

This Day We Fight
Series: Victorious #7
Judges 3:1-4; Judges 6-7

Introduction: Max Lucado told a story that is taken from the proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute. A man is telling what happened one day in the maneuvers, and two battle ships were maneuvering, they were in a training process. The seas were heavy and the visibility was not good, and the captain was on the bridge, and a message came from the man on the lookout. He said, *'there's a light bearing on the starboard bow.'* And so, the captain said, *'is the light steady or is the light moving astern?'*

The answer came back, *'it is steady sir.'* The captain said, *signal that ship that we are on a collision course and tell them that they are advised to alter their course twenty degrees. '*

They flashed that signal to the other light, and a signal came back and that said, *'No, you alter your course twenty degrees.'* And the captain was infuriated and he said, *tell them I am a captain; alter your course twenty degrees.*

The message came back; *I am a seamen second class; advise that you alter your course twenty degrees.* The captain was furious. He said, *"I'm in a battleship...alter your course.'* The message came back, *I am a lighthouse, you better alter your course twenty degrees.* And then according to those proceedings the man said, we altered our course.

Now God is the lighthouse of the universe, and we find ourselves sometimes on a collision course and the wise thing to do is to alter our course because God will not alter His. That's what Israel found out, time after time.

Turn with me this morning to the OT book of Judges chapter 6, beginning with verse 1: ***The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites.*** [NIV]

Notice it was God that turned them over to their enemies – Verse 2 goes on to say, ***'Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds.'*** [NIV]

They're scared. They're hiding. And now verses 3-6 says, ***'Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country. 4They camped on the land and ruined the crops all the way to Gaza and did not spare a living thing for Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys. 5They came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count them or their camels; they invaded the land to ravage it. 6Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the Lord for help.'*** [NIV] **Let's Pray**

Our fight is the fight of faith: Do we believe what God has promised? Our war is against principalities and powers: Do we believe the report that Christ shall "sprinkle [that is, cleanse, and bring forgiveness and transformation to many nations" as Isaiah 52:15, says?

God's Word is not just to comfort us in times of trouble but a sword that we wield in times of spiritual war.

Consider God's proclamation: "So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

Consider also His commitment: ***"I am watching over My word to perform it"*** (Jeremiah 1:12).

We are not mere mortals stumbling blindly on earth, separated from God and isolated from His response to our needs. We are new creatures, born again from above, and resident within us is the Holy Spirit of Almighty God.

Ultimately, if we intend to follow Christ, we must think of ourselves not just as Christians, but more specifically as overcomers.

The Bible says it is ***"through faith and patience"*** that we overcome and gain heaven's treasures (Hebrews 6:12; see also Revelation 2:3).

Our source of spiritual life flows from our daily union with God in Christ. We do not bear fruit on our own. Jesus said if we abide in Him, then we will bear "much fruit" (John 15:5). He tells us to come to Him when we are "weary and

heavy-laden" (Matthew 11:28).

We are as strong and vulnerable to spiritual attack as we are close to Jesus. The enemy knows it is our nearness to God that produces our strength.

When love grows cold, a door opens in our souls toward darkness. We become vulnerable to other sins. Indeed, Jesus promised that **"the one who endures to the end, he will be saved"** (Matthew 24:13). Between now and the end of our lives, we will find many obstacles before us. Each battle comes like a thief to "steal and kill and destroy" (John 10:10). We may have survived the battles but lost our joy. We may still be attending church, but our vision has grown dim.

Many Christians have drifted into a life of passivity. Passivity does not feel like sin; it does not specifically violate any of the Ten Commandments. Its deception is more like a drug that clouds our discernment. But we can and must get our lives back and fighting spirit back, but we must defeat the illusion that our current condition is our permanent condition.

In our passage, Israel is intimidated and impoverished by the enemy for seven years. The Midianites could come and go. They oppressed the people of God, and they were put to humiliating shame by an enemy, and it was severe, and it was continuous. It reminds me of what is happening in America today. The church of Jesus Christ is becoming intimidated and impoverished.

Look at verses 7-10, 'Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the Lord for help. 7When the Israelites cried out to the Lord because of Midian, 8he sent them a prophet, who said, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. 9I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians. And I delivered you from the hand of all your oppressors; I drove them out before you and gave you their land. 10I said to you, 'I am the Lord your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.' But you have not listened to me.' [NIV]

Whenever we fail to obey the Lord, we begin to fear, and we become oppressed and enslaved by our enemies. Oppression plagues many Christians. In most cases oppression abides because we have been afraid to face our enemies and deal objectively with our problems.

