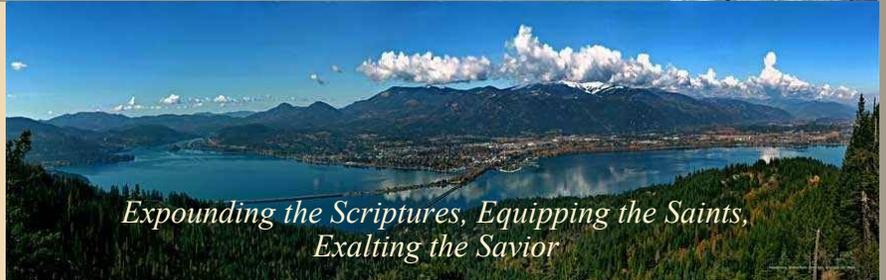


Kootenai Communicator

The monthly newsletter of Kootenai Community Church, Kootenai, Idaho

Important Dates <<<

- 9 KCC Youth Craft Fair
- 12 Baby Shower, see p. 4
- 16 Membership Class
- 23 Membership Class
- 31 Harvest Dinner Potluck



God Doesn't Whisper

Chapter 11, Part 1
I'll Put Out a Fleece

By Jim Osman, Pastor/Teacher

"Put out a fleece?" What does he mean by that?" I wondered.

I was new to the Christian jargon. My friend, who had been instrumental in my salvation, spoke it fluently. "Putting out a fleece" was new to me, but judging from the way he talked, it was *the* way to discern God's will.

"What do you mean by that?" I inquired. If there was some secret to knowing God's will, I wanted in on it.

He recounted the story of Gideon in Judges 6-7. "Gideon needed to confirm God was telling him to fight the Midianites, so he put out a fleece - a piece of cloth. He asked God to cause the fleece to be wet and the ground dry by morning. God answered his prayer. To confirm God's will again, he asked for the opposite on the following night - a dry fleece and wet ground. God answered his request and confirmed His will to Gideon."

From the way other Christians talked, it sounded as if this was *the* method for confirming God's will. Which job should I take? Which college should I attend? Which car should I buy? Each and every one of these could be settled with a "fleece." Not a literal, actual fleece, mind you, but something similar - a confirming test by which God would give direction through circumstantial happenings.

Allegedly, Gideon's approach to getting a "sign" from God was a model for us. When faced with two options, we can ask God for special guidance through a similar circumstantial confirmation. It sounded legit. After all, it was right there in the Bible!

THE PRACTICE DESCRIBED AND DEFENDED

Garry Friesen, in his excellent work *Decision Making and the Will of God*, describes the fleece this way:

Gideon's fleece has become the basis of a practice among some Christians which is called "putting out a fleece." In essence, when you put out a fleece you say to God, "If you really want me to carry out plan A, then please make the telephone ring at 9:10 p.m., then I will know that plan A is what you want." (You can make the "fleece" anything you wish, just so long as it can serve as a "sign" to you.)¹

Robert Morris² unabashedly defends Gideon and the use of "fleeces" as a means of "confirming" personal revelations. In his book, *Frequency*, he writes:

I mentioned at the start of this book that the number one question I get asked as a pastor is "How can I hear the voice of God?" Well, I get asked an additional question about the number one question, and it's this: "How do I know if it is really God?" In other words, how do I know if God is truly speaking, and I'm not making up something in my mind? Is it okay to ask God to confirm His word?³

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- 4 Garden of Readin'
- 4 Women's Ministry
- 5 Student Ministry
- 5 Kootenai Thunder
- 5 Kootenai Classifieds
- 6 Adventure Club
- 6 Church News

Morris assures the reader that “God always confirms His word. Let me repeat that: God *always* confirms His word.”⁴ He cites the story of Gideon saying, “The story of Gideon’s fleece in Judges 6 is perhaps the best-known Bible story that relates to confirmation.”⁵ Likewise, Jack Deere cites fleeces as one of the “variety of ways” that “the people of the Bible heard God speak.”⁶

