

Remnant Life Church  
November 23, 2024  
**Principles for Winning a Spiritual Battle**  
**Part 4**  
Judges 7:16-22

Gideon has been called by God to lead the people of Israel into battle against an overwhelming force.

- The Midianite army is over 120,000 strong
- Gideon has 33,000 men
  - That's a 3 to 1 advantage in power
  - But instead of God increasing the Israeli army, He decreases it to 300
  - An absurdly small number to go up against 120,000
- But God had been preparing Gideon for this moment
- And God had given Him a strategy
  - We are not told what that interaction was
  - The account does not record that conversation
  - But we read this morning, as Gideon tells his soldiers the plan, what God had instructed Him to do
  - And Gideon is now ready to execute God's plan and put it into action

**READ – Judges 7:16-22**

Courage in Obedience

- By obeying God, Gideon begins to walk in courage
  - His leadership is critical
  - But notice that we read much on God preparing him for this task
  - And relatively little on the event itself
  - That is because what God was doing with Gideon was more important than the outcome of the battle
    - The world describes it another way – it is not about the destination rather the journey that gets you there
    - Within his journey, Gideon was developing courage
- The courage God gave Gideon enabled him to use the tools God instructed him to use
  - In those days, the primary weapons used in battle were determined by the type of engagement
    - For close-range hand-to-hand fighting it was the sword and dagger
    - A light spear was used for mid-range
    - And for more long-range engagements it was the bow and arrow and sling
  - In all my reading and study, however, I have never seen a torch, trumpet and empty clay jar listed as offensive weapons
    - It was going to definitely take the courage given by God to approach a battlefield with only these in hand
- Courage also requires faith
  - When we follow God's commands, there is always sufficient evidence to inspire faith, but almost always uncertainty on our part to stretch it

- In **Genesis 22** we read of Abraham being told by God to sacrifice his son Isaac
  - Abraham trusted God with a powerful faith, but do you think that faith was being stretched as they made their way to Mt. Moriah?
- But in these times of faith-filled courage, God does not hand us solutions on a gold platter
  - He puts us in a place that we must depend on Him
  - Step by step – stage by stage – so that we learn to trust Him continuously and completely
- Gideon possessed a new-found courage, put His trust in God, but was going into battle looking like he was anything but ready to fight

The second thing Gideon showed in this time was Wisdom in Action

- The actions Gideon was presented with required wisdom as well as courage
  - He was going into battle with very little planning
  - And He was going into battle without superior fighting power
  - There was no time for the former, and God deliberately removed the latter
- And while we do not read about God giving Gideon the plan of action notice one important thing about this once fear-filled general
  - He did act!
  - He had the wisdom to act according to what God had told him
    - Certainly not in an expected way
    - But how many times has God acted on your behalf, answered a prayer, or provided for your need in an expected way?
    - The realm of God's work in our lives most often comes through the unexpected
- *In 1945, a young associate pastor named Cliff married his fiancée, Wilma Newell, who they called Billie. They had very little money but he was able to scrape up enough to take a honeymoon to Asheville, NC. When they arrived at the hotel, this being long before information was available to everyone at any time, they were told it was now a rehabilitation center and not available to overnight guests. Disappointed, they hitchhiked to a grocery store several miles down the road where the owner, sympathetic to their situation, let them spend the night in a room over the store. The owner quickly caught on that they were Christians and he referred them to a friend nearby with a nicer place to spend the rest of their honeymoon. During that week their host invited them to attend a youth rally at a nearby Christian conference center. The regular song leader was ill that night and, having learned of Cliff's musical background, asked if he might take charge of the music service that night. Out of gratitude for their generous hospitality, he consented and led the music, before a young evangelist named Bill stepped up to preach. It was at that Christian conference center that Cliff Barrows first met Billy Graham and formed a ministry team that would preach the gospel throughout the world for the next sixty years.*
  - That encounter was unexpected but God had something better planned for 2 men who answered a call
  - They both were acting in faith to an opportunity God presented to them

Finally, in the battles, you Act in Boldness because of God's presence and participation

- And when God is present, His will is going to be accomplished just as He said
  - In **Judges 7:2**, God told Gideon that if He allowed them to fight with their full army, they would not give the glory to God but would keep it for themselves
    - When the jars were broken, the trumpets sounded, and the light of the torches shown - the Midianites were thrown into such a panic that they began attacking each other thinking the enemy had come into the camp
      - All the Israelites were left with was mop-up duty
      - A miracle victory took place and only God could be given praise
  - The boldness of the soldiers was in knowing that God would give them the victory without one bow string drawn or one sword unsheathed.
    - In these times of uncertainty in this nation and around the world, our boldness should also be present.
    - When we surrender to God, we are convinced of His sovereignty knowing that every person, government, ruler, and power is in place through God's permissive will
    - They are there to accomplish His purposes
    - We must grasp the truth that, in our culture, the unseen things are the eternal realities, and the order of the things we can see is purely transient and temporary
  - The reality is God is always at work and in ways that we can not grasp, cannot understand, cannot anticipate, and often cannot articulate.
    - But His will is inevitable in every circumstance throughout the world throughout all of history
    - And it is true for each individual who ever lived, is alive today, and is yet to be born
    - And that is true for you
- Theologian C.J. Goslinga summarizes Gideon's triumph and shows the thoroughness of God's plan and how simple they truly are when we are willing to remove ourselves from the center of our world
  - *The torches flickering on all sides told the Midianites that they were surrounded. The pandemonium of shattering jars deluded them into thinking that the Israelites had already entered the camp and were creating havoc there. And the battle cry with the dreaded names of Yahweh and Gideon did the rest. The enemy was thrown into a panic. While Gideon and his 300 men merely held their positions, waving their torches and blowing their trumpets the camp rushed about in wild confusion.*

You are going to face battles in your life

- Not only because of the sin nature we all wrestle with
- But because you have a target on your back
- And satan wants nothing more than to discourage, confuse, frustrate, and bring doubt into your mind and heart at every opportunity

He will give you strategies of brilliant, simplistic wisdom if you will only ask for them and then listen