



“Mighty Man of Valor”??

The story in Judges 6 isn't Gideon's story; it's everyone's story. The only difference is that Gideon knew what was going on in his life.

Enemies were everywhere. The people of Midian were oppressing God's people, so that many in Israel were hiding in dens and caves in the hill country. Those who stayed at home were staying out of sight. Joash's boy, Gideon, was threshing wheat, but doing it down in the winepress to hide from the marauding Midianites.

Oppressed on every side, hiding from the enemy—what a time for an angel of the Lord to show up! The Bible doesn't speak of angels chuckling, but I'm sure I hear a chuckle in the angel's voice as he calls out to Gideon, “The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor!” Thanks. Thanks a lot. What a cruelty joke. Never in his life had Gideon felt less like a “mighty man of valor!”

Gideon tried to weasel his way out of the uncomfortable moment by recalling why not only he, but the whole nation, was hiding in fear. The angel totally ignored what Gideon said, replying with words that must have seemed even more incredible to Gideon's ears than to ours: “Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do I not now send you?” Gideon's predictable response, loosely paraphrased: “You've got to be kidding!”

The rest of the chapter is God's patient working with Gideon to help him realize that he, too, could be one of God's chosen servants. Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua—they were God's servants in their time. Now, in this time, Gideon is “da man.”

Gideon had a tough time believing it, but he finally did just what he was supposed to do: he dipped his toe into the water. That is, he started out by doing a few relatively simple things to see if all this would work. It did—God blessed his efforts—so he was emboldened to step out into deeper waters. By the beginning of chapter 7 he had become, in fact, the mighty warrior that God's vision knew him to be from the very beginning.

Wondering about your spiritual gift but a little afraid to try? You and Gideon can share stories some day. *G. Crowe*

Standing at the Cross

During our recent Spring Retreat we spent time reflecting on the different pathways we can use to pursue God. Examples included, but were not limited to, the intellectual pathway, the relational pathway, and the contemplative pathway. I asked the students in my group, the contemplative pathway, to try it out that very morning. So, off we went, each his own way to embrace the contemplative pathway.

I walked to our fireside amphitheater where there is a big firepit, benches, and a 6-foot cross standing in the ground. I went alone and I stood at the foot of the cross. The words of a beautiful hymn came to my mind, “Near the cross, O Lamb of God..... Bring its scenes before me. Help me walk from day to day...with its shadow o'er me.” Beautiful, beautiful words.

Indicting words. As I stood at the foot of the cross, I found myself desiring to back up a little, to move, to walk away. I honestly could not stand at the foot of the cross after hearing those words in my head! The weight was too much to bear. I found myself shrinking back and glancing at the cross from afar, even though the goal of life is to embrace the cross.

I challenge you this week to find a way to both feel the weight of the cross and yet to embrace it up close. Find that balance and you might be near the cross, but you probably won't be standing.... ~Dan



Bob Stafford will have surgery Thursday morning at Home Hospital....**Connie Nicholson** will have eye surgery on Thursday....**Amber Tolle**, Ginger Maxwell-Spenard's daughter, is on complete bed rest until her baby is born....**Willie Batts** continues medical tests for ongoing physical problems....**Rose Hunt** is having chronic health problems and undergoing tests....Continue praying for **Patty Vice, Tim McClain, Kaden Koebcke, Noah Powlen, Sarah Bird, Natasha Risley, Phyllis Gray, Mark Eddy, Marie DeWoody, Anna Dale, Delpha Allen, Carrie High** (*Regency Place Nursing Home*), **Irene Fox** (*George Davis Manor Nursing Home*), **Paul & Ruth Marks, Minnie Scott, and Burnell Gulden** (*Rosewalk Village*).

Serving in Iraq: **Jon Kiefner, Loren Sniffen, and Brad King**. Serving in South Korea near the DMZ: **Amanda Martin** (Phyllis Simmerman's niece).

Wedding Shower for Mary McClain & Jared Fee

Everyone is invited to a come-n-go wedding shower for Mary McClain, bride-elect of Jared Fee, on **Sunday, April 30, from 3-5 PM**, in the fellowship room (A-2) of Elmwood Church of Christ. For contributions toward a gift, see Stephanie Barrett, Sherry Marks, Sharon Porter, or Sheryl Willison. Please come and offer your best wishes to Mary and Jared who will be married June 10.



Chelsea Barnett and **Cara Gamble** will both participate in the **March of Dimes Walk America** this **Saturday, April 29**. All money donated to them will be used to further the cause of saving premature babies. If you would like to donate to Chelsea, contact her at 477-0027 or Caitie Jones at 426-8651 or email her at cnjones@purdue.edu. To donate to Cara you can reach her at 538-2995 or email her at Rscargamble@aol.com.

Wedding Shower for Joe Armstrong & Eleri Griffin

Joe Armstrong and his fiancée, **Eleri Griffin**, will be honored at a shower at the home of Mandy and Kenny Anderson, 16 Haymarket Way, Lafayette, on **May 13 at 7:00 PM**. To contribute to a group gift, see Gina Boyd or Mandy Anderson.

