

Mission: Possible - Victory
Gideon Part 2
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March 9, 2014

We are in our sermon series titled, Mission: Possible and today we are looking at Part 2 of Gideon's story and his defeat against the Midianite Army.

Turn with me if you would to Judges 7 ~ and as you are doing that, let me remind us of *some thoughts that I shared with you last month on how we can **experience Victory in life.***

If we are going to experience Victory in our lives, and remember, we don't have to live defeated and deflated lives....Jesus came so that you and I might have life and have it abundantly!! (john 10:10) And so if you and I are going to experience the victory and live in the abundance he offers to us, we need to

1. **Rely on God's strength, not on our own! – God wants us to get to a place where we have to fully rely on Him.**
2. **We cannot allow fear to get in the way of what God wants to do in us! – How often do we let fear set in on us and deter us from moving forward with the dreams, hopes, and possibilities that God has given to us!?**
3. **When it's our time to go to battle we better be ready!! Eph. 6 tells us how to get ready for battle and if you have some time this week, I'd encourage you to read this chapter!**
4. **Not everybody who starts out the battle with you, will stay with you! There will be people in your life and in my life who we thought would stick with us forever but for whatever reason, they decided to bail on us, and we just need to know going into battle this will happen.**

And today we are going to pick back up in this story of Gideon to discover some more truths about how we can experience victory in life!!

And so let's read Judges 7:1-8 and then we'll get the rest in our notes...

*"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. ²The LORD said to Gideon, "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.' ³Now announce to the army, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.'" So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained. ⁴But the LORD said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will thin them out 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." ⁵So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the LORD told him, "Separate those who lap the water with their tongues as a dog laps from those who kneel down to drink." ⁶Three hundred of them drank from cupped hands, lapping like dogs. All the rest got down on their knees to drink. ⁷The 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 others go home." ⁸So Gideon sent the rest of the Israelites home but kept the three hundred, who took over the provisions and trumpets of the others. *Now the camp of Midian lay below him in the valley.**

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.

Now let’s pause here to pull out some thoughts about how we can experience victory:

- a. **When God says, GO, GO!!!!** Here we have an issue of obedience vs. disobedience. Gideon chose to be obedient to what God was asking him to do. And you and I have to ask ourselves, “When God is telling me to “Go” or telling me to “Do” something, am I doing it? We either do what God wants us to do, or we don’t! There’s no in between!!!! There’s no such thing as partial obedience!! Partial obedience is disobedience! And If you want to see the results of your obedience vs. disobedience, read through Deuteronomy 28 – It tells us that when we are obedient, God will bless us and when we are disobedient, there will be curses on us! If Gideon had not done what God wanted him to do, this story would have probably turned out differently and Gideon and all his men, would have been wiped out by the much stronger, better equipped Midianite Army!
- b. **We can’t let our fear become an excuse that will keep us from the task God has in store for us.** Gideon was facing some overwhelming odds, but he did what God was asking him to do anyway. And here’s why this is important for us....If we become stationary, we become stagnant, and when we become stagnant, we will eventually die. What would have happened if Gideon had just stayed and not gone down to listen in on what the Midianites had been saying as God had instructed him to do? What if he had come up with all kinds of excuses and missed out on what God had in store for him? I think there are times in your life and in my life when we let fear become an excuse for us and as we do that, guess what happens? We stay right where we are today, in the same old spiritual condition, stationary, and if we’re not stagnant yet, we soon will be! When God says go, GO! And don’t let fear lead you to a spiritual death!!!
- c. **Now, here’s the great thing about how God works.....**he recognizes that there will be times in our lives when we will have some level of fear.....and so what does God do for Gideon? He does two things....
- d. First, he tells Gideon to **take someone with him.....**a support person, a friend, a confidant.... And so in your life and in my life, we need to understand that it’s important that as we are moving toward experiencing victory in our lives, we need to take somebody with us!! We need to take a support person, a friend, a confidant. We don’t need to experience victory all by ourselves. As I shared last week, God doesn’t want us to have this lone-ranger spirituality! Who in your life would be a person that would be by your side as you moved toward victory?
- e. and then Second, **God tells him that he will be encouraged.** God will always provide encouragement to us when we need it the most and especially as we head into a battle and toward victory! And the reason for that is because often times when things are really good in our lives, where there’s not a lot of conflict, or tension, or doubts, etc, we just really don’t need a lot of encouragement. But when we are facing a battle, and striving toward victory in that battle, the road can be tough can’t it? We’ve been there, right? We have some battle wounds, and scars, and perhaps some deep internal hurts because of some of the things we’ve battle against in our lives...but friends, guess what? We’re here today.....and I would guess that the greatest reason why we are here today is because God has encouraged us in the heat of those battles. When we’ve felt like throwing in the towel, He said don’t give up!! When we’ve felt like we can’t take it anymore, he’s reminded us that he is with us!!!
- f. Now, before we move on to the next part of this story, there’s a thought that ties in here and it’s found in verse 15 – *“Gideon returned to the camp of Israel and called out, “Get up! The Lord has given the Midianite camp into your hands.”*

- g. If we are going to experience victory, we need to remember, **Never underestimate the power of our actions!!** Because Gideon chose to go. Because Gideon did not let fear get in his way. Because he was encouraged, he was able to confidently lead others to battle and on to victory!! Friends, listen. When you and I commit to these things above, God will exponentially increase our leadership and influence we have with others!!

