

# OUR GOD'S FAILURES & FAITHFULNESS

## STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Part 11 — “Unrestrained Passions & the Ruin of a Legacy” — July 27, 2025

### Introduction: Virtue & Self-Control

Our emotions and desires are natural to our experience as embodied creatures and they are given to us by God for good and productive ends. Although they have been corrupted by sin, in Christ, these passions can be ordered towards godly ends by His Word and Spirit. In Titus, believing men and women of all ages are exhorted to live lives that are characterized by self-control for God's glory and their good. Self-control is central to a godly life and, therefore, to a Christ-honoring testimony.

σώφρων (sōphrōn)—pert. to being in control of one's self, prudent, thoughtful, self-controlled

Gal. 5:22-23a—<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control;

**Main Point:** The conclusion of Gideon's life is a warning to us that unrestrained \_\_\_\_\_ can lead us to compromise our \_\_\_\_\_.

### Judges 8:1-8:32

The Angel of the Lord had patiently prepared Gideon to be the deliverer of Israel through public and private demonstrations of His power. He then tested Gideon's faith while simultaneously assuring him of His own sovereign control of all things. Having witnessed these things, Gideon led his forces to battle and the Lord gave them victory. Gideon then sought to finish off the Midianites and their allies and to establish his own legacy as a leader in Israel.

### Exposition:

1. Gideon demonstrated \_\_\_\_\_ sensibilities as he defused a tense situation with the Ephraimites. (8:1-3)

#### Observations:

(1) Gideon's delayed call for the Ephraimites to participate could have brought \_\_\_\_\_ upon them.

(2) He sought to \_\_\_\_\_ them by humbling himself before them.

**Key Point:** Good leaders know when to \_\_\_\_\_ themselves and when to \_\_\_\_\_ others.

2. Gideon exhibited a tendency towards \_\_\_\_\_ vengeance and retribution. (8:4-21)

#### Observations:

(1) Two cities in the territory of Gad refused to give \_\_\_\_\_ to Gideon and his men.

*Succoth*

*Peniel*

(2) The language Gideon used in his threats against the cities demonstrated that he took their words as a personal \_\_\_\_\_.

*“I will flail your flesh...”*

*“I will break down this tower...”*

(3) His retribution against the cities evidenced a growing lack of \_\_\_\_\_ in dealing with his own people who had doubted him.

(4) He intended to give the Midianite kings a shameful death as \_\_\_\_\_ for the deaths of his brothers.

**Key Point:** Our anger can lead us to confuse vengeance and retribution with \_\_\_\_\_.

3. The latter years of Gideon's life were characterized by \_\_\_\_\_ and spiritual \_\_\_\_\_.  
(8:22-32)

Observations:

(1) The people offered Gideon the chance rule over them as \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) For some reason, Gideon rejected this offer.

(3) Gideon requested gold from the people and used it to create a religious icon.

*"ephod"*

(4) Having previously destroyed a pagan \_\_\_\_\_, he established a new one which led the people away from the Lord.

*"all Israel whored after it"*

*"it became a snare to Gideon and his family"*

(5) Although he had rejected the title, he \_\_\_\_\_ himself as if he was a king.

*"he had many sons"*

*"he had many wives"*

*"his concubine...in Shechem...also bore him...Abimelech"*

**Key Point:** In seasons of worldly \_\_\_\_\_, we should be all the more vigilant to order our lives according to the Word of the Lord.

Assessing Gideon

Although he was used of the Lord to deliver Israel, Gideon ultimately demonstrates himself to be a \_\_\_\_\_ ~ \_\_\_\_\_ rather than a \_\_\_\_\_ leader.

Applying the Text

1. Personal insecurities can \_\_\_\_\_ a lack of self-control that personal success will often reveal.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ who conduct themselves like Gideon, and the \_\_\_\_\_ who indulge them, do not establish godly legacies.

3. God's work in our lives is intended to prepare us to serve Him for His \_\_\_\_\_ and not our own.

Titus 2:11-13—<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ

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Gal. 5:22-23a—<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control;

**Main Point:** The conclusion of Gideon's life is a warning to us that unrestrained passions can lead us to compromise our testimony.

### Judges 8:1-8:32

The Angel of the Lord had patiently prepared Gideon to be the deliverer of Israel through public and private demonstrations of His power. He then tested Gideon's faith while simultaneously assuring him of His own sovereign control of all things. Having witnessed these things, Gideon led his forces to battle and the Lord gave them victory. Gideon then sought to finish off the Midianites and their allies and to establish his own legacy as a leader in Israel.

### Exposition:

#### 1. Gideon demonstrated political sensibilities as he diffused a tense situation with the Ephraimites. (8:1-3)

##### Observations:

(1) Gideon's delayed call for the Ephraimites to participate could have brought shame upon them.

(2) He sought to honor them by humbling himself before them.

**Key Point:** Good leaders know when to humble themselves and when to elevate others.

#### 2. Gideon exhibited a tendency towards personal vengeance and retribution. (8:4-21)

##### Observations:

(1) Two cities in the territory of Gad refused to give aid to Gideon and his men.

*Succoth*

*Peniel*

(2) The language Gideon used in his threats against the cities demonstrated that he took their words as a personal insult.

*“I will flail your flesh”...*

*“I will break down this tower...”*

(3) His retribution against the cities evidenced a growing lack of restraint in dealing with his own people who had doubted him.

(4) He intended to give the Midianite kings a shameful death as revenge for the deaths of his brothers.

**Key Point:** Our anger can lead us to confuse vengeance and retribution with justice.

3. The latter years of Gideon's life were characterized by indulgence and spiritual compromise. (8:22-32)

Observations:

(1) The people offered Gideon the chance rule over them as king.

(2) For some reason, Gideon rejected this offer.

(3) Gideon requested gold from the people and used it to create a religious icon.

*"ephod"*

(4) Having previously destroyed a pagan shrine, he established a new one which led the people away from the Lord.

*"all Israel whored after it"*

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**Key Point:** In seasons of worldly success, we should be all the more vigilant to order our lives according to the Word of the Lord.

### Assessing Gideon

Although he was used of the Lord to deliver Israel, Gideon ultimately demonstrates himself to be a self-serving rather than a servant leader.

### Applying the Text

1. Personal insecurities can mask a lack of self-control that personal success will often reveal.
2. Men who conduct themselves like Gideon, and the women who indulge them, do not establish godly legacies.
3. God's work in our lives is intended to prepare us to serve Him for His glory and not our own.