

“Watch How God Responds When The Odds Are Against You!”

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Sunday Morning, 9:30am Stream

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hashtags:

#guidinglight #pastorjim
#givingthanks #identitycrisis
#waiting #promisesofGod
#love #showinglove
#loveofGod #loveofChrist
#whatdoesGodsay
#forgiveness #Godworks
#savedtoserve #healer
#protector #Godforgives
#worry #NewYear
#deliverance #fear

{All scriptures are NIV84 unless stated}

Judges 6:33-35

33 Now all the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples joined forces and crossed over the Jordan and camped in the Valley of Jezreel. 34 Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, summoning the Abiezrites to follow him. 35 He sent messengers throughout Manasseh, calling them to arms, and also into Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali, so that they too went up to meet them.

2 Things Happened:

-The Enemy Joined Forces Into A Combined Army

-The Spirit Of The Lord Helped Gideon Build An Army

Judges 7:1-3

Early in the morning, Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all his men camped at the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was north of them in the valley near the hill of Moreh. 2 The Lord said to Gideon, “You have too many men for me to deliver Midian into their hands. In order that Israel may not boast against me that her own strength has saved her, 3 announce now to the people, ‘Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.’ ” So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained.

Jerub-Baal - that was the name the people gave him because of the altar incident.

he tore down the Baal altar.

Jerub-Baal means “let Baal deal with him.”

But Gideon and all of his men camped to get ready for the battle.

It was estimated the Midianites with everyone else totaled over 135,000.

The Lord told Gideon that he had too many men.

Gideon at the time had 32,000 men.

We can see how many Gideon had because if 10k remained.

and 22k left.

We know from Gideon's own attitude that he was a nobody.

This nobody in a matter of days gained 32,000 people ready to FIGHT for the Lord. And for Gideon!

God Can Change Your Entire Life In A Day If You Let Him!

You don't know what your tomorrow looks like.

but it can be even better if you give it to God.

32,000 is an impressive number to make within a couple days.

But with the army of 32,000...God said that was TOO many to fight 135,000.

Judges 7:2-3

2 The Lord said to Gideon, "You have too many men for me to deliver Midian into their hands. In order that Israel may not boast against me that her own strength has saved her, 3 announce now to the people, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead. 'So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained.

God is telling Gideon that you have too many men.

Too many??

Gideon is already out numbered.

135,000 / 32,000 is 4.

Gideon's men on average would have to fight 4 men each.

But EVEN with that...God says it's too much.

Why?

“in order that Israel may not boast against me that her own strength has saved her.”

Because God doesn't want Israel to boast about the win.

If God Fights For You, He Doesn't Want You Thinking You Won On Your Own!

Zechariah 4:6

So he said to me, “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty.

God wants to make sure no one can boast saying they did something on their own power.

God Doesn't Want You Taking The Glory That Belongs To Him!

He isn't going to fight for you only for you to not give God glory for it.

Isaiah 42:8

8 “I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.

Moses at the Red Sea.

what could any one person do on their own?

They were trapped between the sea and the Egyptians.

There was NO question God did it.

Daniel at the Lion's Den.

was Daniel gonna fight off a den of lions?

These situations were HEAVILY stacked against God's people.

The More The Circumstances Are Stacked Against You, The More The Lord Can Work For You!

It may seem unfair...but when it SEEMS like the odds are stacked against you,

You have the favor of God.

God is for you.

**Romans 8:31 {if God be for us...}
Who can be against us???**

God Wants To Work For You On A Level So You KNOW It Was Him!

God also told Gideon HOW to get rid of those he didn't need.

Judges 7:3

announce now to the people, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.'

Anyone who trembles with fear.

Why fear?

There's a scripture in Deuteronomy that can help explain that.

Deuteronomy 20:8 (NCV)

8 Then the officers should also say, "Is anyone here afraid? Has anyone lost his courage? He may go home so that he will not cause others to lose their courage, too."

This was in Deuteronomy talking about the Laws for War.

Gideon you have people around you who are afraid...

those who are trembling in fear...get them away from you!

Faith Is Contagious, But So Is Fear!

This applies to us also!

Imagine having the wrong people around you when it's time to fight.

That fear is contagious!

They can start making you afraid as well.

A good example was when Moses sent the spies to see the Promised Land before they got there.

Numbers 13:31

31 But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." 32 And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. 33 We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."

When the spies came back...

they were afraid because of what they saw.

What happened when they brought that fear back?

Numbers 14:1-4

That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud.

All the people of the community.

They became afraid and grumbled to Moses...

even wanting to go BACK to Egypt!

It's Hard To Trust The Will Of God When The Wrong People Are Around You!

We have to get the fearful people from around us!

We'll see why this is important...

So now Gideon's army is smaller.

He sent more back than he kept!

There are now 10,000 men fighting for the Lord.

Against 135,000 people who wanted to keep Israel in captivity.

This now means that each person went from having to fight 4...to 135.

But God STILL wasn't done!

Judges 7:4

4 But the Lord said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will sift them for you there. If I say, 'This one shall go with you, 'he shall go; but if I say, 'This one shall not go with you, 'he shall not go."

God is saying the odds are still too much in your favor.

Just like before...

apparently there is a way they could possibly win on their own.

MAYBE each person COULD take on 135...

and they could REALLY boast.

Judges 7:5-6

5 So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the Lord told him, "Separate those who lap the water with their tongues like a dog from those who kneel down to drink." 6 Three

hundred men lapped with their hands to their mouths. All the rest got down on their knees to drink.

With the 10,000 men who showed up.

300 of them qualified.

Judges 7:7-8

7 The Lord said to Gideon, “With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the other men go, each to his own place.” 8 So Gideon sent the rest of the Israelites to their tents but kept the three hundred, who took over the provisions and trumpets of the others.

