

GIDEON: THE STRENGTH OF FAITH

Part Four: God Creates Faith So That He Alone May Receive the Glory

Judges 7:1-11

- **God Creates Enormously Dangerous Situations To Strengthen Faith and for Him To Receive the Glory**

v. 1

1. Gideon, also known as Jerubaal, had gathered together men from Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali (6:35) .
 - Gideon knew for sure that Yahweh Shalom, the God of Peace, had chosen him to deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. God had confirmed that through the fleece. Now, Gideon did not know how God would use him, but he knew God would.
 - Often, God confirms to us that He has great plans for us. We just do not know how we fit into God's plan. Gideon probably expected that God had assembled this army to fight the Midianites. Instead, God had assembled the army to draw all the glory to Himself by deliberately shaping the faith of Gideon and all Israel.

v. 2

2. The LORD spoke to Gideon and told him that he had too many men. God would not give Midian into the hand of so many men because Israel would become boastful, saying "My own power has delivered me."

- **God always has all the power needed to overcome every enemy, spiritual or physical.** Our faith rests upon the omnipotence of God.
- **God never has to shape the battlefield so that He can triumph.** We may need more men, more firepower, more of something, but God alone has every sufficiency to meet every foe. He shapes human hearts to trust in Him alone, and not in our power. Your circumstances never pose the slightest challenge for God. He created the world and all that exists.
- **God fights battles so that believers may have more faith in His power and recognize that deliverance only comes by God's power, not ours.** Better than anyone, God understands the pride and arrogance of humans. He knows that humans will take credit for deliverance whenever they can. God intends to take all the credit for His acts. Until we learn to trust God's power to overcome seemingly insurmountable odds, we will never understand God's purpose and plan for our lives.

v. 3

3. God separates men and understands our fear and trembling. God told Gideon to have those with fear and trembling leave. 22,000 left, 10,000 remained.
 - **Gideon must have had even greater faith to watch more than two-thirds of his army leave.** Sometimes, the best thing that can happen is for those who fear and tremble before the enemy to leave the spiritual front lines and leave the people of faith to act for God.
 - **Faith means you trust God to keep His promise to you by His means, through His power, and in His time.** God never needs an army, but always rewards faith. Gideon told the people what God told Him.

- **God Strengthens Faith by Placing You in Circumstances Where You Will Prosper By Obeying Only Him.**

v. 4

4. The LORD told Gideon 10,000 men were still too many. God intended to test them further and separate out only the ones God selected.

- **God speaks to Gideon and Gideon had to follow God's words. Gideon believed God would do all that He had promised.** Imagine Gideon standing there with 10,000, perhaps thinking that even with 32,000 he did not have enough men. Human thinking always fails to understand God's plan or appreciate God's power.
- **Gideon had a clear idea of God's will for his life: deliver Israel.** Often, we know exactly what God expects from us, but we believe we can do His will in our power. God taught Gideon all about the futility of human power and replaced those decrepit ideas with a new vision of God's matchless power.
- **God often has to push out our own ideas and fears so that we can learn to rely upon faith in Him alone.** Until we understand that only God can provide the help we need will we stop trusting in armies and start counting on power from God.

v. 5

5. God imposed the test of readiness, by selecting only those who lap the water from their palms. The alert soldiers will not put their face to the water or kneel down.

- **God chooses men who remain alert, and ready for spiritual battles.**

v. 6

6. Gideon watched as the men shrunk from 10,000 to 300.

- **God wants to be sure everyone knows of His strength and power. Life is all about serving God in faith so that He receives all the glory from our actions as we follow His plans.**

v. 7

7. Gideon released all but the 300 men, relying totally upon God's promise that He would deliver Israel from the Midianites.

- **Gideon knew all about God's absolute power to deliver and work miracles. The confirmation by the fleece and Gideon's private conferences with God now come into full play. Gideon faithfully followed the commands of God which defied all human wisdom, but relied totally upon God's power.** In our own lives, we need to let God remove from our lives all fears, every hindrance, and every instinct we have to follow human wisdom. Until we can trust God's plan, we will never walk in His ways.

v. 8

8. The 300 men took the people's provisions and the trumpets into their hands. Gideon sent the other men to their own tents and the camp of Midian was spread out before them.

- Gideon had eyes to see the entire army of Midian before them in the valley. Yet, He had faithfully followed the commands of God in releasing the army to stand with 300 chosen men. God commands us to follow Him and not lean on our own plans, wisdom, or understanding. We must be just like Gideon and trust God only, especially with an army in the valley.