"A Kingless Kingdom" Series WEEK 5 – CALLED OUT

--We are studying the entire book of JUDGES!

TODAY: **WEEK 5 – CALLED OUT**

We have seen 4 judges: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah

God has continued to redeem a Kingless Kingdom

He loves His people and when the people cry out to Him, He answers

Through Deborah stirring up the call in BARAK, the Israelites enter in to peace again

8 years of bondage, then 40 years of peace
18 years of bondage, then 80 years of peace
20 years of bondage and now they are just finishing up 40 YEARS of peace….

Judges 6:1-6 (NLT)
1 The Israelites did evil in the Lord's sight. So the Lord handed them over to the Midianites for seven years. **2** The Midianites were so cruel that the Israelites made hiding places for themselves in the mountains, caves, and strongholds. **3** Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, marauders from Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east would attack Israel, **4** camping in the land and destroying crops as far away as Gaza. They left the Israelites with nothing to eat, taking all the sheep, goats, cattle, and donkeys. **5** These enemy hordes, coming with their livestock and tents, were as thick as locusts; they arrived on droves of camels too numerous to count. And they stayed until the land was stripped bare. **6** So Israel was reduced to starvation by the Midianites. Then the Israelites cried out to the Lord for help.

The people were in rebellion and the OPPRESSION that were handed over to was SO BAD – that this time it take 40 years of oppression, only 20 years….

THEY were reduced to starvation, their land stripped bare, and reduced to FLEEING their homes and HIDING in the mountains, caves, and strongholds

LET ME READ the passage right before JUDGES….RIGHT before JOSHUA died and there was no leader….

Joshua 24:13 (NLT)
13 I gave you land you had not worked on, and I gave you towns you did not build—the towns where you are now living. I gave you vineyards and olive groves for food, though you did not plant them.

THEY VERY THING that God gave them; they couldn't even POSSESS
God gave them homes; they were reduce to HIDING..

THEY WERE HUMILIATED – they were HUMBLED…

Matthew 23:12 (NLT)
12 But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

THEY WERE ONCE AGAIN, exalting themselves BEFORE GOD

GOD gave them the land – and instead of STERWARDING it in the name of the Lord, they did evil IN his sight, walked away from him, as if it was THEIR RIGHT to do what they wanted..
"I HAVE THE RIGHT"

God says "YOU DIDN'T GET ANY OF THIS, I GAVE IT TO YOU"
Now manage it and bring honor to the giver

AND WHEN YOU DON'T…YOU WILL BE HUMBLED….
To a place where you have to DEPEND on me

THEY WERE living in HIDING when they should have been RULING and walking and living a peaceful life as a FRUIT from doing everything to glorify God…

Colossians 3:23 (NLT)
23 Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

IN ALL THINGS – do it as a THANKFUL offering to the LORD
And if what you're doing isn't acceptable..
GET RID OF THE CURSED thing or MANAGE WELL the GOOD thing…

AND WHAT IS FUNNY
After 20 years of oppression, they use a FREE, FIRST resource as their last resort.. PRAYER…

Jeremiah 33:3 (NKJV)
3 'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'

WHY is that always our LAST RESORT when it is an un-ending resource
ASK ME, TELL ME, ill answer…and ill show you….

AND THAT IS EXACTLY what God does…

Judges 6:7-10 (NLT)
7 When they cried out to the Lord because of Midian, **8** the Lord sent a prophet to the Israelites. He said, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of slavery in Egypt. **9** I rescued you from the Egyptians and from all who oppressed you. I drove out your enemies and gave you their land. **10** I told you, 'I am the Lord your God. You must not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you now live.' But you have not listened to me."

BEFORE GOD raises up the judge – HE REMINDS THEM OF SOMETHING…

God says "remember what I did for you?
I delivered you from slavery, oppression, conquered enemies, gave you this land"
God says "remember who I am?"
God says "remember what I asked you NOT to do?"

GOD IS REVEALING something to them BEFORE he delivers the JUDGE
Israel thought the problem was a STRONG enemy called the MIDIANITES
BUT THE PROBLEM – wasn't the enemy – it was ISRAEL…IT WAS themselves

GOD SAYS – you have FORGOTTEN who you are….

YOU ARE MINE…but you live as if I DON'T EXIST – and I want my children back

Psalm 100:3 (NLT)
3 Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

REMEMBER who you ARE…
WHY did he need to remind them

THEY were crying out to help, without understanding they needed to repent and turn back..

They cried for help…but they needed to realize THEY wre living in opposition to HIM, robbing themselves of WALKING in their true identity…

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Judges 6:11-12 (NLT)
11 Then the angel of the Lord came and sat beneath the great tree at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash of the clan of Abiezer. Gideon son of Joash was threshing wheat at the bottom of a winepress to hide the grain from the Midianites. **12** The angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, "Mighty hero, the Lord is with you!"

