

### WARM-UP

- What food do you dislike? What don't you like about it?
- Share a time when your expectations did not match reality. How did you respond?
- What is something you are afraid of? Why?

**WORD** <sup>11</sup>Now the angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. <sup>12</sup>And the angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, "The LORD is with you, O mighty man of valor." **JUDGES 6:11,12**

(Read also **JUDGES 6:13-24; ROMANS 5:1.**)

Every year, the Midianites would raid the Israelites and take their wheat. To hide the wheat from the raiders, Gideon beat it in the winepress. There was no peace or security in their daily lives. But the angel of the Lord called Gideon a *mighty man of valor*, even if it did not match Gideon's view of himself or his actions. Let's look at what Gideon learned about what it means to have the peace of God.

# 1 | God gives us peace in our circumstances.

*<sup>13</sup>And Gideon said to him, "Please, my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' But now the LORD has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian." <sup>14</sup>And the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?" <sup>15</sup>And he said to him, "Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." <sup>16</sup>And the LORD said to him, "But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man." **JUDGES 6:13-16***

Gideon was focused on the present reality of the Midianite raids. But God focused both on the present reality and His presence in that reality. God would send and be with a deliverer of Israel. God's presence in our reality is what brings peace, wholeness, and deliverance to our lives. How have you experienced the peace of God in a difficult situation?

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## 2 | God gives us peace with Him.

*<sup>22</sup>Then Gideon perceived that he was the angel of the LORD. And Gideon said, "Alas, O Lord GOD! For now I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face." <sup>23</sup>But the LORD said to him, "Peace be to you. Do not fear; you shall not die." <sup>24</sup>Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and called it, The LORD Is Peace. To this day it still stands at Ophrah, which belongs to the Abiezrites. **JUDGES 6:22-24***

In the Israelites' culture of the time, seeing the angel of God was equal to seeing the face of God. Seeing the face of God, because God is holy and man is sinful, meant death. But the angel instantly assured Gideon that he had nothing to fear. God did not come to destroy Gideon, but He had come in peace. We too can have peace with God and need not fear death, through faith in what Jesus Christ did for us (Romans 5:1). Share a time that you had a realization of God's holiness and peace at the same time. How did that change your life and perspective?

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### APPLICATION

- Have you experienced the peace of God in your life? Meditate on Philippians 4:7 and how it describes the peace of God.
- Is there a situation you are asking for God's peace in? How can you make time for God to speak into your situation this week?
- With God, we experience wholeness. What is one thing you can do that will help you remember the Lord is your peace?

