

To the Teacher

The information below is to help you in teaching the lesson. DO NOT read this page to the students. Instead, teach the information in your own words. Be sure to finish the student's lesson as well. The Scripture references in parentheses are for additional study, to round out the information given in the lesson. Become familiar with these passages as well, to provide additional Scriptures to your students.

The idea and a great part of the information for this particular lesson has been taken from Henry T. Blackaby's book, *Experiencing God*, Chapter 16. (Blackaby, Henry T. *Experiencing God*. Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.)

Lesson 18 – Crisis of Belief (Teacher's Lesson)

Opening: Answer the opening question.

Study Notes:

Judges 6:11-16

What did the angel first call Gideon? Mighty warrior.

The angel also told him that the Lord was with him.

Why did Caleb doubt that the Lord was with the Israelites? Because He hadn't liberated them from Midian.

Gideon expected great supernatural miracles. He wanted God to do all the work. He did not realize that God generally works through people to accomplish His purpose.

How was God going to free Israel from the hand of Midian? Through Gideon.

What were some of Gideon's doubts? His clan (group) was really small, and he was not a strong leader.

How did God answer those doubts? Promising him that He would be with him (Gideon).

God did not promise that Gideon would sit and do nothing, but that He would supernaturally empower him to accomplish the task that God have him.

Judges 7:1-8

Why did God tell Gideon that he had too many men? He did not want the Israelites to brag that their own strength had freed them.

In the end how many men did Gideon have to fight against Midian? 300.

It is important to explain that achieving the will of God must be done God's way. His ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). There are no tricks to obedience.

Joshua 6:1-5

What was God's plan to topple the walls of Jericho? March around the city 13 times, blow the trumpets and shout.

Was this a normal way of toppling city walls? No.

Was God's way successful? Yes.

City walls were an important means of defense in ancient times. With the wall and men to defend them, cities were virtually impenetrable. Without the walls, they were virtually defenseless. That is why Nehemiah was so careful about the reconstruction of the wall around Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:1-4; 2:4-5).

Summary: When God speaks, it brings us to a crisis of belief that requires faith and action.

Application:

Help students see what God is calling them to do. Explain that there are some things only God can do, like draw people to an understanding of salvation through Jesus Christ, convincing them of sin, and spiritual growth. Help them to find practical, measurable ways to put their faith in action. Remember to ask them to report about how they are achieving what they have promised to do. In a previous lesson, the students had an opportunity to commit themselves to a daily time of prayer and Bible reading. Ask them if they are fulfilling this commitment.

Lesson 18 – Crisis of Belief

Working Together

When have you been given a task that is too big for you alone; what did you do?

When God invites us to join Him in His work, the work He gives us is God-sized. We cannot do them alone. This brings us to the moment of decision – Are we going to believe God or not? We have arrived at a crisis of belief.

A Decisive Moment

Frequently, when we think of the word “crisis,” we imagine a tense situation that is out of our control. But the word “crisis” means *a decisive moment*. Gideon was a young man when God called him to do some extraordinary things and he wrestled greatly with his faith. Turn to Judges, chapter 6 and read the following verses.

Verses 11-12 – What did the angel first call Gideon?

Verses 13-14 – Why did Gideon doubt that the Lord was with the Israelites?

How was God going to free Israel from the hand of Midian?

Verses 15-16 – What were some of Gideon’s doubts?

How did God answer those doubts?

As you can see, Gideon’s faith was not particularly strong, but God could work through him anyway. Gideon was unsure of his ability and the Lord, so he asked God for signs. God was merciful and gave him the signs and Gideon snuck out at night and obeyed what God ordered (read Judges 6:25-28). Here is another event in the life of Gideon where God stretched him. Read Judges 7:1-8 and answer the following questions.

Verse 2 – Why did God tell Gideon that he had too many men?

Verses 6-7 – In the end, how many men did Gideon have that could fight against Midian?

When God told Gideon what He planned to do, it was something that only God could do. Gideon could not accomplish the job God's way without God. He could have gone with a much bigger army, but that would have been disobedience to God's direction. This is the crisis of belief. When God revealed His will to Gideon he had to choose to trust in God, or do it his own way. Look at another example in Joshua 6:1-5, and verse 20.

Verses 3-5 – What was God's plans to topple the walls of Jericho?

Was this a normal way of toppling city walls?

Verse 20 – Was God's way successful?

Note that, in all these cases, responding to the crisis of faith required faith and action on the part of those who sought God. We cannot simply say that we believe God can do it and then do it our own way. We should put our faith in action. Now think for a minute about your life. Is there something that God is asking you to do that you cannot do on your own? If that is the case, write it in the space below.

What obstacles are there to what God wants you to do?

What will you do about it?

Scripture to memorize:

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Hebrews 11:6