Sermon Notes

Judges 6: 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. 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."

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!"

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."

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!"

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."

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.

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.

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.

25 That night the Lord said to Gideon, “Take the second bull from your father’s herd, the
one that is seven years old. Pull down your father’s altar to Baal, and cut down the
Asherah pole standing beside it. 26 Then build an altar to the Lord your God here on this
hilltop sanctuary, laying the stones carefully. Sacrifice the bull as a burnt offering on the
altar, using as fuel the wood of the Asherah pole you cut down.”

27 So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the Lord had commanded. But he did it
at night because he was afraid of the other members of his father’s household and the
people of the town.

28 Early the next morning, as the people of the town began to stir, someone discovered
that the altar of Baal had been broken down and that the Asherah pole beside it had
been cut down. In their place a new altar had been built, and on it were the remains of
the bull that had been sacrificed. 29 The people said to each other, “Who did this?” And
after asking around and making a careful search, they learned that it was Gideon, the
son of Joash.

30 “Bring out your son,” the men of the town demanded of Joash. “He must die for
destroying the altar of Baal and for cutting down the Asherah pole.”

31 But Joash shouted to the mob that confronted him, “Why are you defending Baal? Will
you argue his case? Whoever pleads his case will be put to death by morning! If Baal

truly is a god, let him defend himself and destroy the one who broke down his altar!” 32 From then on Gideon was called Jerub-baal, which means “Let Baal defend himself,” because he broke down Baal’s altar.

Action Steps

1. Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior?
2. What have you grown numb to that now feels normal?
3. What was the last thing God told you to do? Did you do it? If not, have you repented of it?