God gave them the victory, but they forgot God. Do you see the parallel here in America? Americans have forgotten the Lord. We have forsaken our Judeo-Christian ethic, and the prevailing rhetoric in America is, all religion is essentially the same, and it is not. There is only one way to heaven... 'Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.'

In recent years, America has gone from **authority to relativism**. There is no fixed standard of right and wrong. And the theme in the book of Judges is found in chapter 21 verse 25, the last verse in this book. ***'In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit'*** [NIV]...or as the KJV says, ***'every man did that which was right in his own eyes.'***

That's America, folks. Everybody does which is right with his own eyes. We have gone from authority to relativism. We **have gone from truth to pragmatism**.

No longer do we ask, Is it true? We just simply ask, does it work for me? People are looking for religion that brings them health, wealth and happiness rather than nearness to God. Just so you know, God is not here to make you happy or healthy. He's here to make you holy.

We've gone from authority to relativism, from truth to pragmatism, and we've gone from reason to feeling. Psychology has replaced theology. And sin is no longer the enemy, sadness is. And the thing in America is to feel good about yourself and because of that we've replaced **convictions with opinions**.

Young people are being told in college you can't be certain about anything. One professor stood up in a class, and said, we can know nothing for certain. A student said, "Professor, are you sure about that? He said, "I'm absolutely certain. Really???"

The result of all of this is moral confusion. Our kids don't know how to play the game of life. They don't know where the sidelines are. They don't know where the end zone is. And they don't know what the rules are.

The word sin is a forgotten word in America. People want to live in a no-fault society. Nobody is guilty anymore. Nobody is sinful, just sick. Nobody is wicked,

just misunderstood or disenfranchised.

STORY: There was a man who mugged and brutally beat an elderly man in the subway in New York and he was shot when he was fleeing the scene and he was permanently paralyzed. Then the mugger who was shot and paralyzed sued the New York Transit Authority. And the reason he sued them? He really shouldn't have been shot for just mugging a poor old man. The man that was mugged, who was a cancer patient, is still paying his doctor bills, but the man who did the mugging was awarded 4.8 million dollars.

Judge 21:25, 'In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit.'

And so, we're not worshipping the God of the Bible. We don't have a fixed standard of right and wrong. Everything is relative. We're living in a pragmatic society, and victimization is the order of the day. Nobody's sinful, everybody's just sick. Nobody's evil, everybody's just ill. Nobody's wicked, everybody's weak. Guilt is out of date and sin is an old-fashioned concept.

This argument often arises: "I was taught that there isn't much point in fighting for our culture because life is only going to grow more evil until Christ returns." Regardless of the size of the battle before us, no matter how dark the spiritual atmosphere becomes, we must stand and fight for the purposes of God.

You are no doubt familiar with the Lord of the Rings trilogy written by J. R. R. Tolkien and made into popular movies. Tolkien, an Englishman, always denied that his work had anything to do with the realities of World War II. Yet much of his manuscript was written during the height of that time, when entire civilizations were at war. In any event, the book is a metaphor for all times and conflicts, especially highlighting the role of common men to attain uncommon levels of valor and victory against forces of evil.

Illustration: In a scene from the third Lord of the Rings movie, The Return of the King, Aragorn seeks to inspire his hopelessly outnumbered men against what seems like sure defeat: Hell's swarming legions have amassed before them, and the courage of Aragorn's fighters is weakening.

Riding along the front lines of his gathered but rather lowly army, he shouts, ***“I see in your eyes the same fear that would take the heart of me. A day may come when the courage of men fails, when we forsake our friends and break all bonds of fellowship. But it is not this day. ... THIS DAY WE FIGHT! By all that you hold dear on this good earth, I bid you stand, men of the West!***

The title of my message today is from Aragon’s speech; THIS DAY WE FIGHT.

We are in a battle today between light and darkness, good and evil, heaven and hell, God and Satan. And the book of Judges gives us the principles of victory. They center around a man named Gideon.

Look at verses 11-14 in Judges 6.

“The angel of the Lord came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. 12When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.”

13“Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said, ‘Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt?’ But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian.”

14The Lord turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?”

We find here in the book of Judges the keys to victory.

Principle #1, We must have VISION.

Gideon is threshing wheat in a winepress instead of on a threshing floor. A winepress is an enclosed circular structure; a threshing bin has doors open toward the prevailing wind, which blows away the chaff. It is no easy job threshing wheat in a winepress. When you are fearful, life gets difficult.

