

Overcoming our Reluctance

Judges 6: 11-16

Living the Christian life isn't always easy. In fact, we are often forced to deal with difficulties and struggles. At times we surrender to defeat and feel as if we lack the ability to overcome. I am sure we have all dealt with moments of insecurity, while lacking the faith necessary to continue. The enemy loves for us to live in fear and uncertainty. While we are immobilized with fear, we are accomplishing little for the cause of Christ. However, the Lord desires us to live victorious lives in Him. We can overcome in Christ. We are more than conquerors in Him.

Our text reveals desperate and difficult days for the people of God. They were living in the Promised Land, but had strayed from the Lord and forsaken Him. In an act of divine chastisement, God had allowed the Midianites to overtake Israel and the people suffered under their heavy hand. Often in times of difficulty God will raise up one to lead His people out of bondage and into victory. Gideon was an unlikely candidate, but God chose to use him. Often the Lord uses the weak and inadequate to accomplish His will.

We find ourselves in desperate days, but God is looking for those who will stand for Him despite the difficulties of our day. This will require a strong faith and sacrifice on our part, but it can be done. Gideon wouldn't have been chosen by his peers to lead this charge; but they hadn't called, God had! We may think that we're unable, but God can empower us to overcome.

As we begin this series dealing with Conquerors, I want to consider the [factors](#) in Gideon's life that eventually resulted in victory as we think on: [Overcoming our Reluctance](#).

I. The Anxiety of Gideon – As we consider the life of Gideon, we discover that he lacked confidence and was filled with anxiety. We too must learn to overcome our anxiety as we trust the Lord to do the impossible in our lives. Consider:

A. Gideon's Activity (11) – [And there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abi-ezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.](#) Typically in that day wheat was thrashed on the threshing floor, a place set aside near the field of harvest using oxen to tread out the grain. It is noble that Gideon is working in the harvest at all, but he has been overcome with fear. He isn't using all that is available to him to ensure the harvest. He has brought a small portion of the wheat to the winepress and is working in secret, hidden from the Midianites.

- Sadly this is the case for many believers today. We have abandoned the harvest, content with a little work around the church, hidden from the world. We have found this is much easier. As long as the world isn't aware of what we are doing, we don't have to take a stand for the field. We have grown complacent with the little that is being done. We may see a little grain brought in to the storehouse, but much of the harvest remains in the field. You will likely be attacked while working in the field, but we must labor for the harvest. I'm glad someone endured the difficulties to labor for my soul!

B. Gideon's Apprehension (13) – *And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.* Upon hearing the call of God Gideon begins to question whether it is a worthy task. He complains about the situation Israel is facing. If God hasn't forsaken us, why has all of this come upon us? Why hasn't God performed a mighty miracle and taken care of the Midianites? Gideon seems resigned to the fact that the suffering they face will never improve; this must be God's will for our lives. He has decided to accept things as they are.

- Satan would have us believe that God has abandoned us. He wants us to believe our efforts will make no difference. God is sovereign and He can do all things, but He desires us to be workers in the harvest. We cannot assume that things will never be any better.
- If you and I aren't willing to stand for the Lord and try to make a difference, who will? I can tell you that it isn't God's will for men to die lost. He came for whosoever will. He wants none to perish. Man has brought much upon himself, but that isn't what the Lord desires. There is hope as long as we live in the day of grace.

C. Gideon's Assumption (15) – *And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.* Gideon begins to question the choice God had made. He begins to tell the Lord about his inability in regard to his heritage. "Surely the Lord has made a mistake. He doesn't want me to become a leader."

- Who are we to question the authority of God? He knew all about Gideon and He knows us as well. Gideon wasn't called because of who he was and he wasn't expected to stand in his own ability. This type of assumption is human nature. Surely there is someone else who could do that task better than me. Who am I that God would want me? Many times we miss God's blessings because we doubt that God can really use us!

II. The Possibility within Gideon – Gideon looked at himself from a human perspective. He rested solely upon his own ability. Gideon had no idea what he was capable of accomplishing. God knew much about Gideon that he had never seen before. Notice:

A. His Undiscovered Courage (12) – *And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.* All Gideon could see was a heart filled with fear, but God saw a mighty man of valor. This courage wouldn't be found within himself, but given of the Lord.