FIRST THING ANGEL OF THE LORD SAYS is what…
MIGHTY HERO – *he was ACKNOWLDING an identity that GIDEON didn't believe*

ANGEL OF THE LORD – an appearance of JESUS in bodily form before he came in to the world in ACTUAL flesh – WHY – Jesus was always the WORD…
The LORD delivered a MESSAGE, a WORD to GIDEON

****THE reason we know it wasn't just an angel, because you'll see in verse 14, the txt references this angel AS Lord*

AND THE PLACE God called him MIGHTY HERO….
He was threshing wheat a the bottom of a winepress to HIDE grain

*A JOB that was both difficult and HUMILIATING, HUMBLING
- Wheat was usually threshed (separating grain) in open spaces so the breexe could blow away the chaff – the worthless part of the wheat
- because it wasn't in the open, he couldn't do the usual work of bringing a wheel over the grain or use the feet of oxen, it was by hand all by himself

IN A HIDDEN HUMBLE DIFFICULT PLACE – GOD SAYS – YOU SIR are mighty

Colossians 3:23 (NLT)
23 Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

GOD determines your identity in ALL things you do and HOW you do them and what you do them FOR
GIDEON was seen as MIGHTY because of his DAILY DUTY

WHAT DO YOU DO with your ORDINARY – HOW DO YOU STEWARD the seemingly meaningless things in the hidden places of your life….

GOD SAYS – by what you DO – I will know whether or not you're walking in what I have called you as….

AND after GOD calls Gideon as mighty and says "GOD IS WITH YOU"
Look at what Gideon says…

Judges 6:13 (NLT)
13 "Sir," Gideon replied, "if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn't they say, 'The Lord brought us up out of Egypt'? But now the Lord has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites."

Gideon turns to God with a response – NO HE AINT! – God isn't with us
If he was – where are the miracles, The Lord abandoned us – it is HIS fault

Gideon puts the fault on GOD!
Isn't that what we do? Why did God let this happen?
Why did God turn from me?

In Hebrews 13, God says "I will never leave you or forsake you"
In 1 Cor 10 God says "God is faithful, you cant be tempted beyond what you can stand and even if you fail, He will be there to show you a way out"
BUT WE LOVE to blame instead of seeing

AND EVEN THOUGH Gideon questioned him….look what God says…

Judges 6:14 (NLT)
14 Then the Lord turned to him and said, "Go with the strength you have, and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!"

EVEN THOUGH GIDEON questioned God – God said
GO with what you got and RESCUE my people – I AM SENDING YOU

AND WE HAVE painted a horrible picture in the church – DON'T QUESTION GOD
Yet over and over in scripture – God invites us to a CONVERSATION

APPROACH ME – ASK ME – TALK TO ME – you can't see clearly, ask me to show you

That is all Gideon was doing – he didn't understand – and he was working diligently and when God started talking – GIDEON wanted to make sure "IS THIS GOD TALKING OR MY FLESH TALKING OR MY HEART TALKING"

Judges 6:15-16 (NLT)
15 "But Lord," Gideon replied, "how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family!"**16** The Lord said to him, "I will be with you. And you will destroy the Midianites as if you were fighting against one man."

Immediately – after God calls him out again by his identity…Gideon says LORD
God calls him MIGHTY MAN of VALOR
And then after Gideon questions, God says "I AM SENDING YOU"

GIDEON WAS CORRECT… I CANT NOT RESCUE ISRAEL
NOT ALONE – He was TOTALLY depending on needing HELP
HE DID NOT EXALT HIMSELF above God
AND GOD says "I WILL BE WITH YOU"

AND NOTICE – God says "Go with the STRENGTH YOU HAVE"
What strength?

Gideon questioned God with all the attributes of God…
"God did the miracles and great things"
MEANING he didn't forget GOD like all the others did…

HE had STRENGTH Of knowledge of God
Of being humble in his threshing of weak
Of caring bout Israel so he worked to sustain them (wheat)
OF being HUNGRY for God to do great things again
Of being TEACHABLE – cause He listened to God

GIDEON SAYS "I cant do this, my clan is the weakest of all Manasseh and I am the weakest in my family"

2 Corinthians 12:9 (NLT)
9 Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.

In his humility God says "I can use you because you will have to depend on me and let your IDENTIY be not in yourself, but as a CHILD of God"

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IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

WALK in your identify – but don't let your authority in CHRIST to make you Boastful – ONLY boast that "I CANT DO IT WITHOUT HIM"

God was calling Gideon to be raised up to REDEEM the kingless kingdom

And Gideon was chosen because of his HUMILITY

Philippians 2:5-9 (NLT)

5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. **6** Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. **7** Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, **8** he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. **9** Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names,

God uses those who are moldable, teachable, obedient, self-sacrificing..

