

Series: Questions  
Title: Have Not I Sent Thee?  
Text: Judges 6: 14  
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A sinner is only fit to serve God when he knows that all his strength is Christ alone. And the only way a sinner will look to Christ for strength is when he knows that he is altogether without strength. This what the Lord taught Gideon. I pray the Lord teach us this.

**Judges 6: 11: And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which *was* in Ophrah, that *pertained* unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide *it* from the Midianites. 12: And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD *is* with thee, thou mighty man of valour. 13: And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where *be* all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. 14: And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? 15: And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family *is* poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house. 16: And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.**

The two things that hinder you and I who believe is: one, looking to our vain, useless understanding rather than Christ our Wisdom; and two, looking to our vain strength rather Christ our Strength.

Christ alone is the Wisdom and the Power of God for his people. We have no might in wisdom—Christ alone is the Wisdom of his people. We have no might of strength—Christ alone is the Power for his people.

**Proposition:** Only when the Lord purges us of all self-sufficiency will we look to Christ for all sufficiency.

## **CHRIST OUR WISDOM**

First, we have to have our conscience purged from our vain wisdom and have Christ made our Wisdom. We see our own ignorance in Gideon's vain understanding—"And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee,..." (Ju 6: 12)

This is Christ the Angel of the LORD. He appeared unto Gideon and said unto Gideon, "The LORD *is* with thee." Literally, there stood the LORD with Gideon. It was a statement of fact. There the LORD was with Gideon.

We all hear the gospel going forth. We hear the gospel declare "The LORD *is* with thee." Is Christ our Wisdom so that we believe him? Or do we look with carnal sight and lean to our own understanding?

Gideon looked to his own understanding, based on his own carnal sight, therefore he did not and could not believe that indeed the LORD was with him—"And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where *be* all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." (Ju 6: 13)

The LORD had allowed the Midianites to ravage the land for seven years. The children of Israel now hid in mountains and caves and strongholds. The crops and cattle of Israel were all destroyed by the Midianites. The children of Israel were impoverished which is why Gideon was hiding and threshing wheat.

So by natural sight, leaning to his own understanding, Gideon could not understand that it was Christ come to him. He could not believe the Lord was with him. In his vain understanding all he could do was deny the truth, saying, “if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us?” The LORD said, “the Lord is with thee.” But Gideon denied this good news, saying, “the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.”

How many times have you heard sinners deny the gospel of God’s covenant grace in Christ using the wars and evil of sinners in this world as justification for doing so?

Everything the LORD did to the children of Israel was because they had broken the covenant of works and sinned against God. (Ju 6: 1) So it is with the judgment of God upon this whole world today. It is man who sinned against God in the garden. It was man who sinned against God in Israel. It is man who has sinned against God in our day.

God’s judgment in the earth with wars and pestilence against rebellious sinners is the just due earned by the sinner for breaking the covenant of works in the garden and by each man’s own willful rebellion. If God does not intervene in grace, after rebellious sinners die, his just judgment will be far worse.

Scripture says to the believer that the Holy Spirit is our earnest, our foretaste of heavens glories. By the same token, the judgment of God upon this world, the evil that sinners commit, is a foretaste of hell for rebels.

Yet, in the midst of Israel God had an elect people who he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world. God elect were chosen by God’s sovereign free grace. God’s choice of his people is not based on any good or evil in us. God has always looked to Christ our Surety who is the only righteousness and sanctification of his people. The elect of God are accepted in Christ the Beloved by God’s grace and it will never change.

Therefore, no matter how it may appear to carnal understanding “The LORD is indeed with his people.” For the sake of Christ, he would not leave his elect in the garden or in Israel and he will never leave us nor forsake us. For the sake of Christ who has purged all his people from our sins, God shall deliver us. He shall bring each one to life and faith in Christ. The Lord shall preserve us from our enemies. Nothing shall ever break God’s everlasting covenant of grace toward his people in Christ. Christ says to all his people, “The LORD *is* with thee.”

But believer, here is the sad thing, even worse than the unbeliever, when it comes to serving Christ in spreading his gospel, you and I often lean to our understanding as Gideon did. How many times have we heard the gospel that Christ is with us yet we become frozen in our tracks from spreading this good news because we lean to carnal sight and carnal reason?

Our ignorance is only opportunity for Christ to manifest that he is the Wisdom of God. So in the first hour of grace and throughout the life of faith, the Holy Spirit must purge our conscience, turning us from our vain wisdom, making Christ the might of our Wisdom.

