Gideon

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (Psalm 28:7a)

True or False

1. When the Angel of the Lord appeared before Gideon, He called Him by name. _____
2. The Midianites were oppressing the Israelites by ruining their food. _____
3. God allowed Midian to oppress His people because they had stopped worshipping Him. _____
4. God allowed Gideon to use twenty-two thousand men to fight the Midianites. _____

Short Answer

5. What name did the Angel of the Lord use to greet Gideon?
6. What two signs did Gideon ask for before battling the Midianites?
7. Why did God say that Gideon had too many men?
8. What steps did God take to reduce the number of men in Gideon's army?
9. The very first task the Angel of the Lord appointed to Gideon was to destroy the altar of Baal and to make an offering to God instead. What kinds of idols are there in our lives, and how can we "destroy" them and turn them into offerings to God?