Message Notes

Christian living void of the mission of Christ is not what Christ had in mind for his followers. As you look at the book of Acts, every Christ follower understood that following Christ implied active participation in His mission. They did not, and could not, separate participation in the mission from association with Christ.

Living beyond yourself is a core concept of following Christ. You can’t possibly follow Christ without following Him into active involvement in his work around you.

But over time, our version of Christianity has created barriers. Barriers that keep you from living beyond yourself. (These barriers that keep you in also keep others out.)

Read: Judges 6:1–4; 11-16.

The first barrier that needed to break was Gideon’s limited view of God. God does care and His call of Gideon was evidence of that care. The evidence of God’s love, grace, power, etc is usually displayed in the lives of His people. God wants to work through His people still today.

The second barrier that needed to break was Gideon’s limited view of himself. Gideon seemed to think that God could do nothing because he and his family were nothing. But God sees the man that He will make and it is on that basis that He greets Gideon.

Gideon is busy limiting God’s future by his own past. Don’t limit God’s future by your past. Your limited view of yourself limits your view beyond yourself.

The third barrier that needed to break was Gideon’s lack of expectation. Our lack of expectation doesn’t change the fact that God is still working around us. To overcome his lack of expectation, Gideon asked the LORD for a sign. Read: Judges 6:17–18

The fourth barrier that needed to break was Gideon’s disobedience to simple and clear commands. Read: Judges 6:25–29. Before the plans the Lord had for Gideon could become a reality, Gideon needed to align himself with God’s already revealed commands.

The personal application is that we can’t be useful to God in the public sphere if we are not putting Him first in our private lives. When God shows us a step, we must take it, for the next door will not open until we have gone through the one already in front of us. Sometimes it just take simple obedience to clear commands. What is your simple act of obedience?
Life Group Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the reasons and excuses that keep Christians from being more actively involved in Christ’s mission? How many of these are actually valid excuses?

Read Judges 6:1-16. The story of Gideon shows us several barriers we need to break in order to participate in living beyond ourselves.

2. The first barrier is a limited view of God (vs. 12-13). How is that barrier demonstrated in Gideon’s calling? In what ways have you seen this barrier in your own life?

3. The second barrier is a limited view of yourself (vs. 15). How is this revealed in Gideon’s story? How does Gideon’s view of himself conflict with God’s view of him? How have you seen this barrier at work in your life?

4. The third barrier is a lack of expectation (Read Judges 6:17-24). Even after the visit of the Angel of the Lord, Gideon is still not convinced. How does this reveal Gideon’s lack of expectation? In what ways is this barrier demonstrated in our lives?

5. The fourth barrier is disobedience to simple and clear commands (Read Judges 6:25-32). How was this barrier displayed in Gideon’s story?

6. Why was this first act of Gideon’s obedience such an important step in God using him in greater ways in the future?

7. What is your simple act of obedience that may lead you to greater involvement in living beyond yourself?