



Date: _____
Series: God is Our Rescuer
Fall Year 2, Lesson 20

Who Will Take a Stand for the Living God?

Take Home Point: *Put God first.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: Judges 6:1-32. Gideon tears down Baal's altar.

Key Verse: Exodus 20:3 "Never have any other god."

We will help kids know:

- The Bible event of Gideon's call, and his response in tearing down Baal's altar.
- The serious consequences of having other gods before the true, living God.




We will help kids feel:

- Conviction if there is anything getting in the way of them making a stand for God.
- Assurance of salvation in Jesus Christ as they claim the power of the cross.

We will help kids do:

- Identify areas in their lives where they might not be fully taking a stand for Jesus, or denying him.
- Identify false gods in which they have more confidence than in the living God.
- Pray for God's powerful rescue and forgiveness for taking a half-hearted stand for God.
- Pray for God's power to live a fully committed life.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3-4	Kids may identify some of their life habits by placing themselves on a continuum. This continuum will also help them identify where their friends are at.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> signs: Sometimes, Always, Never (p. 15) masking tape
Large Group 	4 8-9 10-13 14	Overview Puppet Presentation: “Gordy and Scooby Doo” – Mr. King explains to Gordy how anything that is more important than God can become an idol. Bible Presentation: The Bible event will be the story of Gideon tearing down the altars of Baal from Judges 6:1-32. Puppet Presentation Conclusion: “Gordy and Scooby Doo” – Gordy is reminded that with all that God has done for his children, especially sending his Son to be our Savior, we would only want to <i>*put God first</i> in everything we do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gordy two pairs of white gloves one pair of dark gloves one actor will wear a white long-sleeved shirt and white mime gloves another actor will wear a dark long-sleeved shirt and dark mime gloves white angel robe rock flash paper (Found at most novelty or magic stores. E.g. Dock Haley's Gospel Magic at www.gospelmagic.com) staff with a fireplace lighter or butane lighter taped to the end (See lesson – Page 10)
Small Group Application 	4-7	Each group makes a list of things that sometimes become more important than God. Then these things are “burned up”... representing Gideon burning the idols so the people would once again <i>*put God first</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> flash paper (one small sheet per group) pen or fine tip marker per group signs from warm-up a lighter or match (for leader)

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes

Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

For today's interactive game, each group will need three small signs to place on a taped line on the floor. These signs are "always," "sometimes," and "never."

Kids may identify some of their life habits by placing themselves on a continuum. This continuum will also help them identify where their friends are at.

Boys and girls, today we are going to play, "Where Do You Stand?" See these signs on the floor? They say "always," "sometimes," and "never." I am going to ask a question, and then you will decide how you would answer. If your answer is always, then stand by the "always" sign. If your answer is never, then stand by the "never" sign. If your answer is sometimes, then stand by the "sometimes" sign. Some of you might decide your answer is almost never, so you would stand in between the "sometimes" and "never" signs.

After each question ask, **Where do you stand?**

1. Do you do your homework when you get home from school and before dinner?
2. Do you eat all of your spinach?
3. Do you make your bed every morning?
4. Do you pick up your clothes after you change them?
5. Do you complain when you help with the dishes?
6. Do you ever say you washed your hands before dinner but you didn't?
7. Do you watch T.V. every day?
8. Do you read the Bible every day?
9. If you have a big problem do you always talk to your friends about it?
10. If you have a big problem do you always talk to God about it?
11. If someone talks about God at school, do you tell what you believe about God?
12. Have you talked to a friend at school this past week about what Jesus means to you?

After the continuum game, say:

Did you know that if we value things and people in our lives more than we value our relationship with God, we might have a hard time getting to know God? Other things that we make more important than God can become idols or false gods. If we want to watch T.V. so much that we decide to stay home and watch it instead of going to church on Sunday to worship God, then T.V. can become an idol or a god.

When we go to large group today we will meet a man named Gideon. He took a stand for God. He was willing to **put God first*. He helped the Israelites get rid of the idols they worshiped. These idols were taking the place of God.

Large Group: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Overview

Puppet Presentation: “Gordy and Scooby Doo” – Gordy would rather watch his favorite cartoon than go to Kingdom Quest on Sunday morning. Mr. King explains to Gordy how anything that is more important than God can become an idol.

Bible Presentation: The Bible event will be illustrated with mimes, telling the story of Gideon tearing down the altars of Baal from Judges 6:1-32.

Puppet Presentation Conclusion: “Gordy and Scooby Doo” – Gordy is reminded that with all that God has done for his children, especially sending his Son to be our Savior, we would only want to **put God first* in everything we do.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids refer to Judges 6 in their Bibles.