Dallas Willard suggests that we regularly ask God to speak to us through “friends, books, magazines, and circumstances.”⁷ Confident that if God “has something he really wants [you] to know or do,” you will receive “an idea or thought with that peculiar quality, spirit and content that [we] have come to associate with God’s voice.” He suggests asking for further confirmation saying, “If you are uncertain if this is from you or from God, ask for further confirmation as Gideon did (Judges 6:11-40).”⁸

Mark Batterson promotes the use of signs for confirmation citing Gideon as “our biblical precedent.”⁹ Batterson claims, “Gideon did it in a spirit of humility, and God honored him with an answer both times. I think fleeces have God’s stamp of approval, but let me offer a few warnings and instructions.”¹⁰ He offers three guidelines for using fleeces. “First, test your motives. . . . Second, delayed obedience is disobedience. . . . Third, set specific parameters in prayer.”¹¹ He cautions, “If you don’t define the fleece, it’s easy to come up with false negatives or false positives. Notice the specificity of Gideon’s fleece. And don’t discount the fact that it required divine intervention.”¹²

HOPELESS CONFUSION

We can’t escape the confusion inherent in the Hearing the Voice of God (HVG) methodology. They claim that God speaks outside of Scripture today because we *need* clear direction. Since the Bible doesn’t provide the clear and explicit direction we need, we must receive a clear and current word from God.

Is this what their methodology provides? Is there anything clear about the messages received through still small voices, impressions, and signs? If so, then why do we need confirmations? Willard candidly admits that a message received by “an idea or thought” is of uncertain origin. How do we know if the thought is from God, Satan, or self? Morris promises that “God always confirms His Word,” but the confirmation is subject to deception and misinterpretation. Batterson warns that we might get “false negatives or false positives.”

HVG methodology provides unclear and ambiguous parameters to confirm inconclusive and unreliable “voices” so we can test vague impressions of questionable origin. This they call a “clear and personal word from God.” The man-made HVG system is a confusing, subjective, and hopelessly uncertain method, impotent to deliver what it promises, namely, the clear and unmistakable voice of God.

NOT ALL AGREE

Not all HVG teachers are as committed to the fleece as Batterson and Willard. Blackaby cites Gideon as an example of *unbelief* saying:

Sometimes in Scripture God gave a miraculous sign to assure the person that the word was from Him. Gideon is one example (Judg. 6). Asking God for a sign, however, is often an indication of unbelief. In Gideon’s case God had already sent fire from stones to consume a sacrifice and even the stones it was on. Yet, in his unbelief, Gideon asked for another sign. “Putting out a fleece” like Gideon is often a sign of your unbelief or an unwillingness on your part to trust God for an answer.¹³

Blackaby cites Gideon as an example of unbelief. Willard cites him as a model for confirming the Word of God. According to some HVG teachers, Gideon was questioning clear instructions. According to others, he was clarifying instructions because God had been unclear.¹⁴ Blackaby teaches that Gideon’s request was sinful because he had a clear command from God, but Batterson claims that Gideon’s actions have “God’s stamp of approval” for confirming unclear commands from God.

I hope you see how confusing this is. Is Gideon an example of unbelief or faith? Is he a model of cowardice or confirmation? Was God’s Word to Gideon clear or unclear? Is his example to be followed or avoided? Is Gideon an illustration of willing obedience or cowardly disobedience?

Ironically, we can get no certain answer from HVG teachers! We should expect, with something this important, to get clear teaching from those who claim to receive God’s personal word. If God is truly speaking to these proponents of HVG theology, then maybe they could “confirm” whether Gideon’s “confirmation” was an act of faith or fear. Blackaby and Batterson disagree on the purpose and function of fleeces. We need an HVG teacher to have an impression about fleeces. Of course, that won’t be clear enough in and of itself, so we would need to have the impression confirmed. We need a confirmation of an impression about confirmations confirmed so we can know for sure that we can use fleeces to confirm impressions, even if they are impressions about fleeces. A confirmation of this kind is the only way we can know if an impression about confirmations is confirmed. Think of it as a fleece to confirm an impression about using fleeces to confirm impressions. While promising methods for receiving clear and sure words from God, HVG teachers sure seem confusing and unclear. They are unable to give us a clear message on how exactly we are supposed to get a clear message.

Examining the story of Gideon will go a long way toward clearing up the confusion that surrounds him. As we shall see, the example of Gideon is misused in the modern HVG movement.

