

Deliverer Needed Series

“Delivered from Indecision”

Judges 6:36-40

Introduction

- Tell a little bit of the story
 - As we saw last Wednesday Night, Israel went through cycles of sin
 - They would choose to worship the Baals and then God would raise up a deliverer and set them free and they would have freedom all the life of that deliverer, but soon after his or her death, the cycle of sin would begin again
- Well there has been 40 years of peace in Israel since Deborah and Barak had victory over Jabin and Sisera
 - But after 40 years the children of Israel start to worship the false gods again
 - And God has to raise up the Midianities this time to come to battle and they oppress Israel for seven years

But at the end of the seven years, Israel cries out and God calls a man by the name of Gideon

- and Gideon is such an interesting judge, he has the same number of verses dedicated to him in the Word of God as does the judge Samson
 - now Samson is way more popular because he had the muscles
 - but the lessons from Gideon's life, God considers just as important
- And this Wednesday we will get to study the life of Gideon from the world he lived in, to his call from the Lord, to the battle he fought with only 300 men verses 135,000 Midianites, how did God do that
 - You need to come out on Wednesday Night

But for this morning I want to draw your attention to verse 36 of chapter 6

- after the children of Israel cry out to God for help, and after God calls Gideon as the next judge of Israel, this conversation takes place
 - look at it with me in [verse 36-40](#)

Gideon says to God, I don't really know if you have picked the right guy to deliverer Israel from the hand of the Midianites

- so I am going to devise a little test
 - I am going to put fleece, a bit of sheep's skin, with the fluffy wool still attached, I am going to put a fleece outside and if in the morning, the fleece is wet, but the ground is dry, then I know you have called me Lord
- So Gideon does this and the next morning, the ground is dry and he rings out a bowl full of water from the fleece
 - Then Gideon gets to thinking – would this have happened anyway – is this just science, in the night, fleece get wet, ground stays dry?
- So he comes up with another test for the Lord – how about we reverse it
 - I am going to put a fleece outside and if I get up in the morning and the ground is wet, but the fleece is dry, then I know you have called me
 - And the next morning, Gideon gets up and that is exactly what happens

Now this devising of little tests to discover God's will for our lives is where we get the term, “laying out a fleece”

- maybe you have heard Christians says this, maybe you have said this – well I didn't know God's will so I laid out a fleece

How many of you have heard of this as a good way to determine God's will for your life?

- Devising little tests where God can speak to you, is that a solid way to be delivered from indecision as I have entitled the study today?

- How many of you have heard this is the good way to be delivered from indecision? – go ahead and raise your hands
- I just want to know who I am offending this morning – who to be really nice too in the courtyard afterward – okay got it

Is what Gideon does here in Judges chapter six a good way to be delivered from indecision?

- Well not really!
 - There is a couple of things to notice about Gideon's fleece, making it a poor way to be delivered from indecision

Things to Consider about Gideon's Fleece

#1 – His fleece was miraculous

- the first time he asked God to make the fleece wet and the ground dry
 - and then the next time he reverses the process
 - it is a miracle

Now I point that out because so often you and I lay out a fleece but it is anything less than a miracle

- okay – I'm going to work, and if I have a bad day today, then I know you want me to take that new job
 - or if I see him and he looks at me, and my heart flutters, he is my husband – that is called hormones - That is not a true Gideon fleece
- What you need to do is pray – Lord if the couch in my living room is levitating when I get up, then I know you want to marry him or take that job
 - That would be a real fleece

If you have read the Harvest Book, short biographies of the original Calvary Chapel Pastors – Steve Mays of Calvary Chapel South Bay, meets this girl named Gail and he prays, I am going to call her, and if it is her birthday – if she is alone and crying because no one remembered, then it must be you – Now that was a real Gideon fleece

Things to Consider about Gideon's Fleece

#1 – His fleece was miraculous

#2 – Gideon already had the will of God

- It wasn't that Gideon was trying to discern God's will with the fleece, He already had God's will – He was trying to confirm God's will
 - God had spoken to him, what to do, God was really clear
 - God had backed it up multiple times
 - So what Gideon was doing was confirming what God had already told him

