

Worship on November 15th, 2020

Order of worship

We Gather

- Prelude (Paul T.)
- Welcome and Announcements
- Call to worship
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture Judges 6:11-18
- Sermon: Mighty Warrior

We Respond

- Prayer for the people
- Offering (Offertory music – Paul T.)

We Serve

- Benediction
- Postlude (Paul T.)

Ponder Upon Questions

Announcements:

. Grace and peace to you all who are worshipping God with us through this video today. This worship is for Sunday, November 15th, 2020. Even though we are living in extreme limitations, God is faithful and God is still working for us and with us. Through this worship, let us come to our God.

. To meet and talk to me for the pastor care or any prayer requests, please email me or phone me. revsoonghuh@hotmail.com / 647-208-5381. OR, I am visiting congregants these days. If you want my visit, please let me know.

. Thank you for your offerings in this difficult time. May God use our gifts and us in his best ways and his best timing.

As we come into the presence of God, let us calm down our hearts and minds and focus on our Lord.

Call To Worship

Our Call to Worship today is from Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God – not the result of works, so that no one may boast." (Let us pray)

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

By your amazing grace, we are here. We are amazed by your grace and love for us. You gave us all that we have, freely. You are an amazing God, we worship and adore you.

Transforming God, you take the night and give us day. You take our strife and give us peace. You take our sadness and give us joy. You take our fear and give us courage. You take death and give us new life. You give grace beyond all expectation; you give love beyond all imagination; you give and you give and you give. So we praise and adore you as Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit, One God, Three in One, Now and forever.

Compassionate and loving God, we confess we have not always lived faithfully. We fill our days with things that do not matter. We seek simple answers to complex issues. We are weighed down by many tasks yet we cannot sort out our priorities. We fail to hear your call on our lives. Hear our silent confession and forgive us, merciful God,

(let us take about 30 seconds in silence as we come to God with our confession)

This time, we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray: (The Lord's Prayer:)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Sisters and brothers, remember the promise St. Paul declared: Neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Let us rejoice that, no matter what is happening around us, no matter what we have done, God's deep love will never let us go. Thanks be to God!

Before we read today's scripture, let us pray for the illumination of the Lord.

Prayer for Illumination:

Eternal God, in the reading of scripture, let us hear your voice; in our reflections on your Word, let us know your will. Then, in the living of our lives, let us show your love, we pray in the name of Jesus, your Living Word, Amen.

Scripture: Judges 6:11-18

11 Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press, to hide it from the Midianites. 12 The angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, "The Lord is with you, you mighty warrior." 13 Gideon answered him, "But sir, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our ancestors recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has cast us off, and given us into the hand of Midian." 14 Then the Lord turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; I hereby commission you." 15 He responded, "But sir, how can I deliver Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." 16 The Lord said to him, "But I will be with you, and you shall strike down the Midianites, every one of them." 17 Then he said to him, "If now I have found favor with you, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with me. 18 Do not depart from here until I come to you, and bring out my present, and set it before you." And he said, "I will stay until you return."

This is the Word of the Lord / Thanks be to God.

Title: Mighty Warrior

The title of today's sermon is "Mighty Warrior."

The book of Judges is 7th book of the Bible. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges. And the next one is Ruth and 1 and 2 Samuel.

The 1 and 2 Samuel start with the story about having their first king. So, in the time of Judges, there was no king in Israel. God was their King and God governed the people through Judges. Judges were the leaders, prophets, and priests.

However, the neighbouring countries had their own kings. Israelites envied other countries because of their kings. Under the kingship of God, the Israelites did whatever they wanted.

Judges 6:1, "The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian seven years."

Midianites ruled Israelites. They were like the king over Israelites. They destroyed houses, took away the food and livestock. Therefore, Israelites became poor and hungry. They did not have places to stay and they did not have food to eat. They had to hide themselves in the mountains and caves. **Judges 6:6, "Thus, Israel was greatly impoverished because of Midian; and the Israelites cried out to the Lord for help."**

To their cry, the Lord answered, v10, **"I said to you, 'I am the Lord your God; you shall not pay reverence to the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.' But you have not given heed to my voice."**

"Israel! I am the Lord your God! I rescued you. I told you not to worship other gods, but you did not listen to me!"

And then, today's scripture. In v 11, God sends his angel to Gideon. Vs 1 states that the Lord gave Israelites to the hand of Midian for seven years. So, from v1 to v11, there was 7 years of time gap. In the 7th year, to rescue his people, God began his work.

But, look at whom God chose. Gideon. Who is he? What is he doing in v11?

