

God Gave Gideon This Success Strategy—And Now He Gives It to You

Choosing to do our primary work in the smaller, less noticeable spheres and to devote our best gifts there is often a foreign thought to us. We usually want to jump from the center directly to the perimeter of impact, skipping over the areas most closely connected to us.

The result? A life and calling that eventually implode, caving in upon their shoddy, unstable structure.

God had strategically set Gideon in this family, in this tribe and in this valley for a reason. He fully intended to call and equip Gideon to affect his closest relationships before moving on to something and someone else. The priority and preeminence of serving those in the sphere closest to us is seen throughout Scripture. When Abraham was chosen by God to be the father of Israel, he was given instructions for what his first tasks should be.

“I chose him, and he will instruct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He promised him” (Gen. 18:19, MEV).

Centuries later, as Jesus’ disciples were ushered into the age of the church, God gave them a unique power to function on His behalf, and then clearly outlined the course their ministry was to follow.

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The disciples were in Jerusalem when they received these instructions from Jesus. They were to focus on the ministry to be done where they were standing even as they began moving outward on mission. Start inward, move outward. First things first. Both for Gideon and for us.

Gideon had been reared in an idol-worshipping family. His own father was the keeper of the Baal altar in their town of Ophrah.

“So Gideon took ten men from among his slaves and did as the Lord had told him, but because he was too afraid of the rest of his father’s household and the men of the city to do it by day, he did it at night” (Judges 6:27).

Often, like in Gideon’s case, our smaller spheres of influence are not easier to contend with just because they are smaller. On the contrary, some of the most difficult and intimidating opportunities to walk in God’s calling come when we are staring in the faces of those who know us best and whom we love the most.

Consider how Gideon must have felt tearing down what his father had spent his lifetime building, teaching and defending. With each stone that he and his servants dismantled, another layer of the ideology that had overrun his family came unglued. This overnight idol-demolishing wasn’t affecting some random town and family he would never see again. This was a task he’d feel, see and endure the consequences of every day from that point on. There are consequences:

- When the Christian daughter chooses to evangelize her non-Christian parents
- When the godly wife chooses to set an example for her unsaved spouse
- When the teenager seeks to impact his pagan school environment

- When the coworker tries to influence her friends on the job

The stakes are often much higher when the mission field is so personal.

What lies ahead in your journey is not nearly as critical as where you are right now. Wherever you are now is where you are meant to serve now. These innermost circles are often the ones that offer the least amount of recognition. This is why so many people try to circumvent them. And yet your greatest impact will be done here—in the ordinary rhythms of your daily living.

Following God wholeheartedly within these up-close loops of faith will often cause you internal uneasiness and daily faithfulness that cannot be escaped just because it's 5 p.m. and the workday is over. It's easier to stand on a platform and teach people we may never see again than to walk with our own children, friends and loved ones in accountability and discipleship. But these spheres encompass the heart of true ministry.

Begin to clarify who the people in your primary sphere of influence should be. Refuse to search for significance in another place if you've bypassed any near and necessary steps in the journey God has for you. Pray for a courageous faith and holy boldness to start where you are. He'll give it to you. {eoa}

The preceding is an excerpt from Priscilla Shirer's Bible study, Gideon: Your Weakness, God's Strength. You can purchase it on .

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