Things to Consider about Gideon's Fleece

#1 – His fleece was miraculous

#2 – Gideon already had the will of God

#3 – The fleece didn't convince Gideon

- It would be one thing if when Gideon said, "Let the fleece be wet and the ground dry", that when it happened he said, "Okay Lord, I have heard your Word, you have confirmed your Word, I will obey"
 - But that is not what happened
 - He asked for another test
 - Well maybe that would have happened anyway

And all of these reasons together is why "laying out a fleece" is not a good way to be delivered from indecision

- we don't usually ask for a miracle, so when we have a bad day at work or our heart goes flutter, we start to think – maybe that would have happened anyway

We don't have the will of God, so we are not trying to confirm the will of God, but discern the will of God

- and because that is not what a fleece is designed to be, a fleece does not deliver us from indecision, it really creates more indecision and confusion
 - So there has to be a better way!
 - And I believe that there is

The Bible never promises to write God's Will in the sky, or do some miracle that will determine what God is doing

- but God does promise to give us wisdom

“If anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who will give it to him liberally and without reproach” – James 1:5

- God wants to give wisdom – God wants to deliver us from indecision – but He wants to do it through wisdom

The Book of proverbs from cover to cover encourages you and me to walk in wisdom

- So instead of looking for some fleece
 - We need to know how to make the best possible decision and use the wisdom God has given us
- And to do that I believe we need to ask four questions when we are faced with any situation

Four questions to run difficult decisions through

#1 – What does the Word of God say?

“Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path” – Psalm 119:105

The idea of the passage is scripture gives you information on what you need to know for the direction of the your life

- now you might not find “marry Jonny” – but you do find the kind of person you are to be married to
 - you might not find – go ahead with this deal – but you'll find the principals in scripture to live by

You see the idea of patterning our lives and decision after what this book has to say is an important one

- in Luke chapter 6 – Jesus tells His disciples,

“But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.” – Luke 6:46-48

- When our lives are founded upon this book, they have a firm foundation

In the book of Genesis when the flocks of Abraham and the flocks of Lot were too big for them to dwell together, Abraham said, you decide Lot which direction you want to go and I will go the opposite

- Genesis says, when Lot saw the well watered plains of Sodom and Gomorrah and said, that is a great place to raise cattle
 - But if he had been seeking the word, he would have understood that God wanted his family to be first
 - And though Sodom and Gomorrah may have been a great place to raise cattle, it was a horrible place to raise kids
 - The principal to make a godly decision was found in the Word of God
- So the first question needs to be, what does the Word of God have to say on this subject
 - What principals are laid out for me to help discover wisdom on this subject
 - Is this a type of person God wants me to marry, is this job situation going to draw me closer to him or draw me or my family away
 - What does the Word say?

Four questions to run difficult decisions through

#1 – What does the Word of God say?

#2 – What does Godly Counsel have to say?

- The Proverbs have much to say about using wisdom in our lives

“A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel” – Proverbs 1:5

“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise.” – Proverbs 12:15

- There is something wise about asking people who know God, who know His word and who know you what they think about a certain decision you need to make
 - When I was trying to discern the Lord’s will about marrying Christy, back when she was Christy Apple, I asked men who I knew would tell me the truth, men who were not just buddies, who would say – Bro, go for it, she is pretty!, but Men I knew, knew God, knew His Word, knew me and knew her, and would be honest with me about what they say in all of that and give godly counsel

I asked Charlie Campbell, our college pastor here at the time, he spoke some great things into my heart on the subject. I asked Pastor Rob

- He said, “I think you should wait three or four years, and then he paused, and my heart just sank because that was what the first person I asked had said, but then Pastor Rob continued... to have kids – get married as soon, but wait to have kids – oh wisdom – we only waited a year and a half, but wisdom

The last person I sought godly counsel from was her Dad, and I expected to get a grilling from him

Charlie had asked me some tough questions, Pastor Rob had challenged me with some tough things, and what would her Dad say?