Sunday School <<<

HIGH SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Jay Cates, teacher; Jana Cates, assistant

My name is Jay Cates and I have the privilege of teaching ninth through twelve grades in Sunday School. We have been studying the book of Matthew and are currently starting chapter nine. We have a wonderful group of young people attending regularly. It is my goal that these students would develop a sincere love for God's word by carefully studying Matthew and mining its depths.

2 Timothy 2:15

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.



Sunday School begins at 9:30 a.m.

>>> Church Directory Information —

HOW CAN I GET TO KNOW ALL THESE PEOPLE?

USE THE CHURCH DIRECTORY!

It is full of names and faces - some familiar, some new. It's an excellent resource for all of us!



Instant **Church Directory™**
Your church directory on your mobile device. **Instantly!**



To be added, please email Kathy: secretary@kootenaichurch.org

ONLINE CHURCH DIRECTORY!

Benefits

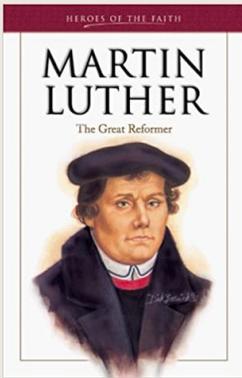
- It is absolutely private -- information is only available to our church family. Access is removed when people no longer attend.
- Allows updates to happen easily and quickly.
- Convenient apps available for both iPhone and Android. Can also be accessed from your computer.

What to do once you have signed up:

- Proofread what has been added. This includes spelling of your names, addresses, anniversaries, and birthdays.
- Use it as a tool to learn names and faces of our church body!
- You can update as any changes happen in your family.
- Add a photo!

Print copies available by request. Contact Kathy Conger.

>>>Garden of Readin'



Martin Luther: The Great Reformer by Daniel E. Harmon

With Reformation Day coming up on October 31, it's a good time to learn about the life of Martin Luther. This concise overview introduces students and adults to the man who tacked 95 theses to the Wittenberg church door, igniting a firestorm that swept through the church. Look for it in the "Biography" section.

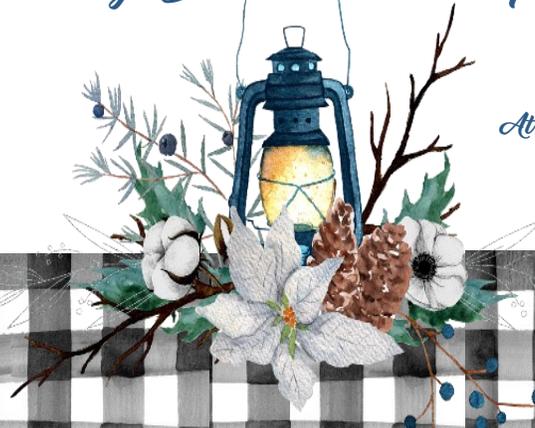
Please contact Jenny Leo (208-610-2520) about donations or any library-related matter.

Women's Ministry <<<



BABY SHOWER
for Kira Kariker
and baby girls
Michaela and Gabriella
October 12, 6:30 p.m.
at the church

KCC Ladies' Christmas Tea
Saturday, Dec. 4, 1:00-4:00 p.m.



At the church

HELP NEEDED
For the
Harvest
Dinner

Contact
Marcia
Whetsel



>>>Cocolalla Bible Camp

Please visit the camp website at clbcamp.org for more details.

FALL QUILT CAMP

Oct 7-9, 2021

Time: Register at 2 p.m. on Thursday

Ends: 7 p.m. Saturday

For: Ladies age 13 and up

Cost: Contact the camp office (208-263-3912)



Student Ministries <<<

OCTOBER

- 6 Guys and Girls Bible Study 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.
- 13 Youth Group 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
- 20 Guys and Girls Bible Study 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.
- 23 Work Day at Cocolalla Lake Bible Camp
- 27 Youth Group 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

WORK DAY
at Cocolalla Lake
Bible Camp
October 23

All youth meetings (youth group and Bible studies) will be meeting at KCC for this school year.



JAMES 4:17
"SO WHOEVER KNOWS
THE RIGHT THING TO DO
AND FAILS TO DO IT, FOR
HIM IT IS SIN."



