

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Judges 6:36-7:25**.
- B. My favorite judge is Gideon. He was a simple man, but was God's man to defeat the Midianites and Amalekites.
- C. Gideon gives a five-step process for success.

I. **FIRST, GIDEON TESTED GOD.**

- A. Scripture text: **Jud. 6:36-40**.
- B. It is not wrong to test God! He commanded it in the OT (Mal. 3:10).
"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."
- C. Before Gideon could obey God (6:36), he had to make sure God was real.
"If Thou wilt deliver Israel through me,"
- D. We can test God by reading His word and seeing how he kept all of the promises and covenants He made.
- E. When we think about becoming a Xian, we test God to make sure He is real, by investigating His word and His church.

II. **SECOND, DON'T BE AFRAID.**

- A. Scripture text: **Jud. 7:2-3**.
And the LORD said to Gideon, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel become boastful, saying, 'My own power has delivered me.' "Now therefore come, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, 'Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead.'" So 22,000 people returned, but 10,000 remained.
- B. God was working His army down to "victory size." And why not, the Midianites and Amalekites were in the valley of Jezreel (the place where God's enemy always dies)!
- C. Some of the people (22,000) were too afraid to fight for Jehovah.
- D. We are told many times in Scripture not to fear (1Jn. 4:18; Rev. 1:17).
(1Jn 4:18) There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.
(Rev 1:17) And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last,"
- E. Those who cowardly about their relationship with God will suffer great loss (Rev. 21:8).
"But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."
- F. Those who are fearful were not able to serve God, and were sent home.

III. **THIRD, BE READY!**

- A. Scripture text: **Jud. 7:5-6**.
So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, "You shall separate everyone who laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, as well as everyone who kneels to drink." Now the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was 300 men; but all the rest of the people kneeled to drink water.
- B. Now, another 9,700 were turned away because they were not ready to fight.
- C. This test was administered w/o the people's knowledge, and God may do that today too. God may be testing you in "little things," to see if you can handle the "big things."
- D. Readiness needs to be a state of mind and being:
 - 1. Be alert, be awake, be ready (Eph. 5:15-16).

Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

2. Be ready to make your defense of the gospel (1Pet. 3:15).
but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;
 3. Be alert to the devil, who prowls like a roaring lion (1Pet. 5:8).
Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
- E. Our state of readiness can come by wearing the spiritual armor of God (Eph. 6:13).
Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

IV. **FOURTH, MAKE FOOLISH BATTLE PLANS.**

- A. Scripture text: **Jud. 7:16.**
And he divided the 300 men into three companies, and he put trumpets and empty pitchers into the hands of all of them, with torches inside the pitchers.
- B. Gideon took some things into battle that I would deem as foolish weapons; a torch, an empty water pitcher, and a trumpet.
- C. Gideon came upon the Gentiles by night (early morning), and routing them by smashing the pitchers into the rocks, blowing the trumpets, and showing the numbers of fore-running troops that had torches.
- D. God has left us to preach His word to save those who will believe. The world calls this foolishness, but it is really the power of God (1Cor. 1:18).
For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- E. Only by the foolishness of gospel preaching will we be able to save souls (Jas. 1:21).
Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

V. **FIFTH, REALIZE THE VICTORY.**

- A. Scripture text: **Jud. 7:19-22.**
- B. As Gideon was successful w/God's help, Xians must realize they are victorious too!
- C. We are being lead in triumph (2Cor. 2:14).
But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.
- D. We have the victory that overcomes the world (1Jn. 5:4).
...and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith.
- E. We can do great things with the power that is within us (Eph. 3:20-21).
Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. To summarize the work of Gideon: he tested God, he was not afraid, he was ready to fight, he made foolish battle plans, and he realized the victory.
- B. With God's blessings and help, Gideon was exceedingly successful in accomplishing the Lord's will.
We can too!
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring-Xians.