He is beating out wheat to get some grain in the wine press. Why? He wanted to hide his food from the Midianites. To Gideon, at this moment, the angel of the Lord came and called him **MIGHTY WARRIOR**.

How non-sense it is!

Why did Gideon beat the wheat in the wine press? To hide from other people. The Bible only talks about hiding from the Midianites, but I think Gideon was hiding from his own people as well. How much wheat do you think he had? They were out of food. They were hungry. Gideon got some wheat branch somehow and he would hide it from everyone.

And when do you think it is the best time to eat something in secret? After sunset. Darkness helps Gideon to hide. He found some wheat branch in the morning or afternoon. He kept it himself. And after the sunset, he sneaked out. Quietly walked toward the wine press because there would be nobody working in the dark. He would be so excited to eat something. And at the same time, he would be so nervous whether someone sees him eating food by himself.

That is what Gideon was doing when the angel of the Lord to him.

V12, The angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, “The Lord is with you, you mighty warrior.”

Imagine the angel of the Lord speaking to Gideon. If you were the angel, what volume would you speak to him?

Because he is hiding from everyone, would you whisper to him? “The Lord is with you, you mighty warrior.” – (whisper)

NO!!!

The angel would speak it out loud with the glorious light of the LORD.

“THE LORD IS WITH YOU, YOU MIGHTY WARRIOR!!!”

You know what this is in today's language?

I have this kind of experience. I bought two flashlights. I went to the cashier to pay. I gave her money and got some change. By mistake, she only scanned one flashlight. I found it out as I walked out of the store.

What was my response? “OH YEAH!! I got a free flashlight!!”

Yup. That was my response. I did not go back to pay for unpaid flashlight. It was only \$2.50, but it was enough to make my day happy.

Do you have any similar experiences?

But, think about it. At that happy moment, but at the same time, a little nervous moment, the Lord came to you and loudly calls you, **YOU MY BELOVED SON!! YOU MY BELOVED DAUGHTER!! YOU ARE A MIGHTY WARRIOR FOR MY KINGDOM!!**"

Uh-oh...

Walking out of the store, I was a cheap man. I sold my dignity for \$2.50. At the wine press, Gideon was a pure coward. He is a selfish man. But, still, God calls him **MIGHTY WARRIOR**. But, still, God calls me, this sinful me, his beloved, his warrior. Can you accept that?

I think Gideon is a very very interesting guy. Look at **v13. "Gideon answered him, "But sit, if the Lord is with us, why then had all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our ancestors recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has cast us off, and given us into the hand of Midian."**

Can you believe this? When the angel of the Lord calls him **MIGHTY WARRIOR**, he poured out complains. Listen to the conversation between the angel and Gideon.

V14, "Then the Lord turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; I hereby commission you."

V15, He responded, "But sir, how can I deliver Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."

V16, The Lord said to him, "But I will be with you, and you shall strike down the Midianites, every one of them."

V17, Then he said to him, "If now I have found favor with you, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with me. Do not depart from here until I come to you, and bring out my present, and set it before you." ---- and he said, "I will stay until you return."

Gideon did not have confidence after speaking with the angel of the Lord. He was totally coward, he was the weakest and the smallest. Moreover, he required a sign to make it sure that whom he was speaking to. Furthermore, he left the angel of the Lord alone and left to bring out his present.

In my view, in many ways, he is impolite, disrespectful, and even rude.

However, I totally relate to him. God suddenly came to me and called me **MIGHTY WARRIOR**? Then, how would I feel? This me? This sinful and selfish me? **MIGHTY**

WARRIOR? No way! I cannot believe it. I cannot accept it. I need a sign. I need more confirmation. What's happening to me is totally different from what I learned about God.

God waits for us. God knows us. God knows our weaknesses. God knows our selfishness. God knows our mistakes. God knows our sins. But the problem is... God still calls us MIGHTY WARRIOR. God is so patient. He will walk with us until we truly give our hearts to him. Until we truly believe in him. Until we truly become the MIGHTY WARRIOR of God.

What do we need? We just need to accept him calling us MIGHTY WARRIOR. We just need to trust him. It will be a long journey for sure. But, God will help us. God will be with us. God will inspire us. God will empower us. God will speak through us.

That is why I am standing here with the word of God. As you can see and hear, I am too weak. I have too many disadvantages. I do not have good experience. This is my first charge and I was ordained as a minister three weeks before we had to close our building. I have strong accent. I do not have deep understanding of Canadian culture.