>>>Kootenai Thunder

kootenaithunder.com

For the most current information, please check our website and Facebook page.

COME CHEER THE
PLAYERS FROM KCC

AMELIA BLACK
OLIVIA BARKER
ANNALYN DYE
LENA CATES

Volleyball Update

We have 3 full teams: Junior High (10yrs-14yrs) coached by Jeffrey and Lizzie Bickish, Junior Varsity coached by Beau and Rhonda de Graaf, and Varsity coached by Nikki Favor and Kenna McArthur.

KOOTENAI THUNDER SPORTS PRESENTS...



Silent
Auction
&
Dessert
Social

Sat., Oct. 16
 6:30 p.m.

At Kootenai
 Comm. Church

Auction will include Crafts, Gift Baskets, Baked Goods, Gift Certificates, and more!

Kootenai Classifieds >>>

Homegrown Garden Goods

carrots, beets, apples, and leeks

For prices call
Andrea Kinne 208-265-0102
 This is a landline so texts will go nowhere.

To have your items listed in this section, please get the information to Lisa Slippy by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Email her at lisaslippy@gmail.com.



AVAILABLE
NOW!

This book can be purchased at the church Welcome Table or on Amazon.com

>>>Adventure Club News

Questions? Talk to Dave & Diane Rich at (208) 265-2997 or dianeerich@gmail.com



HOW MANY KIDS???

Our year has started off with a bang! We averaged 55 kids a night during Week of Adventure in August, and had 75 on our first night in September! We have 90 children registered this year already! Mr. Dave says we'll be running 100 kids a night by Christmas! Maybe more! What a blessing this weekly Bible Club is!

Year 2 Curriculum

The Truth about Man, Sin, and Salvation

Our curriculum this year is amazing. Our clubbers are being taught about God creating mankind in His image, that man has sinned against God, that sin separates us from God, sin deserves punishment, and that God provides a way of salvation. We are thankful for the Adventure Club curriculum provided by Generations of Grace.

QUESTIONS? TALK TO ONE OF THESE PEOPLE!

- Trackers - Age 3 - Jayde Cordes
- Trackers - Ages 4-5 - Peter & Amanda Hammond
- Scouts - Grades 1-3 - Ben Bryan
- Trailblazers - Grades 4-6 - Jamie Slippy, Kathy Conger
- Elder/Secretary - Dave & Diane Rich

Can we still sign up?

Yes, you can! We are still accepting new clubbers for all ages right now, and new leaders are coming on-board, as well. If you've been attending KCC for a year, or are already a member, you are eligible to be an Adventure Club Leader! We'd love to have more male leaders in our 4th - 6th grade age group, and both Scouts and Trailblazers could use 1-2 more adult leaders. Talk to Dave and Diane if you are interested in plugging in.

OCTOBER

- 1 Club Night
- 8 Club Night
- 15 Club Night
- 22 REVIEW 2/ Reformation Night (dress up!)
- 29 Club Night



October 22
Reformation
Night! Dress up!

Dress-up nights are the best! All clubbers who dress up receive a prize, and the top clubbers in each age group receive a special prize! We've seen costumes that kids have put HOURS into! Those are the best!

Church News <<<

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays at the church, 7:00 p.m.

This Bible study is for everyone! Led by Jeff Miller and Bryan Wood, we are studying the book of Jude.



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Monday, Oct. 11

Monday, Oct. 25

6:00 p.m., at KCC

HARVEST DINNER

Sunday, October 31

If you would be willing to help with the dinner by either making mashed potatoes, or with setup and cleanup, please call Kathy Conger at 208-597-5551.

See p. 8 for details

Membership Classes

October 16 and 23

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

at the church

Lunch is provided. Childcare is not provided.

PLEASE SIGN UP AT THE WELCOME TABLE.

GIDEON EXAMINED

Gideon lived during the time of the Judges - a series of military/political leaders God raised up to lead the nation of Israel. This period lasted from the death of Joshua (Judges 1:1) to the rise of Samuel (1 Samuel 7:15; 8:1-9). The ministry of Samuel transitioned the nation into the Jewish monarchy ruled by Saul, David, and then Solomon.