Gideon’s “might”, first of all, was to be made to know in his conscious that he was not to look to his own understanding because he had not might of wisdom in himself. Christ had to be made his Wisdom—“And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, . . . have not I sent thee?” (Ju 6: 14)

*“The LORD looked upon him.”* Before we will look to Christ in faith, the LORD must look upon us in power. Gideon was looking upon the world, upon troubles and enemies but with a look the LORD made Gideon turn from his ignorance and look upon the LORD his Wisdom. Gideon said, “The LORD has forsaken us!” The LORD made Gideon look him in the face and behold “The LORD is right here, right now, with thee!”

*“And said.”* The LORD does this work by speaking his word effectually into our hearts, purging our conscious by the Holy Spirit. Gideon was listening to his own vain words based on his own ignorance. So the LORD spoke, turning Gideon to hear the Wisdom of the LORD.

*“Go in this thy might...Have not I sent thee?”* Here is Christ our Wisdom. Gideon was leaning to his own understanding. But the LORD made Christ to be his Wisdom. He said, “This is thy might—the might of thy Wisdom—Have not I sent thee?”

To them who are called, Christ is first made Wisdom unto us. The Spirit of God purges our conscience from our vain, carnal understanding making Christ our Wisdom. Only then will we believe the LORD is indeed with us. Only then will we obey his voice. Only then we will go forth with true Wisdom in our conscious that the LORD sent us so the LORD is with us.

Proverbs 3: 3: Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: 4: So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. 5: Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6: In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

## **CHRIST OUR POWER**

Secondly, when Christ is made our Wisdom, we are also made to know that Christ is our Power, our strength. When Christ appeared he called Gideon mighty and told Gideon that Gideon would save Israel—“And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD *is* with thee, thou mighty man of valour...And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?” (Ju 6: 12, 14)

But Gideon now knows something of his utter inability and weakness. So Gideon answers confessing that he has no strength—“And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family *is* poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father’s house.” (Ju 6: 15)

*“My family is poor in Manasseh.”* Manasseh was a very small, poor tribe. And Gideon’s family was the poorest in the tribe of Manasseh.

*“I am the least in my father’s house.”* Even in the poorest tribe, in the poorest family, Gideon was the poorest of the poorest. Gideon is saying that he is the least of the least.

But Christ was also made to be the might of his Power and Strength—“And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.” (Ju 6: 16) Gideon’s was a mighty man of valor because Christ was his Power, his strength, making Gideon a mighty man of valor. Gideon would save Israel because Christ promised to be his strength, “I will be with thee and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.” The Midianites were like grasshoppers for multitude but Christ promised Gideon that Christ would be his Power so that Gideon would smite that whole people as if they were only one man.

The Midianites were enemies of the children of Israel. They represent all the enemies of God and his elect. The law is holy just and good but it was once our enemy. Who was our Power to satisfy the justice of God?

Christ is the Power of his people because he has satisfied the law for all God's elect by laying down his life at Calvary, making us righteousness in him, redeeming us from the curse of the law by his blood.

Our sin nature was our enemy. Did we have power to give ourselves spiritual life? Did we have power to give ourselves faith? Did we have strength to keep our old man of sin subdued? No, no, no! Christ has conquered our sin nature by creating a new man within us. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" is the Power by which our old man of sin is subdued and we are made to rest all in Christ. (Col 1: 27)

Satan, daily enemies, death and the grave is our enemy. We have no strength to conquer these enemies? Christ is our Power who has and shall conquer all our enemies as he continues his work of preserving us and bringing us home.

Romans 8: 35: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36: As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37: Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

If you read further in the chapter you will see that Christ, his Power and Wisdom, was typified in the sign by which God assured him that Gideon would be saved by God's free grace. Everything about the sacrifice typified Christ. The fire consumed Gideon's sacrifice. So the truth for every believer is this: due to Christ consuming the fire of justice for his people, through faith in Christ, God receives us in Christ and all our feeble service. (Ju 6: 17-21) So Gideon found out that in Christ he had peace with God. Gideon called this place Jehovahshalom, the Lord is Peace. (Ju 6: 22-24)

### **HAVE NOT I SENT THEE?**

Lastly, let each one here answer this question from the Lord—"Have not I sent thee?"

God never uses an unprepared instrument. He empties the chosen instrument of all self-sufficiency: all self-wisdom and all self-strength.

Then our Lord brings his child to trust Christ. Christ is our Power and Wisdom, our Righteousness and Sanctification and Redemption; Christ is our Salvation by grace alone.

If Christ is our All—**ONLY IF CHRIST IS OUR ALL**—then we can answer, "Yes, Lord, Thou hast sent me, and I will go in Thy strength and trust I will be more than conquerors by Christ my Power and Wisdom."

When faith truly realizes this, it rejoices that God's grace is sufficient for "when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor 12: 10)

Believer, our discouragement should be our greatest encouragement. When we have no ability and know it and know Christ is all our Strength then are we truly strong. Then we have the peace of knowing "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

**AMEN!**