Why did God allow the Midianites to chase the Israelites out of their homes? *(Judges 6:1. The people of Israel did what was evil in the Lord's eyes.)*

How did Gideon act when the angel told him he was chosen to save Israel? *(Judges 6:14-19. He thought he was too weak, so he asked for a sign and went to make some food for his guest.)*

How did the angel prove Gideon was the one to save Israel? *(Judges 6:20-21. The Messenger of the Lord burned up the food as a sacrifice.)*

When did Gideon tear down the altar of Baal? Why?

(Judges 6:27. He tore down the altars at night because he was afraid of his father's family and the men of the city.)

The people who were angry with Gideon for destroying Baal's altar did not hurt him. Why not? *(Judges 6:30-32. Joash, Gideon's father, said they should let the god of the altar defend himself if he was truly a god.)*

Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

Why do you think God wanted the altar of Baal torn down before he would use Gideon to chase out the Midianites? *(So they would have no other gods except the one true God.)*

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

Today we will talk about what it means to put God first; to have no other gods before him. The very first commandment God gave us is in Exodus 20:3. It says, ***"Never have any other god."***

We may want to have God be number one in our lives, but sometimes that is hard to do. Let's go back to the signs on the floor that say, "always," "never," and "sometimes." Stand by the sign that best describes how you would answer these statements:

- Every day I read something in the Bible.
- Every day I pray for someone else who may not know God's love for them.
- Every day I talk to someone about Jesus.
- Every Sunday I give money in the offering.

By this time the kids will be confronted with the fact that they have not done all things perfectly. They have not put God first in all things. They are *sinners*.

Sometimes we fail in **putting God first*. Sometimes we let other things become too important to us so we forget about God or doing things his way. The good news is that God put us first. He sent his son, Jesus, to take the punishment for all our mistakes in all the ways we have failed him. Romans 5:8a. says, *"Christ died for us while we were still sinners . . ."*** Is this Bible verse talking about you?**

Help children understand they are sinners. Also help them understand that other things can become too important in our lives and are like idols to us. Then say:

God wants us to have the power to **put him first*. He wants to tear down anything that would get in our way just like Gideon tore down the altars of Baal. God tears down the things that get in the way of our relationship with him. He does this by forgiving our sins. All we need to do is ask. Then we can have Jesus live in our hearts.

Lead the kids who believe Jesus is their Savior in the following prayer:

Dear God, I realize I'm a sinner. I need Jesus. I know he died on the cross to forgive my sins, and he is alive, right now. He puts me first because he first loved me. Please forgive me. Jesus, come and live in my life so I can **put God first* in all that I do. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Application Activity:

Supplies: flash paper and pen

Because of Jesus' power in our lives, we can **put God first*. To do that let's think of some of the things we want to watch out for so that we don't put them ahead of God.

Let's start with T.V. Is watching T.V. wrong? No, but if watching T.V. became so important to me that I listen to its messages more than I listen to God's messages, then it's *too* important to me. T.V. could get in the way of knowing God better.

Help the kids make a list of things that may get in the way of putting God first. Write this list on a small sheet of flash paper using a pen or fine marker.

As you continue to brainstorm, point out things like money, toys, friends, sports, etc. These things are not wrong, but if we value them more than God, we are putting them first. You also might mention other false gods that are followed today. After making your list, take the group to a designated place where the flash paper will be burned.

Since burning too much flash paper at one time can be dangerous, do not combine all the flash paper from the groups together. It would be better to burn each sheet safely one at a time unless someone has previously tested this.

While burning the paper, remind the children what Gideon did. He took the wooden Asherah poles the people worshiped and cut them down to use for fire as a sacrifice to the living God.

Let's burn up the sheets of paper as we remember that we don't want anything to get in the way of **putting God first*.

Return to your group for closing prayer.

Closing Prayer:

Have the kids mention some of the things people put first before God and pray that God would help them **put God first*.

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Large Group Presentation: 20-30 minutes

Gordy and Scooby Doo

Puppet Presentation

Mr. King: Hi, boys and girls. Today we will talk about putting God first. This means that we shouldn't follow any idols. Gideon is one of the judges in the Bible that we will learn about today who put God first. To help me introduce him, let's call Gordy.

Kids chant, "Gor-dy, Gor-dy, Gor-dy"

Gordy: *(No response)*

Mr. King: Gordy, are you there? Are you coming?

Gordy: *(From behind the screen.)* Just a minute Mr. King. Scooby Doo is on! Oh, it's commercial time. Okay, here I am. *(Enters.)*

Mr. King: What do you mean Scooby Doo is on?