- Adversity has a way of bringing out the best in people. It is amazing what we can accomplish when we are put to the test. I wonder what lies within us that is waiting to be discovered if we'll only submit to God's will for our lives. I never dreamed I could do what I am doing. I do not stand alone or within my own strength, but God could see more than I could possibly imagine.
- God will never ask you to stand without providing the strength and wisdom needed within your heart. You may not even realize it is there, but God does because He is the One who placed it there! Why not allow God to take His tender hand and remove the doubt to reveal what He has placed in our hearts?

B. His Undeniable Ability (14) – *And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?* Gideon may not have fully understood or come to rest entirely in the Lord, but he was not asked to stand against the Midianites in his own ability. The Lord will never send us out to be devoured of our enemies. When we stand for the Lord we stand in His strength. It may look as if the enemy will soon overtake us, but God is in control.

- *Psalm 73:26 – My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* God will never lead you where His grace can't keep you! When we realize that we are not standing in our own ability, but in the Lord's, we are well on our way to becoming victorious. *Rom.8:31 – If God be for us, who can be against us?* If God has sent us, He will provide!

C. His Unlimited Resources (16) – *And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.* Gideon was a humble man of meager means. He wasn't a man of military might or experience. He faced a host of valiant men who were seasoned in battle. They may have enjoyed the best in modern weaponry, but Gideon had the Lord. He would provide the resources necessary to overcome the enemy.

- There is much we cannot handle on our own, but the battle isn't ours; it belongs to God. We can't begin to comprehend what the Lord is able to provide. He delivered the Israelites in the face of certain death at the Red Sea. He brought the victory through a shepherd boy and five smooth stones. The Christian has at his disposal all that God can provide. What more could we possibly need? [Ephes.3:20 – Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.](#)

III. The Victory of Gideon – Much could be said about Gideon's fleece and seeking a sign, but in the end he was obedient to the call of God. If we are to remain strong in the battle and continue in the harvest we must learn the principles that Gideon realized. There are some definite steps that we must practice to ensure the victory.

A. The Presence of Worship (25-27a) – Gideon was surrounded by those who had rejected the Lord and turned to worship Baal, including his father. He had to reestablish the altar and worship of the Lord to be victorious. We will never gain victory if God doesn't have the preeminence in our lives. Far too often we try to secure the victory without Him. In every situation we face, we must seek the Lord and worship Him. It would've been a futile effort without submitting to the lordship of God.

- If we are to overcome in our day, we must restore the altars in our lives. God has been overlooked and neglected for too long! It is time to remember who He is and our obligations to worship. A battle will never be won without worship. Gideon established the altar and worshipped God before he advanced against the enemy! Worship must come first, no exceptions.

B. The Power of Faith (7:7) – [And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.](#) The mission Gideon had been called to do was impossible with man. He started out with 32,000 men and God reduced that number to 300. God knew if Gideon had a large army, they would believe they had overcome within themselves. These 300 men were no match for the Midianites, [Judges 7:12](#). Gideon was going to have to rely on the Lord to defeat the enemy. This would require faith.

- Many times we face situations that are beyond our control. We tend to worry about the outcome. A lack of faith will hinder our progress in the work God has called us to perform. The work we are responsible for is overwhelming. We will never accomplish it without the Lord's help. We need to develop a faith like Gideon had, march confidently into battle, and trust the Lord to give the victory. Without faith we will accomplish very little, but through faith we can accomplish

much! Adrian Rogers said, *“Victory is not achieved by fighting. It is achieved by faith. Faith is not believing that God can do something. Faith is knowing that He will!”*

Conclusion: Gideon was very reluctant to step out in faith and follow the Lord. His anxiety about an uncertain future had crippled him with fear. Although he couldn't comprehend how God would provide victory, he chose to respond in faith. God never expected Gideon to defeat the enemy; He only desired obedience. We must realize that God isn't asking us to fight our battles alone. He is asking us to trust Him to bring victory for us.

Will you respond in faith, and follow the Lord even when the path is uncertain? Is He dealing with you about an area in your life, and you have been reluctant to respond? Come to Him and receive the strength you need to follow Him. He will never lead you astray. If you are yet unsaved, you will never obtain genuine victory. Victorious living is found in Christ alone. Come to Him today, repenting of sin and believe in Him by faith!