- So I asked him to lunch, we met at Cocos down there on Vista Way and Melrose and I had all my plans ready on how I would provide for his daughter and what the Lord had whispered in my heart
 - And he said, Ah great, I am totally on board, thanks for asking me – I didn’t know what else to say – don’t you want to see my financial plan? – Nope – the Lord will provide! – Don’t you want to hear all my verses from the Lord – nope – okay – well thanks for Lunch! – I didn’t know what to say, that is what I said, thanks for Lunch – not thanks for your daughters hand, thanks for allowing me into your family – thanks for lunch

But I will tell you – through that entire process, wisdom, and godly counsel from men I knew would tell me the truth, just confirmed, this is God’s will for my life

- it just delivered me from indecision in my life
 - God’s word, Godly counsel, thirdly...

Four questions to run difficult decisions through

#1 – What does the Word of God say?

#2 – What does Godly Counsel have to say?

#3 – What does your heart say?

- Now this can be a dicey one, but hear me out
 - In the Book of Exodus, and Numbers, how did the children know when it was time to move?
- Well the cloud moved, pretty obvious – but think it through with me – what did the cloud provide in the desert wilderness – shade! - You see it was where they wanted to go – it was obvious and isn’t that what the Word of God says to us

“Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desire of your heart” – Psalm 37:4

- Now this does not apply if you are walking in the flesh – your heart is deceitful

But as you are submitted to Him – He will lead in your heart as well, through what you want

- This whole idea that sometimes we develop “don’t submit yourself to God because if you hate bugs, He will send you to Africa” because that is who God is
 - Oh you want my will huh? – well get ready for life to become miserable
 - Not the God in the Bible
 - He often moves though the desires of our heart
- How? Well Paul the apostle says in the book of Philippians

“the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your heart and minds through Jesus Christ” – Philippians 4:7

- the word ‘guard’ there indicates, “referee”
 - As you delight in Him, as you walk with him in relationship, the Peace of God and the Spirit of God will referee your heart
 - That is fair! – That is right! – The cloud is moving and you want shade – this is right!
- And sometimes the Spirit of God will say – that is foul! – That is not okay that is not of me.
 - You can just sense it as the Spirit of God leads from within your heart.

Four questions to run difficult decisions through

#1 – What does the Word of God say?

#2 – What does Godly Counsel have to say?

#3 – What does your heart say?

#4 – What do the circumstances say?

- Sometimes God lead by the pillar of cloud by day, sometimes God would lead them by the pillar of fire

Or in other words by the circumstances in their lives

- God open doors – **“See I have set before you an opened door.” – Revelation 3:8**
 - Go through it, don’t be afraid
 - And....
- God closes doors - **“Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.” – Acts 16:6**

Now some scholars believe the Holy Spirit forbidding them was a sickness that had gotten to the team and Paul rightly discerned this as God leading through circumstances

- I used to tell college guys when they would tell me, I think that girl is my wife – I would say, awesome, what does she think? “well she thinks I am a dwebb – well it is probably not the Lord – not yet –
- Same thing is with a job, did you get the job – No well then it probably isn’t he Lord right now –
 - Sometimes I hear people say – “When the Lord closes a door, go in through a window??? – I’m not so sure that is great Biblical advice
- God will often lead through circumstances in our lives
 - Through open doors, through closed windows
 - Through circumstances in our lives

So you have this grid

- God’s word
 - Godly counsel
- Your own heart, and desires, the peace that God sends to guard, to referee your heart
 - Your have circumstances

You have all of these things, but the reasons I give you multiple ways God leads us into wisdom is because we can always take one of those things out of context, for example...

You can make the word of God say anything you want by taking the Word out of context

- Maybe you have heard of the man who wanted to hear the word of the Lord, “What do you want me to do? – and so he decided to play Bible roulette, you know what I mean, just flip the Bible open and wherever it opens up, that is God’s will for my life, well this guy decided to do that He flipped open his Bible to Matt 27:5, what do you want me to do with my life God?????”

