

Pastor's Pen

Doubting God!

***Jesus said to him, "Again, it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"* Matthew 4:7**

Have you ever heard someone say, "I need to make a decision, so I laid a fleece out before the Lord"? They are referring to the events of Gideon in Judges 6. We are told the Lord was angry with the Israelites for falling into sin and worshipping false gods. As punishment for their disobedience, the Lord left them under the control of the Midianites for seven years. Seeing relief, the Israelites called out to God for help. God answered them and chose Gideon to save His people.

An angel appears before Gideon, saying (in v 14, we are told it is Yahweh Himself), "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior." The Lord then proceeds to tell Gideon that he will deliver the Israelites from the Midianites, to which point Gideon says, "O Lord, with what shall I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house". Gideon then asks the angel for a sign to prove that he is speaking with God, leaves, and returns with an offering of food. The angel then spontaneously combusts the food. Gideon then realizes it is indeed the Lord. The same night the Lord tells Gideon to destroy one of his father's altars to an idol, Baal, and replace it with an altar to God and sacrifice a bull on it. Gideon does so and at night so that he is not caught. The townspeople find out Gideon did this and demand his execution. However, Gideon's father, Joash, exclaimed that if Baal were truly a God, he would be able to defend himself. Gideon then calls to arms to fight against the Midianites several other peoples, and they join him. Then Gideon asks for another sign that God is with them and asks God to make fleece the only wet thing on the ground the next morning, and then the only dry thing on the ground the morning after that. God does both of these and Gideon knows God is with them.

Gideon goes on to defeat the Midianites with 300 warriors. (I encourage you to read the whole story in Judges 6-7). This sounds like a great outcome, but there is one big problem. Gideon sinned when he tested God. When Satan tempted Jesus, His response was to quote Deuteronomy 6:16, "You shall not put Yahweh your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah."

When you test God, you say you don't trust His Word and reveal in immature faith. Testing God to see whether or not He is faithful, or attempting to blackmail God by making Him give you a sign on your timetable and specifications, is a pagan notion that shows a lack of trust in the God who has only ever proven entirely faithful. Kevin DeYoung stated, "we don't need dreams, visions, fleeces, and signs to know God's will. He has already revealed His plan for our lives: to love Him with our whole hearts, to obey His Word, and after that, to do what we like."

Your shepherd,
Pastor Mark

Quote of the Week

"Have you no wish for others to be saved?
Then you're not saved yourself, be sure of that!"
— Charles H. Spurgeon

Grace Gems

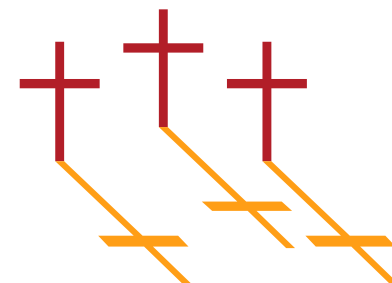
Be diligent!-From Spurgeon's sermon, "Particular Election"

**"...make your CALLING and ELECTION sure."
2 Peter 1:10**

Be diligent in your faith. Take care that your faith is of the right kind - that it is not a creed but a credence - that it is not a mere belief of doctrine, but a reception of doctrine into your heart, and the practical light of the doctrine in your soul.

No man has any right to believe himself elect of God, unless he has been renewed by God; no man has any right to believe himself called, unless his life be in the main consistent with his calling, and he walk worthy of that whereunto he is called. Out upon an election that lets you live in sin!
Away with it! away with it!

The true Christian desires that day by day he may grow more holy;
that hour by hour he may be more thoroughly renewed, until
conformed to the image of Christ, he may enter into bliss eternal.



Weekly Gatherings

Bible Classes

Old & New Testament Classes
Ladies Class
Young Adults Young Parents
Youth Surge
Sunday Morning @ 9:30AM

Weekday Meetings

Mondays | 7PM
Men's Bible Study
1st and 3rd Saturday
Women of Grace | 9AM

Family Groups

Thursdays @ 7PM
every other week @ Brown's
Other groups off for the summer

Build the Body Teams

If you would like to serve on a BtB Team and need to sign up, please contact the team leader at the appropriate email address on the back of this bulletin.

Youth Study

Wednesdays @6:30PM
Youth Study & Surge!

Service Times

Sunday Services 8AM & 11:00AM
Sunday School 9:30AM
Children's Church @11:00AM

Giving from service on 06/18/2023

General Offering	7,269.87
Building Fund	1,238.00
Uganda Missions	70.00

Total.....	\$8,577.87
Attendance	266
Online.....	21

Build the Body Ministries

Women's Ministry-women@ghbcva.org
AWANA-awana@ghbcva.org
Outreach Ministry-outreach@ghbcva.org
Worship Ministry-worship@ghbcva.org
Men's Ministry-men@ghbcva.org
Children's Ministry-children@ghbcva.org
Youth Ministry-youth@ghbcva.org
Prayer Team-prayer@ghbcva.org
Maintenance-maintenance@ghbcva.org
Fellowship-fellowship@ghbcva.org
Communications-communications@ghbcva.org
Front Line-frontline@ghbcva.org
Security-security@ghbcva.org



Grace Harvest
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Grace Harvest Baptist Church

June 25, 2023

Welcome