Alright, let's continue on here in our passage of scripture....

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. 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." 15 When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he bowed down and worshipped. He returned to the camp of Israel and called out, "Get up! The Lord has given the Midianite camp into your hands."

If we're going to experience Victory, we can pull a couple of things out of these verses here.....

- h. **No matter what size battle you are facing, God has already won the battle!** The enemy that Gideon and his 300 men were about to face were in the tens of thousands, more than could even be really counted!! It's estimated at 135,000, but is probably much more than that! And friends, I'm telling you today, just like Gideon's experience here, no matter what you are facing.....God has already won the battle!!! It might not feel like it at times.....But because of his son, Jesus.....the battle is won. **Listen to these victory verses!!** [1 Corinthians 15:57](#) - "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." [Romans 8:31](#) - What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? [Romans 8:37](#) - "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."
- i. Now here's another thought that we can pull out from this section.....if we're going to experience victory, we need to **Make Worship a practice (he bowed down and worshipped God – vs. 15)**
- j. Let me share a few thoughts about worship so that we understand what Worship is, and perhaps what Worship is not....
- **Worship places God first in our lives** - Throughout scripture, we are told that worship is central, of primary importance, to our relationship and connection to God. And if there is anything in our lives that is more important to us, than God is, then God doesn't hold first place in our lives.....and it's here that we might need to do some self-reflection and allow God to speak to us about some of those things that we are placing first in our lives. Is it our time? Is it our family? Is it our money? Is it our recreation? It will vary for all of us, but we need to know the reality here that if God isn't first, we're worshipping idols! If we continued on to Chapter 8 here in Gideon's story, we would find that he got a little side-tracked and began to worship idols himself.
 - **Worship is more than music** – We don't know what Gideon did here when he bowed down to God. He might have prayed, he might have just listened for God's voice, He might have recited some scripture, he might have given an offering, He might have shared a few lines of a popular song of that day.....we just don't know. And I'm glad we don't know what Gideon did because when we think of worship, we tend to

drift quickly to the idea that our worship to God is about music. And it's much more than that!!!! Because,

- **Worship is a lifestyle** – Author and song writer Graham Kendrick said this about worship, "Worship has been misunderstood as something that arises from a feeling which "comes upon you," but it is vital that we understand that it is rooted in a conscious act of the will, to serve and obey the Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 12:1 tells us that it's only when we offer our entire lives....a living sacrifice, that we engage in the spiritual act of worship....and when we do that, God is pleased!

Alright, let's finish this up here today.....

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.’” 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. 22 “When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the Lord caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords. The army fled to Beth Shittah toward Zererah as far as the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath. 23 Israelites from Naphtali, Asher and all Manasseh were called out, and they pursued the Midianites. 24 Gideon sent messengers throughout the hill country of Ephraim, saying, “Come down against the Midianites and seize the waters of the Jordan ahead of them as far as Beth Barah.” So all the men of Ephraim were called out and they seized the waters of the Jordan as far as Beth Barah. 25 They also captured two of the Midianite leaders, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb at the winepress of Zeeb. They pursued the Midianites and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon, who was by the Jordan.”

If we're going to experience victory we need to know that

- k. **Victory will always require a strategy** – so we have 2 strategies at work here in this story. 1. We have a military strategy – the 300 guys were split up and they surrounded the midianite army from above. This is a good military strategy if it can be accomplished as they would have the advantage of position over their enemy. And it was at night time.....many of the midianites were sleeping, and they were not expecting anything to happen. And Gideon and his men snuck up on them when they were least expecting it. This was a good military strategy as well. Now, there are couple of factors here, that were perhaps not so good military strategies. First, an army of 300, taking on an army of 135,000 is not smart!! They're outnumbered by 450 to 1!! and when going into battle it's often times better to have a comparable size army. The second no so good strategy is their weaponry.....instead of armor, instead of spears, or whatever else they used then, they had horns.....musical instruments, and empty jars, and torches. And these weren't exactly the best choice of weaponry to take into battle. And so from a military perspective, victory would really be difficult if not entirely impossible!!
- l. **And isn't this exactly what you and I often do when preparing for battle.....**we look to OUR resources, OUR strategies, we look to OUR wisdom, OUR experience, and 1 of 2 things tend to happen....1, we give up before we even begin because when we look at what we have, vs. what our "enemy" has, there is no possible way we could win, so why bother trying!!! Or 2., we go

into battle foolishly, thinking that our resources, our wisdom, our experience, and our strength will defeat a much larger enemy and we'll often find ourselves on the losing end of that battle because we thought we could do it on our own!

- m. But remember what our series is called! Mission: POSSIBLE!!!! Nothing is impossible with God!!! And so in order to understand how this impossible situation was made possible, we have to take a look at the second strategy used here in this story and that's God's Strategy.
- n. And God's strategy included using the weakest, youngest member of the least family, in the least tribe, who had the least experience (Gideon was a farmer) to be the leader over the smallest, least equipped and worst equipped, army in order to defeat one of the most powerful armies of that time!!
- o. And the reason God did it this way is so that Gideon, and his army, and their enemy, and you and I today would know that victory will come, not because of what you and I have or don't have, not because of what size battle we might be facing, but because **NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD!!!**

And God wants us to get to a place in our lives, where we know that Victory can happen, and the impossible situations that we face can be turned into possibilities, not because of us, but because of Him!!! **NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD!!**

Pray