And in that HUMILITY – we have all the access to HIS strength…

Judges 6:17-19 (NLT)

17 Gideon replied, "If you are truly going to help me, show me a sign to prove that it is really the Lord speaking to me. **18** Don't go away until I come back and bring my offering to you." He answered, "I will stay here until you return." **19** Gideon hurried home. He cooked a young goat, and with a basket of flour he baked some bread without yeast. Then, carrying the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, he brought them out and presented them to the angel, who was under the great tree.

LOOK AT GIDEON –

He is wanting CONFIRMATION that it is God, and in bringing the offering to the angel of the Lord he was questioning and needing confirmation of – LOOK AT THE DILIGENCE: ***got a young coat, cooked it, baked bread – carrying this feast and broth and bread back to a TREE***

AND REMEMBER – doing all this in SECRET so that the Midianites didn't steal it from him

EVEN THOUGH it MIGHT not have been God – HE DID it as UNTO THE LORD no matter what

Proverbs 13:4 (NLT)
4 Lazy people want much but get little, but those who work hard will prosper.

Proverbs 21:5 (NLT)
5 Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty.

GIDEON KNEW – I am gonna bring my BEST offering AS UNTO THE LORD

Malachi 1:6-9 (NLT)
6 The Lord of Heaven's Armies says to the priests: "A son honors his father, and a servant respects his master. If I am your father and master, where are the honor and respect I deserve? You have shown contempt for my name! "But you ask, 'How have we ever shown contempt for your name?' **7** "You have shown contempt by offering defiled sacrifices on my altar. "Then you ask, 'How have we defiled the sacrifices?' "You defile them by saying the altar of the Lord deserves no respect. **8** When you give blind animals as sacrifices, isn't that wrong? And isn't it wrong to offer animals that are crippled and diseased? Try giving gifts like that to your governor, and see how pleased he is!" says the Lord of Heaven's Armies. **9** "Go ahead, beg God to be merciful to you! But when you bring that kind of offering, why should he show you any favor at all?" asks the Lord of Heaven's Armies.

GOD has plans for you
God has a call on your life
    AND HOW YOU STEWARD WHAT YOU HAVE – weighs greatly on the favor and strength you need to WALK in to the CALL God has placed on you

AND WE think "well I need _____ so I can answer that call

WHEN GOD SAYS "go with what you DO have…and I will provide the rest"
    And God CALLED OUT GIDEON after seeing a man DILIGENT and HUMBLE in ALL he did

I BELIEVE that is why God waited for Gideon, probably for hours and hours
    GOD ALREADY KNEW the kind of offering GIDEON would bring because HE KNEW Gideon

GOD KNOWS YOU…and KNOWS what you are capable of!

Judges 6:20-21 (NLT)
20 The angel of God said to him, "Place the meat and the unleavened bread on this rock, and pour the broth over it." And Gideon did as he was told. **21** Then the angel of the Lord touched the meat and bread with the tip of the staff in his hand, and fire flamed up from the rock and consumed all he had brought. And the angel of the Lord disappeared.

GOD accepted HIS OFFERING

Judges 6:22-24 (NLT)
22 When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the Lord, he cried out, "Oh, Sovereign Lord, I'm doomed! I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!" **23** "It is all right," the Lord replied. "Do not be afraid. You will not die." **24** And Gideon built an altar to the Lord there and named it Yahweh-Shalom (which means "the Lord is peace"). The altar remains in Ophrah in the land of the clan of Abiezer to this day.

I think a lot of us have that response sometimes
WE GET AFRAID because we disappointed God
WE GET AFRAID when we see HIM in the middle of our mess

AND GOD SAYS "don't be afraid" – ANSWER YOUR CALL and be obedient
SO HIS RESPONSE – an act of worship – and his FEAR turned in to PEACE

Hebrews 13:14-15 (NLT)
14 For this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come. **15** Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name.

THIS world is not permanent, it WILL be redemeemed
UNTIL THEN – let us offer a SACRIFICE of PRAISE through JESUS

Gideon did this – an offering of praise through the ANGEL OF THE LORD that was JESUS before the fleshly in-dwelling for the FATHER

ALL This work with the offering of the GOAT and BREAD
And then HE BUILT an altar

And in that PRAISE – fear turned to peace which made him READY to answer the call for a WEAK NOBODY to redeem a KINGLESS KINGDOM! …….

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WEEK 5 – CALLED OUT

How have you responded to God?

DO YOU TURN from him in fear
Or RETURN to him with an offering of praise and thanksgiving

YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED OUT

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH IT?

HOW WILL YOU PREPARE?

Have you humbled yourself?
Are you diligent in seeking Him?
Do you steward what you have instead of complaining about what you don't have?

GOD SEES GREATNESS IN YOU and thought YOU as WORTHY to create

LET's BEGIN TO HONOR HIM as the called out ones!

AMEN