The book of Judges follows a predictable pattern. The nation would forget the goodness of God and turn to idols. God's wrath would burn against the nation bringing judgment through oppression by neighboring nations, or even people groups within their own borders. Israel, feeling the pain of temporal judgments, would cry out to God for deliverance. God would raise up a deliverer - a Judge "who delivered them from the hands of those who plundered them" (Judges 2:16). The deliverance was short-lived as the people would eventually turn from Yahweh, worship idols, and the whole process would repeat.¹⁵ As Yogi Berra would say, "It's déjà vu all over again."¹⁶

Gideon came on the scene while the nation was oppressed by the Midianites for seven years (6:1). Judges 6:6 says, "So Israel was brought very low because of Midian, and the sons of Israel cried to the LORD." After the Lord sent a prophet to reprove the nation for their disobedience (vv. 7-10), we read, "Then the angel of the LORD¹⁷ came and sat under the oak that was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press in order to save it from the Midianites" (Judges 6:11). The conversation between the angel of the Lord and Gideon is recorded in Judges 6:12-18:

The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, "The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior." Then Gideon said to him, "O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian." The LORD looked at him and said, "Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?" He said to Him, "O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house." But the LORD said to him, "Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian as one man." So Gideon said to Him, "If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who speak with me. Please do not depart from here, until I come back to You, and bring out my offering and lay it before You." And He said, "I will remain until you return."

God's promise to Gideon was unambiguous: "The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior" (v. 12). Gideon questioned the promise, doubting whether the Lord was truly with them in light of their circumstances (v. 13). The command to Gideon was equally unmistakable: "Go in

this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?" (v. 14). Just as he had argued with the Lord concerning the promise, Gideon doubted the ability of God to deliver Israel through him (v. 15). The Lord repeated the promise, and the command (v. 16). Gideon responded by asking for a sign saying, "If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who speak with me."

Though Gideon may have doubted the identity of the One Who spoke, there could be no doubt as to the meaning of what He said. Gideon was assured of two things: the Lord was with him, and he was to deliver Israel from the Midianites.

God granted Gideon's request for a sign. After he prepared a meal for the angel of the Lord, the Lord caused fire to consume it. Judges 6:20-21 says:

The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And he did so. Then the angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight.

Gideon realized with Whom he had been speaking. "When Gideon saw that he was the angel of the LORD, he said, 'Alas, O Lord GOD! For now I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face.' The LORD said to him, 'Peace to you, do not fear; you shall not die'" (Judges 6:22-23).

We haven't come to the test with the fleece yet, but already we can be certain of several things. First, *Gideon knew Who had given him instructions*. After the angel of the Lord vanished from his sight, Gideon "built an altar there to the LORD and named it The LORD is Peace" (6:24). He knew he had "seen the angel of the LORD face to face" (6:22).

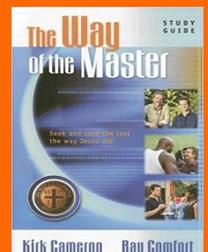
Part 2 of Chapter 11 available next month.

Footnotes available in the book God Doesn't Whisper by Jim Osman.

The Way of the Master EVANGELISM TRAINING COURSE

Sundays in October
1:30 p.m.
at the church

Contact
Peter Hammond
for details.



Kootenai Community Church

P.O. Box 593
Kootenai, ID 83840

208-255-5668
kcc@nctv.com
www.kootenaichurch.org



2nd Annual KCC Youth Craft Fair

Saturday, October 9
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Brainstorm, plan, and create now! Official vendor sign-up will be the end of September. Open to any KCC youth (preschool-12th grade).

Sign up on or before October 1.

Contact Katie Moon at 208-627-3871 for more details or to ask questions.



HARVEST DINNER

Sunday, October 31, after church

EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND

The meat and potatoes will be provided; the rest of the meal is potluck.

Please bring:

Last names A-M: Salad and side dish

Last names N-Z: Dessert and side dish

Join us for this time of fellowship and thanksgiving to our Lord for His provision for us.

If you would be willing to help with the dinner by either making mashed potatoes, or with setup and cleanup, please call Kathy Conger at 208-597-5551.