Gordy: Well, I have a T.V. now, and Sunday morning cartoons are great. I'm watching Scooby Doo.

Mr. King: But we're talking about important stuff. We're talking about idols.

Gordy: Oh, idols are dumb. Imagine someone bowing down and worshipping a statue or something. Okay, gotta go. Scooby Doo is just getting to the spooky part. *(Begins to exit)*

Mr. King: Gordy, did you know we could have false gods as idols in our lives today?

Gordy: Not now, Mr. King...gotta go. *(Exits.)*

Mr. King: *(Speaking into the puppet stage.)* Gordy, it's time for Kingdom Quest. T.V. can wait. Scooby Doo isn't that important.

Gordy: *(Popping up.)* What? Did you say Scooby Doo isn't that important? Well, Mr. King, that's going just a bit too far.

Mr. King: Gordy, you're beginning to sound like you are making Scooby Doo an idol.

Gordy: Don't be silly. An idol is some kind of false god that is a little statue or something that people bow down to.

Mr. King: I know, but we can have idols today that aren't little statues. An idol can be *anything* that gets to be so important that we don't put God first.

Gordy: You mean like Scooby Doo?

Mr. King: If Sunday morning cartoons are so important to you that you don't take time to worship God or learn about him, then they could be an idol.

Gordy: What? You mean Scooby Doo is bad? Mr. King you are all confused.

Mr. King: No, Scooby Doo may not be bad. There might be nothing wrong with cartoons.

Gordy: Especially Scooby Doo.

Mr. King: Okay, but if cartoons become more important than spending time with God, then they can become an idol.

Gordy: Oh my. I wouldn't want that.

Mr. King: I know you wouldn't. You'd want to **put God first*. That's what we are going to learn from a special leader in Israel who was a judge. His name was Gideon, and he tore down some idols that people worshiped.

Gordy: You mean they had television back then?

Mr. King: No, they had other idols or false gods that they worshiped.

Gordy: Oh, that is silly!

Mr. King: I'll bet you'll find it more interesting than Sunday morning cartoons. Let's watch the dramatic presentation of a leader in Israel called Gideon.

The Story of Gideon Tearing Down the Altars of Baal

Judges 6:1-32

Bible Event Illustrated with Mimes

If you choose not to use mimes to help tell today's Bible event, the story might easily be told using a costumed character, Gideon, telling the event in first person.

Mimes will be an effective way to tell the Bible event of Judges 6:1-32, Gideon tearing down the altar of Baal. This involves one storyteller and two mime actors. These actors will silently act out the story point by point. One actor will wear a white long-sleeved shirt and white mime gloves. The other actor will wear a dark long-sleeved shirt and dark mime gloves. The mime gloves will help accentuate their gestures.

In addition, the dark mime must transition to become an angel. Therefore, he needs to have a quick change, such as a white robe with white gloves, so he might characterize the angel.

The props needed are:

- *a rock,*
- *flash paper, and*
- *a staff with a butane lighter taped to the end. A fireplace lighter would be best for the staff. A butane lighter should be covered with brown tape except for its very tip.*

The section of the story in which the angel touches the rock with the tip of the staff and fire burns the meal sacrifice will be dramatic because it uses flash paper. (See supply pages on how to purchase flash paper.) Caution should be used with the flash paper as it burns brightly and intensely for a second or two.

Please practice the fire section ahead of time to insure safety.

The narrator's part is best read verbatim. However, captions are included in case the story is told by a character in costume. It would help this character cover the main points of the story. The mime characters can easily ad-lib their parts as they listen to the story, but suggestions are included in italics.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Verses 1-10

Israel Followed False Gods

God had warned his people, the Israelites, not to follow the gods of the people who lived in the promised land. Soon they had forgotten God's words of warning.

The Israelites liked the worship practices of the people of Canaan, so they decided to worship their gods called Baal and Asherah. They built altars and offered sacrifices to these false gods. They bowed down and worshiped them just like their heathen neighbors.

God was displeased when he saw them worshipping other gods. He knew it was best for them to love and serve him, the only living God. So he sent trouble their way.

The mime in white sits reposed noticing the mime in black. The black mime bows to worship an imaginary object and motions to the white mime to do the same.

Midianites Come Like Grasshoppers

The people living nearby, called the Midianites, were watching for an opportunity to invade the Israelites' land. They began to move their flocks and herds to graze on the pasture land of Israel. They soon stole Israel's food and spread throughout the land. They stole the Israelites' crops and vineyards. They filled the countryside with their tents. Like grasshoppers they ate up everything the Israelites grew.

The mime in white eats from an imaginary plate. The mime in black grabs the plate and pushes the white mime away. The black mime waves over imaginary friends to join him in eating, and pushes the white mime out.

