

3. In 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, Paul has been privileged to see a vision from heaven yet has a hindrance with a thorn in his flesh. How can we apply this passage to Gideon's challenges and what do we learn about boasting?

4. How do you see God's goodness and reassurance as He goes ahead of Gideon in 7:9-15? What was Gideon's response?

Verse 15 shows us what happens when we allow God to reassure us of his strength and promises. We praise and worship God, and we act in radical obedience to him.

5. After Gideon worships the Lord, He displays unwavering courage and action. How does slowing down to worship propel our obedience? Give a verse to support your answer.

6. Read Judges 7:6–23. How do you see Gideon stand on who God says he is, “a mighty warrior” even with overwhelming odds? Despite and through Israel's (and Gideon's) weakness, who truly wins the battle?

This triumph is truly God-given, won despite and through Israel's weakness!

Reflection & Application:

7. Likely, Gideon looked back and remembered God's command from 7:2. When has God weakened you with a reduction of resources, and how did this bring about growth in your relationship with Christ?

Fasting Reflection:

RELAX: Take a moment to relax. Close your eyes and breathe deeply - inhaling slowly, then exhaling slowly. Repeat this several times as you imagine yourself coming into God's presence. As you finish and get ready to read, pray something simple like "Lord, speak to me through the words of your gospel. Amen."

READ. Read this story about Jesus two times. Read slowly, pausing at the line breaks:

Mark 6:34-44 (NIV)

When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

But he answered, "You give them something to eat."

They said to him, "That would take more than half a year's wages^[e]! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"

"How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see."

When they found out, they said, "Five—and two fish."

Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

REFLECT. After the reading, take some time to reflect in silence on one or more of the following questions:

- What word or words in this passage caught your attention?
- What in this passage comforted you?
- What in this passage challenged you?
- What is God inviting you into?

RESPOND. Read the scripture passage one more time. Bring to the Lord the praise, petition, questions, or thanksgiving that the Word inspires in you.

REST. Soak in the moment, rest in it, don't rush through it. Do you sense anything that Jesus is inviting you to know, see, believe, or do? Pray: Thank you God for meeting with me in this time. Give me courage and faith to follow you this day.