How could 300 take on 135,000??

Those odds were each person would have to kill 450 men on their own!

This is almost impossible odds...

Until you realize the type of God we serve!

How will they kill 450???

Well the bible talks about what the power of 1 could do...

Deuteronomy 32:30 (MSG)

How could one soldier chase a thousand enemies off, or two men run off two thousand, Unless their Rock had sold them, unless God had given them away? For their rock is nothing compared to our Rock; even our enemies say that.

One could handle 1000 when God is with them.

God Is Going To SHOW You HE Is A Miracle Worker!

Judges 7:9-11

9 During that night the Lord said to Gideon, “Get up, go down against the camp, because I am going to give it into your hands. 10 If you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah 11 and listen to what they are saying. Afterward, you will be encouraged to attack the camp.” So he and Purah his servant went down to the outposts of the camp.

God is telling Gideon, if you're afraid...

go sneak down there and see what the enemy is saying.

When you hear what they say...you'll be encouraged to attack the camp.

Judges 7:12-14

12 The Midianites, the Amalekites and all the other eastern peoples had settled in the valley, thick as locusts. Their camels could no more be counted than the sand on the seashore.

The Lord said that they would be encouraged to attack...

but on they way...they see their enemy.

It's nighttime...so it's hard to see...

but even then, they looked thick as locusts.

the camels they rode in on seemed to keep going and going...

imagine the FEAR on this man's mind as he approaches.

Verse 13

13 Gideon arrived just as a man was telling a friend his dream. "I had a dream," he was saying. "A round loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the Midianite camp. It struck the tent with such force that the tent overturned and collapsed." 14 His friend responded, "This can be nothing other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite. God has given the Midianites and the whole camp into his hands."

Wait!

Gideon is listening to the conversation going on in the enemy camp.

They're talking about HIM!

one of them even had a dream!

God Is Making Your Enemies Have Nightmares About You!

You might be worried about how you're going to deal with this mountain of a trial that has come up against you.

But God said he was fighting for you!

Even those in the camp who heard the dream...

Oh that's definitely about Gideon.

God is gonna give us to them.

They KNOW they're fighting a losing battle!

And these geniuses came anyway...

Oh if we could be a fly on the wall in the conversations of some of those against us.

this army knew Gideon...

this army apparently knew God...

this army also knew who was gonna win.

God Is Telling Those Against You They Can't Win Because HE Is Fighting For You!

But these people are foolish to fight anyway!

This is also why God sent the fearful home.

The other army was about numbers.

they LOOKED big.

they WERE big!

but they had scared men with them.

God is going to use their own fear against them.

Also seems God has a sense of humor.

a round loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the camp.

it struck the tents with force that the tents collapsed.

That must have been a big loaf of bread right?

Something maybe 35 pounds of flour could make...???

Either way...with this NEW information...God was right.

It's go time!

Judges 7:15-18

15 When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped God. He returned to the camp of Israel and called out, "Get up! The Lord has given the Midianite camp into your hands." 16 Dividing the three hundred men into three companies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside. 17 "Watch me," he told them. "Follow my lead. When I get to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do. 18 When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then from all around the camp blow yours and shout, 'For the Lord and for Gideon.' "

300 men into 3 companies...100 men each.

Judges 7:19-21

19 Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after they had changed the guard. They blew their trumpets and broke the jars that were in their hands. 20 The three companies blew the trumpets and

smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, “A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!” 21 While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled.

All the Midianites ran crying out as they fled...

Judges 7:22

22 When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the Lord caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords.

{shortening the story}

The army fled and was chased back and eventually defeated from this act alone.

Here's the crazy part of all this.

Gideon And His Army Were Going To FIGHT The Midianites

they were going to ***FIGHT*** the Midianites.

right?????

Judges 7:16

16 Dividing the three hundred men into three companies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside.

He gave them trumpets and empty jars in their hands -

They have trumpets and jars.

Verse 20

20 The three companies blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, “A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!”

They are going to Fight The Midianites.

they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars.

They took the torches in their left hand.

They took the trumpets in their right hand.

and they SAID “A sword for the Lord and Gideon!”

wait...WHERE WERE THE SWORDS??

Their hands were full with torches and trumpets!

They didn't need their weapons!

they just needed to show up!

The Bigger Your Problems Are - The Bigger The Opportunity For God To Show How Big HE Is!

God said he was going to DO it!

Judges 7:7-8

7 The Lord said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands.

They didn't have to fight!

They just needed to trust God and show up.

Jehoshaphat -

he told God that multiple nations were coming against him...

the odds were impossible.

he didn't know what to do...but his eyes were on God.

Bible tells us that as they showed up for a fight they couldn't win on their own.

something broke out in the nations against him.

they started fighting one another!

Jehoshaphat didn't even need to fight!

the Lord fought for him!

We can learn from Gideon that God will fight for us.

WE just have to have the faith to trust him.

You are not on your own.

You have a God that will fight for you.

Deuteronomy 20:4

4 For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory.

Exodus 14:14

14 The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.”

Deuteronomy 3:22

22 Do not be afraid of them; the Lord your God himself will fight for you.”

Isaiah 40:31

31 but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.

Joshua 1:9

9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

John 10:10

10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

{Jeremiah 17:7-8 {FOR NEXT WEEK}}

7 “But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. 8 He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”}

This Week:

1. Review This Message

2. Pray That God Makes His Word More REAL For You

{The story of Gideon isn't there just to be there...it's about faith.}

{These people went through it so you don't HAVE to}

3. Remember That You Don't Have To Fight Your Battles

When God Is With You

{This is how I fight my battles}

{You have a God who WILL do what he said}