



The book of Judges captures the stories of the nation of Israel in its infancy. Gideon, Deborah and Samson are some of the more well known leaders whose lives are recorded in the book of Judges. Gideon, whose story is recorded in Judges 6-8, led Israel in several major military victories over the much stronger and larger forces of the Midianites.

Like Moses, Gideon felt like there were several reasons why someone else should be chosen to lead the army of Israel into battle. What are some of the barriers you might feel in being obedient to God's call in your life?

In verse 16, the Lord responds to Gideon's fears with a simple affirmation. God says to Gideon, "I will be with you." Today, spend a few moments in prayer thanking God for this promise he offered to Gideon and continues to offer to you.

GPS for Families

GrowPrayStudy.org/family

Children need to learn the concept of obedience as it applies to you as their parents and to God.

Read John 10:14-27. These verses teach that those who listen to Jesus' voice know him and follow him. Jesus calls his children sheep, and he is their shepherd. Tell your child that a shepherd is responsible for guiding his sheep into green pastures where they can get food to eat. The shepherd also protects the sheep from wolves and predators. If a sheep gets lost, the shepherd will go and find it. The sheep learn to recognize the shepherd's voice and listen to it. If the shepherd calls them in closer, it is not because he doesn't want the sheep to roam free. It is because he may know there is a cliff nearby that the sheep could fall off of. Or the shepherd may see a wolf in the distance.

Obedience is like that. Obeying will keep us from getting hurt. It isn't meant to stop us from having fun. But obedience to our parents and to God will help us live the life God has planned for us. Tell your children the next time they question your reasoning for telling them to do something to remember you may know there's a wolf or a cliff in the distance that they can't see. They must trust and obey. Ask your child how he or she can show obedience to both you and Jesus. Give examples of how you obey God as well.

MESSAGE

"Obey"

*Rev. David Alexander, Teaching Pastor
davidalexander@firstmethodistmansfield.org*

SCRIPTURE

Mark 8:27-35

Things I'd like to remember from today's sermon:

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PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Holy and loving God, help me this day to know that you are present in my life and calling me to a life of obedience. Give me the strength to respond with faith when I feel afraid and with courage when I sense that I am weak. Today, Lord, help me to be your obedient servant. AMEN.

Our focus this week is obedience. Obedience can be defined as “compliance with someone’s wishes or orders or acknowledgment of their authority.” To bring clarity to this entire message series, obedience includes following God’s will for our lives and believing that God has the authority to direct our lives.

The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats which is found in Matthew 25 gives us a picture of “when the Son comes in his glory . . . and sits on his heavenly throne.” What qualities separate the sheep who are invited into that kingdom from the goats who are asked to “depart from him”? In what specific ways have the sheep been obedient to God? Why might these areas of obedience be so close to God’s heart?

Looking again at how Jesus describes faithfulness in verse 40, how might you be obedient to God’s will today?

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I John 4:19-21

John’s words in the fourth chapter remind us that obedience is always a response. We are faithful in response to God’s faithfulness. Further, obedience is an ongoing challenge in which our beliefs are consistently challenged by the circumstances we face. John illustrates this ongoing process in this simple way, “If we say . . . we must do.”

When was the last time that you felt like “what you said” was tested by “what you had to do”? How did you respond to that challenge? How has that experience helped prepare you for what you may face in the future?

John speaks in strong terms when he writes, “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ yet hates his brother, he is a liar.” Do you have someone in your life who challenges you in this way? How might God express to you how he feels about your frustration with this person?

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In recent weeks we have looked at several passages from this section of John’s Gospel which contains Jesus’ last teaching to his disciples at the Last Supper he shared with them. For anyone facing a difficult season or trial, John 14-17 is filled with words of affirmation and peace that were originally intended to carry the disciples from the horrors of Jesus’ death to the hope found in his resurrection.

In our text for today, what does Jesus identify as the “test” of our devotion to him? How does he describe the actions and attitudes of those he calls “friends”?

In verse 10, Jesus says, “If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love.” In what ways does our obedience to Christ enable us to stay grounded in a proper understanding of God’s love? Consider this today, “Would Jesus consider me a friend?”

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Exodus 4:10-13

Moses had left Egypt decades prior to the experience of hearing God’s voice in the burning bush, after the discovery of his killing of an Egyptian guard who was terrorizing a Hebrew slave. When God asked him to return to Egypt, Moses wanted nothing to do with God’s plan and made many attempts at providing some excuse to disqualify him from service. At the end, when all his excuses had been exhausted, Moses simply pleads, “Lord, please send someone else.”

How does God respond to the final reason Moses gives for why he cannot do what God is asking him to do? If you have ever said “no” to God because you felt “unqualified,” what did God’s response say to you?

Is it possible that God is calling you to an act of obedience that is beyond your own talents or ability? What might that be?

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