Directory Information

Farrell Simmerman is gathering additional information for our new pictorial directory now being done. If you'd like your wedding anniversary date and your cell phone numbers listed along with your address and phone number, etc., contact Farrell at 474-6277 or by email at farrellnphyllis@aol.com. You may also list that information on your yellow attendance card on Sunday morning.



It's a Boy!



Caleb Ethan was born to **Jeff and Amber Witherbee** on Saturday, April 22, weighing 7 pounds 15 ounces. Jeff and Amber live at 12890 E. 131st St., Noblesville, 46060. Congratulations to grandparents, Cecil and Sherry too!



Jack Pierce, grandfather of Brandon Hombs whom we had mentioned in our prayer concerns several times, died April 17. He had lung cancer and most recently sepsis throughout his body. Our sympathies to Brandon, Veronica, his parents, and grandmother.

LUM Meal Providers

Serving dinner at Lafayette Urban Ministry on Monday night were **Judy Riddle, Janet Boston, Thelma Hoyt & Mary Kay Ciesielski**.

April 23, 2006
Class: 214 Worship: 299
Contribution: \$6,675
Budget: \$8,100

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GETTIN' READY?

Ready or not, here comes summer. By now, many of you know, but our Summer Intern, Phil Travis will be here a week earlier than we originally planned. He will be joining us in the office on May 15, but I expect we will see him sometime on the 14th. The reason he is coming earlier is that he has been selected as a R.A. or Resident Assistant at Rochester College for next fall and he will need to be present for training the second week of August and then he is off and running with the athletes moving into the dorms, etc. In the meantime, we have lots of things planned for him – between May 15 and August 2, not the least of which is for him to get to know as many of you wonderful people as possible. To help with the getting to know you thing, we have always asked the church family to house the intern and to provide most of their meals. We have three families (the Bells, the Staffords and the Sutherlins) who are willing to help with housing...we can still work more in. This week, we will be posting a calendar/sign up for people to host Phil for meals. Obviously the most helpful meals are lunch and dinner, but if breakfast works for you, I'm sure he'll be glad to join you. Please know that you don't need to be elaborate. Hot dogs at your house or a meal at a nice restaurant and everything in between will work fine.

ELEVATE AT ROCHESTER COLLEGE

The dates for this year's camp for 7th-12th graders are June 25-30. Josh Stafford is trying to get a group together for this fun experience. Elevate is much like other camps except there are a few new opportunities and you sleep in the college dorms at night...a first taste of college life. If you can't go to Elevate, but want to go to Cedar Point, it is on June 30 this year. We will get details to you as soon as possible.

CAMP CUMO – JULY 9-14

Our group has been invited back to work with the teens from the Withamsville church in Cincinnati to take 50 inner city young people tent camping for a week. Last year was a lot of work, but it was also very rewarding and eye opening. This year's theme is "The AmazinGrace." More details will be coming soon and we will also be getting with the Cincy teens in Indianapolis to meet new people, renew friendships and to begin planning the work. Let me know if you plan to go.

SPRING MILL BIBLE CAMP

Please remember the two weeks we work with generally fill up quickly. Our Senior week is July 16-22 (current 7th-12th grade) and our Intermediate week is July 23-29 (current 4th-8th grade). Get your applications in TODAY! – Lee



Matt Roberts, a Purdue student, made the decision to make Jesus Lord of his life and obey him in baptism Sunday morning. Matt is a graduate student in a specialized field in agriculture. Matt resides at 321 Vine St., West Lafayette 47906; phone: 743-9002. Welcome Matt to our Elmwood family!

Teacher Training April 29 in Logansport

Saturday, April 29, Tom Tignor, Curriculum Editor for 21st Century Christian, will present three teacher training sessions that will revolutionize your teaching. The Northern Indiana Teacher Training Seminar begins with registration at 8:30 AM, followed by sessions that will run from 9:00 until noon. The seminar is free but space is limited, so if interested contact Rob Hall at Yorktown Rd. Church of Christ (574-753-2757) or Tom Tignor (800-251-2477) to reserve your spot. The seminar will be held at the Yorktown Road Church of Christ, 406 Yorktown Road, Logansport, Indiana. –Joe Ruhl

Don't forget the College Spring Banquet at the Seattle Beanery this Saturday, April 29, at 7:30 PM. Cost: \$10



- April 26, 7 PM....**Bible classes for all
- April 29, 8:30 AM....**Teacher Training Seminar at Yorktown Rd. Church of Christ in Logansport
- April 29....**March of Dimes Walk America; contact Cara Gamble & Chelsea Barnett to make a donation
- April 29, 7:30 PM....**College Spring Banquet, at the Seattle Beanery; cost \$10
- April 30, 3-5 PM....**Wedding Shower for Mary McClain & Jared Fee at Elmwood fellowship room
- April 30, 6 PM....**LIFE Groups
- May 13, 7 PM....**Wedding shower for Joe Armstrong & Eleri Griffin at the Anderson home, 16 Haymarket Way, Lafayette
- June 13....**Let's Start Talking Team (**Josh, Gina, & Kinley Boyd, Ryan & Stephanie Middleton, & Alison Ruhl**) leaves for Suva, Fiji; will return July 25