I just trust God holding my hands and leading me. In so many cases, I have to come out of my comfort zone. We are living in Pandemic. Every day the confirmed Covid 19 cases records new high. It does not seem to be under control. Like the Israelites under the oppression of Midianites, we are in panic situation too. However, God is faithful and he still calls us to be his mighty warrior. Can we be today's Gideon? We are weak, of course. We are selfish and sinful. We are full of evil desires. But, can we accept God's invitation calling us mighty warrior?

I will introduce one person Nick Vujicic. He was born with left foot only. He travels all around the world and preaches the gospel. He preaches hope with his body. Because his body was not normal, he thought he could not live like any other normal people. He was depressed and too sad and thought of committing suicide so many times in this young age. His first attempt was when he was 10 years old. But, by the help of his parents, he came to faith in God. And ever since he accepted the invitation of God being the MIGHTY WARRIOR, he fully relies upon God's help. Now, he can give hope to many many people around the world who are suffering with physical



disability and mental depression.

Look at him. What do you think he can do? Not many things.

That is what he thought, first. He is extremely limited. But, God gave him hope and he realized the love of God and God's presence with him. By God's help, his limited body cannot hold him back doing God's mighty works like mighty warrior.

Nick Vujicic can give hope to the people in hardship and limited situations because he was there. He knows what it feels like. Nick usually had the worse situation than the people who are suffering. But he does not live in limit by the power of God.

Let us not limit ourselves. Let us not limit the true MIGHTY WARRIOR, our God.

Nick Vujicic came out from his limitedness by the power of God. Gideon, the pure coward and one of the most selfish persons in the Bible, became the mighty warrior of God. If we accept the invitation of God calling us MIGHTY WARRIOR, we can also come out from our limitedness and become MIGHTY WARRIORS of God and live the fullest life.

Let us ask God, "God, where am I hiding? How am I limiting myself? How am I limiting you? What is my comfort zone you want me to come out from?"

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father God, you are the true mighty warrior. Thank you for calling us your children and thank you for calling us mighty warrior. Thank you for not giving us up. Thank you for your patience. We are restricted with so many things such as our abilities, our selfishness, our mistakes, and our own understanding. Our own experiences and our own ideas are the biggest obstacles to become mighty warrior. God, have mercy on us and God, pour out your grace upon us. We want to live as mighty warrior. Help us trust you. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Let us continue to pray for the people of God.

Prayer for the people

Loving Father God, we praise and worship you with all our hearts. With all our strength, all our minds, all our hearts, and with all our wills, we want to live for you. Be glorified through our lives.

We are praying for your church. It's been so long since we gathered physically. Even though we desire to gather again, safety should be our first priority. Thank you for your guidance and protection upon our congregants. Please continue to be with us and provide us what we need.

We pray for the people who are having difficult times. Open their hearts and come to them and stay in their hearts. Open their eyes and let them see your presence in their lives. Place your hands upon the sick, heal them with your love and power. Remember their sufferings and helpless situations. Give wisdom and lead their lives in the best ways. When we walk through the darkest valley, help us confess that we fear no evil because you are with us. Your rod and your staff, they comfort us.

Also, we pray for the elder election. There are nominated people. Open their hearts and help them

to sincerely consider this invitation of commitment for the service for your church. We need your grace and we need your guidance. Be upon all the process and be the Lord of all the conversation we are going to have. Make us humble and help us only serve you.

As the weather gets colder, COVID 19 will be worse. Protect the front line workers. Provide them what they need and help them rest well. Give humble hearts to the leaders. Whatever they decide, it is the bad one because of the situation. Nothing seems to work. Help all the leaders know you and help them kneel before you and ask you for wisdom. Give wisdom to the people who are making vaccine. Let this virus be conquered by your wisdom.

As your mighty warriors, we want to be your hands and feet. We want to be your light and salt in this world. Help us always. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: Each week we pray for the coming of God's kingdom. Though we do not know exactly what this will look like, we offer our gifts and our talents to God for the work of the kingdom here and now. Let the Lord's offering be received.

Offering – Paul's music

Offering prayer: Mighty and merciful God, we celebrate your goodness to us each and every day. What we offer to you now has come from you. Bless our gifts and bless our actions so that your goodness will touch other lives, in the name of Jesus Christ, our friend and Saviour. Amen.

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. God calls us mighty warriors! With the power of God, with the wisdom of God, with the love of God, go in the world and show our true Mighty Warrior.

Benediction

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.

Ponder Upon Questions:

1. What is my comfort zone?
2. How am I limiting myself and God?
3. What would be one thing I can try today to come out of my comfort zone, to overcome my limit?