“Judas went out and hanged himself” - Matthew 27:5

- He hung himself, that can’t be the Lord the man thought, I will just try it again, and tried again and came to Luke 10:37

“Jesus said, “Go and do likewise.” – Luke 10:37

- oh no
 - you can make the scripture say whatever you want if you take it out of context
 - if you don’t understand what was being said to the original audience

You can make the word say anything you want

- **“Marry her...” – Genesis 38:8**
- **“Don’t marry her...” – Leviticus 21:14**
- **“Put away these wives...” – Ezra 10:3**
- **“God hates divorce...” – Malachi 2:16**

We can make the scripture say whatever we want, out of context

Sometimes you get ungodly counsel

- earlier I was telling you before I asked Christy to marry me I asked a few guys I respected that would tell me the truth about the situation and give Godly counsel
- Charlie Campbell was the second guy, Pastor Rob..

The first guy I talked to told me, I don’t think getting married right now in your life is a good idea, at the very least you need to wait a few years....

- and I remember leaving this guys house thinking, oh no Lord, I haven’t heard from you
 - but everybody else I talked to Charlie, Pastor Rob, her Dad, said, this is totally the Lord
- well we found out years later, that guy was in sin at that time, He was sinning against his wife – no wonder he didn’t think marriage was a good idea
 - Who was that Pastor Jason?
 - I’m not going to tell you! – Pastor Rob? (no I already told you, He gave me godly advice) – Pastor Steve? –Pastor Steve - no way - stop it you gossip
- The only reason I mention that story is sometimes, the people we think we are going to get Godly advice from are not walking real close to the Lord at the moment and we don’t get the Godly advice we think we are going to get
 - Sometimes we can take the Word of God out of context
 - Sometimes we get godly advice that is not so godly and it is out of context

Sometime what my heart is telling me can be wrong – I know Snow White says, “follow your heart” but Snow White is not a Bible scholar

- your heart is desperately wicked Jeremiah 17:9 tells us
 - sometimes we don’t have a peace about something, but it is not the Lord
- I have told you before about DL Moody would felt like he was going to be assassinated while preaching the gospel – he died of heart failure – he should have had a lack of peace about cheese burgers

But you can’t always trust your heart

- and as far as circumstances go
 - open doors, closed doors
 - not every open door is the Lord

Consider Acts 16:25...

“at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened

and everyone's chains were loosed. And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." – Acts 16:25-28

- Paul and Silas were praying God would release them from prison, they were praying God would take care of their lives
 - Then a great earthquake happens and the prison doors are opened and their chains fall off
 - there was an open door for Paul and Silas to run through, literally an open door, if there was ever an obvious open door this was it
- but they didn't go through it – why – because God wanted them to minister to the Philippian jailor

And see the Philippian church raised up, which may have never happen, if they ran through the open door

Well now I am confused – you spent the first part of the study telling us ways to discern God's will and now you're saying we can't trust any of them

- no – the reason I mentioned many things that can help us discern the will of God is any one of them can be taken out of context

I believe you take all four things

Four questions to run difficult decisions through

#1 – What does the Word of God say?

#2 – What does Godly Counsel have to say?

#3 – What does your heart say?

#4 – What do the circumstances say?

- Sometimes one of those can be off
 - I have twisted the Word to say what I want
 - Godly counsel is warning me, my heart is warning me, circumstances are closed but I have my verse – ah – did you twist it?
 - Or you have the Word, you heart and circumstances are leading but the counsel you received doesn't line up – well, are you sure that guy just didn't pray through?
- Maybe you have the Word of God, the counsel of God's people, open doors abound, but your heart uneasy?
 - We can always be off in an area

But that is when you take all those things together, you pray for God, James 1:5 to give you wisdom, and you try the best you can to follow the way God is directing in your life

- And as you follow this, let me share something with great confidence with you – something that can deliver you from the indecision
 - You make the best decision you can with the information you have
 - And as you are acknowledging him – it will be okay
 - How can you be so sure?