Read:
1 Samuel 1-4; Ruth 1-4;
Romans 15-16; Ephesians 1-6

2006 Spiritual Adventure

Week 19: May 7-13

The Book of Ephesians—The “In Christ” Epistle

Paul wrote to the Christians at Ephesus to help them get a firm fix on their relationship to God, Christ, the gospel, and each other. *“You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.”* This “package” of things which the Ephesians (and we) received at baptism was precious indeed. We were **chosen** in Him, received **redemption** and **forgiveness** through His blood, and the purpose of God’s will in Christ. He showed us the **riches of His grace** in Christ, how we have **hope** in Christ, and with the power of his Spirit He **dwells in our hearts** through faith.

After locating us firmly **in Christ, in His church**, in His body, Paul tells us why we are there. The indwelling of the Spirit permits us to become a holy temple in the Lord, in which God lives by His Spirit. Christ apportioned grace to each of us to prepare us for **works of service**, so that the body of Christ can be built up. God wants the gospel of Christ (now revealed) to be made known through the church. Just as He created us in Christ Jesus to do **good works**, His intention is that we should couple the good works with teaching of Christ’s gospel with the result that the whole church grows and builds itself up in love. And now back to God—to Him be glory **in the church** and **in Christ Jesus** throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen **–Bill Farris**



The Immediate Sacrifice

My friend knew time was short. Doctors told her the breast cancer was rapidly spreading. She might not live to see the summer flowers in bloom. She did what most people would do in such circumstances. She put her business affairs in order, called the funeral director, talked to family members, considered spiritual matters, and wept with her friends.

And, she did one more thing. She enrolled in a clinical trial. A doctor submitted her name for a research program using two cancer drugs. Each drug had proven effective when used separately. Now researchers were testing the drugs in combination.

My friend completed stacks of paperwork and met with the researchers. The hope was that these drugs would prove more powerful against cancer when administered in tandem. Maybe these drugs would be the ticket. Maybe they would slow the fast-growing tumors. And, maybe, just maybe, they would ease the pain and give her a better quality of life. The best outcome would be the chance to live a little longer with less pain.

Patients enter clinical trials under the guidelines of informed consent. This means doctors must explain all possible outcomes. So, my friend also heard the other side. The drugs might prove too toxic when used in combination and treatment might need to be stopped. She might be too weak to withstand the treatment. She was told that sun-burn-like symptoms would appear on her hands and feet. The doctors suspected that other side effects would appear once the second drug was administered. As with any new treatment, a worst case scenario could cause organ failure and actually shorten her life.

What would my friend do? Knowing all the risks, would she continue with the trial? She proceeded and began the first treatments. She allowed the researchers to use her body as a living laboratory to learn what they could. It would be wonderful if they could help her. But if not, perhaps they could gain information to help someone else.

Most people know clinical trials exist and know that terminal patients often enroll in hopes of benefiting from a new drug. And, most people know that advances in medical treatment have been possible because patients were willing to enter into clinical trials. Cancer treatment, in particular, has been refined by trials with patients who were willing to risk death in order for doctors to learn more about treatment options.

I have to admit that I knew about the role of clinical trials, but never really thought much about the topic...until I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Suddenly I was benefiting from thousands of women who had offered themselves as living laboratories. These women, coming from the last 50 years, didn't know me or my friend. But, they risked their

survivorship to help the generations who would follow them. The whole concept became very personal.

I take a pill every day to reduce the recurrence of breast cancer. The doctors have told me this drug will be effective for five years. After five years, my body and the cancer will adapt. The medicine is counterproductive if taken beyond five years. Cancer recurrence actually becomes *more* likely if I continue taking the drug after five years and less likely if I stop at five years. This seems counter intuitive. But, doctors have this information because hundreds of women, particularly in the 1970's and 1980's, were willing to participate in clinical trials. Some of them drew the long straw and were in groups with a high survivorship. Many more drew the short straw and found themselves in groups with a low survivorship.

In the years since then, more women have participated in more studies and treatments have advanced. Today new drugs are coming onto the market, thanks to the courage of women who entered clinical trials. And, like my friend, new women continue to offer their lives for women who will be diagnosed in the years to come. I will benefit from these new studies because new drugs will be available at the end of my five years of treatment on the first drug.

It is profoundly humbling to realize that women who didn't even know me were willing to risk their lives so I could have better treatment options. Their lives for mine. Someone sacrificing so others could live. Hmmm...I've heard that before.

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends (John 15:13).

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers (1 John 3:16).

Understanding what these women have sacrificed for others helps me focus on the sacrifice of Christ. What is real and immediate connects me to what is more abstract. It is a portal through which I can have a more full understanding of Christ's willingness to die for our salvation.

Now for my friend. What happened with her clinical trial? She drew the short straw. The side effects were so severe on her weakened system that the treatment was discontinued after one week. She saw the spring flowers, but not the summer flowers. I attended her funeral yesterday and I know a little more about sacrificial love.

–Sue Wilder