The Israelites Cried for Help

The Israelites remembered that God had rescued them from their troubles when they were in Egypt. Out of their fear, the Israelites lived in caves and hid their food from the Midianites who were taking over the land. They cried to God again for help and a prophet spoke up. God would answer their cry and send someone to rescue them.

The black mime exits. The white mime falls to his knees crying, looking up to heaven and lifting hands in prayer.

GIDEON'S ENCOUNTER: VERSES 11-23

<p><u><i>A Messenger Comes to Gideon</i></u> Gideon was an ordinary farmer. One day he was sifting grain and hiding it in his wine press when a stranger visited him. This messenger was an angel from God who said “The Lord is with you, brave man.”</p>	<p><i>The white mime exits and then enters again as Gideon. He sits until visited by the angel mime dressed in white robe. The Gideon mime bows.</i></p>
<p>God said, “I will be with you.” Then Gideon asked for a sign that it really was the Lord speaking to him.</p> <p>“Don’t leave until I come back,” he said. “I want to bring food and set it in front of you.”</p> <p>Gideon went into his house and prepared meat, bread, and broth in a pot. He brought it back for the strange messenger of the Lord. The messenger told him to take the meat and the bread, set it on a rock, and pour the broth over it. Gideon did so, and the messenger of the Lord touched the meat and the bread with the tip on his staff. Fire flared up from the rock; it burned the meat and bread. Then the messenger of the Lord disappeared.</p> <p>Gideon realized that this truly was an angel of the Lord. He was ready to listen for God’s instructions.</p>	<p><i>The Gideon mime shrugs his shoulders and asks questions. The angel mime points to him. The Gideon mime motions to explain he is small.</i></p> <p><i>Gideon brings out imaginary food and places it on a rock. (This is the same place where flash paper is wadded up.)</i></p> <p><i>The angel mime touches the pot with a staff while sparking the lighter, and it bursts into flames.</i></p>

GIDEON DESTROYS THE ALTAR OF BAAL: VERSES 25-32

That very same night the Lord told Gideon, “Tear down the altar of Baal that your father has built. Cut down the sacred poles of Asherah that are like trees around it. In its place build an altar to me. Put all the wood from the Asherah poles on the altar then sacrifice a bull to me.”

While it was still night Gideon called ten servants to help. They tore down the altar to Baal, cut down the trees, and built an altar to the true God. There they made a sacrifice to the true Lord. They did this during the night because they were too afraid of Gideon’s family and the other men in the city to do it during daylight.

Early the next morning the men in the city saw that the Baal altar had been torn down and the Asherah poles had been cut and burned. “Who did this?” they asked one another. While investigating someone said, “It was Gideon.” The angry men in the city went to Gideon’s father. “Bring your son out,” they said. “He must die for he has torn down the Baal altar and cut down the Asherah pole.”

Gideon’s father did not hand him over. “If Baal is a real god then why are you defending him? Let him defend himself if someone has torn down his altar.”

The people left wondering if Baal would revenge his altar being destroyed, but nothing happened. Baal was not the true God, and God was getting ready to tear down Baal’s altars throughout the land.

The angel mime leaves.

The Gideon mime holds hand to ear to listen to instructions. He cuts down Asherah poles, places them on an altar, and places a sacrificial bull on the altar. He burns all of this and leaves.

The mime in black knocks on door. Points finger as if angry. The mime in white doesn’t accept it and points to the horizon to signify Baal defending himself.

Gordy and Scooby Doo

Puppet Presentation Conclusion

Gordy: Mr. King, that was cool!

Mr. King: What was?

Gordy: The way that fire burned up Gideon's food offering.

Mr. King: Yes, it was a sign that God had really chosen Gideon to lead the people away from idols.

Gordy: I still don't get it. Why would anyone want to serve idols when they could have God as their friend and serve him?

Mr. King: I don't understand it either. God has done so much for us. He's given his own Son Jesus to die on the cross for us. If we believe in him we can be friends with God forever. Then we will always want to **put God first*.

Gordy: Yeah. Even more than Sunday morning cartoons.

Mr. King: You are right, Gordy.

Gordy: Especially since I can record them on the VCR ahead of time. I'm going to go do that right now.

Mr. King: Wait, Gordy, lead us in prayer before we leave for our small groups. You can set your VCR later.

Gordy: Okay, Mr. King. Dear God, help us to put you first and not follow any other idols or let anything else get in the way. Thank you for Jesus. I guess you put us first when you gave your own Son to be our Savior. Help us **put you first* in all we do. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SOMETIMES

ALWAYS

NEVER