Because even when you make a mistake, if you made a mistake by genuinely seeking the Lord, not doing things your own way – God will set things right

How can you say that? – Remember Genesis chapter 20? – Abraham lies to Abimelech and Abimelech being fooled takes Sarah into his Harem

- and that is when God shows up
 - God brings a plague upon Abimelech and when God tells Abimelech why – Abimelech says

"In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this."- Genesis 20:5

Wait a minute – I did this out the integrity of my heart – I though it was right – I thought it was the way I was suppose to go –

- And God says, Your right – you did this in the integrity of your heart and so – I have kept you from sinning – they were not together in any way – and God removed the plague

God set things right – protected all involved – why? – Because although the decision was wrong, it was not made in the flesh, it was not made in sin – it was made in the integrity of the heart

Friends – God cares about the direction of your life, God cares about where you are going, what you are doing

- those who follow it will be blessed
 - Psalm one – blessed is the Man
 - God wants to bless
 - How do I discern it

Four questions to run difficult decisions through

#1 – What does the Word of God say?

#2 – What does Godly Counsel have to say?

#3 – What does your heart say?

#4 – What do the circumstances say?

- Sometimes one of those can be off
 - But you take all these things and James 1:5 ask for wisdom in the integrity of you heart

I believe God will lead you

- I believe God will deliver you from oppression of indecision
 - Not by coming up with a fleece like Gideon did
 - But by asking some questions

What does the Word of God say?

What does Godly Counsel have to say?

What does your heart say?

What do the circumstances say?

- And taking that all to the Lord- trusting that He will lead you as you come to him in the integrity of your heart

The oppression of indecision is real

- I just don't want to make a wrong decision!
 - Let Him set you free
 - Not by a fleece, but by walking in wisdom, by using the brain God has given you!

Extra Notes:

Intro...

Former president Ronald Reagan once had an aunt who took him to a cobbler for a pair of new shoes. The cobbler asked young Reagan, "Do you want square toes or round toes?" Unable to decide, Reagan didn't answer, so the cobbler gave him a few days. Several days later the cobbler saw Reagan on the street and asked him again what kind of toes he wanted on his shoes. Reagan still couldn't decide, so the shoemaker replied, "Well, come by in a couple of days. Your shoes will be ready." When the future president did so, he found one square-toed and one round-toed shoe! "This will teach you to never let people make decisions for you," the cobbler said to his indecisive customer. "I learned right then and there," Reagan said later, "if you don't make your own decisions, someone else will."

The Danger of indecision

I remember in Bible College we had a guy at lectures one time who said he ran everything by the Lord in prayer

- what to eat for breakfast, what direction to drive to work
 - I thought that was so holy
 - So I tried it – I almost starved, I couldn't get to work – because I wasn't sure which way the Lord was leading
- When faced with a tough decision sometimes we need to be delivered from indecision
 - That brings us to our story today in Judges chapter 6

The Danger of Indecision - close

In their book Business Leadership the Marine Corp way – Dan Carrison and Rod Walsh discuss who what they learned in the Marine Corp affected how they do business

- and there is a chapter in there on indecision
 - that we always want 100 percent certainty – but if you act that way on the battle field soldiers die
 - you have to be able to make a decision based on the information you have
 - And I was thinking about that when it comes to the spiritual warfare we are in
- Indecision can hinder you from something God is trying to bless you with
- it can hinder someone hearing about the Lord because you are indecisive about sharing with them
 - it can hinder you if God is trying to tell you to leave a situation and yet you stay because of indecision
 - we need to be delivered from indecision

And of course I think the enemy's greatest indecision is keeping you on the fence about what to do with Jesus

- He loves you
 - He is the only way to salvation
 - And I bet deep in your heart you know that is true
- But there is indecision – what will happen with this, I don't know about this question
 - The Word is clear – I am the Way
 - Godly Counsel is clear – old Pastor Jason
 - Circumstances are on – you are here
 - But your heart!!! – don't let indecision cripple you any longer