It is interesting that when the angel sent by God spoke to Gideon, he looked right past Gideon's circumstances and fears, and even past the image Gideon had of himself. He spoke directly to the courageous person God was in the process of creating. Speaking to Gideon, he said, **"The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior" (Judges 6:12).**

God saw Gideon as the leader of Israel. In the same way, He sees us as "more than conquerors" (Romans 8:37, KJV).

Gideon's response to the "valiant warrior" label is typical of something we all tend to think when we're in the midst of a battle: **"If the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about?" (Judges 6:13).**

Have you ever asked yourself why your Christianity is not working the way it works for others? The Lord's response to Gideon is the same response He gives us: **"Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?" (verse 14).**

If we are going to see victory, remember that our strength is not in ourselves. The effectiveness of our authority comes from Him.

Fast forward down to verse 22, ***When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the Lord, he exclaimed, "Alas, Sovereign Lord! I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!" 23But the Lord said to him, "Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die." 24So Gideon built an altar to the Lord there and called it The Lord Is Peace. To this day it stands in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.*** [NIV]

Now here is the point. Gideon was threshing wheat, hunkered down hiding away in a wine press, afraid of the Midianites, and God appeared to him and he had a vision of the Almighty. Here is Gideon living in defeat and fear until he took his eyes off the enemy and put his eyes on God. The Bible says, **'Where there is no vision, the people perish.'**

You might be thinking, I wish God would speak to me as he spoke to Gideon. Listen to me. You have something better than Gideon ever had. You have the Word of God, and you have the Holy Spirit of God living in you. We shouldn't go

whining and complaining about God not speaking.

God wants to speak to you, but do you want to hear? Are you ready to listen to what God is saying? You will never have victory in your life, at home, in school, in the business, in your neighborhood, in the church or in society until we first get a vision of Almighty God. There is the principle of vision, and you need to see God for who He is.

Principle #2, we must have VALOR. We need to be courageous.

Now God has spoken to Gideon and God has said to Gideon, I am your strength. I am your peace. I am your victory. Trust in me. Now when Gideon has his eyes upon the Lord, he gathers an army of thirty-two thousand men, but God doesn't seem to be interested in numbers.

Judges 7:1-3 says, ***“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.”***

Here's Gideon army of thirty-two thousand soldiers and he says, God has said that I'm to tell you that anybody who is afraid can go home. Gideon thought a couple of dozen would leave, but there's a stampede. And after the dust settles twenty-two thousand went home.

The first principle is the principle of vision. The second principle is the principle of valor. Why did God want the fearful to go home?

I'll tell you why. Because fear is infectious. When Joshua sent the twelve spies out, ten came back and gave a fearful report and nobody wanted to go into the land. In churches today we are always faced with people who are fearful, and don't believe God the impossible.

The Bible tells us ***God has not given us the spirit of fear, but a spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind.***

Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world.

Fear and faith can't live in the same heart. Fear will conquer faith or faith will conquer fear, but one will conquer the other.

There is a principle of vision. You need to see the Lord. Then there is the principle of valor. God says if you're afraid, if you're fearful, I can't use you.

Principle #3, we must be VIGILANT.

Look at verses 4-8, “But 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 first, everybody who is afraid to go home, twenty-two thousand went home, with ten thousand left. God says, Gideon, we're gonna have a test. Bring them down to the stream and tell every man to drink. Now here ten thousand people lined among the stream, and they did not know they were being tested. Do you know many times God is testing us and we don't even know it.

The Bible says, ***‘He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in that which is much’*** and the Bible says ***if you haven't been faithful in that which is least God will not commit to you that which is much.***

Illustration: I was reading about a man who, when he would hire people, would go for a ride in their vehicle. He'd say, would you take me somewhere? And when

he got in that vehicle, he'd look around to see what it looked like. And if it was a messy car, he wouldn't hire the person. The man had no idea he was being tested.

Illustration: They said Henry Ford would take a prospective executive out for lunch and he would watch, and if a man would salt his food without first tasting it, he wouldn't hire him. He said, the man doesn't have any sense. He's got to taste his food to see whether it needs salt or not. I mean, who thinks that he's being tested by the way he puts salt on his food?

God is watching in the small things. Two categories of water drinkers:

1. First were those people who got down on all fours, put their mouths in the stream, and began to drink. 9,700 did it like this.
2. But there was another group there that got down on their knees, and they took the water to their mouths and lapped it like a dog. Not putting their mouths in the water, not down on their bellies drinking up the water, but vigilance watching for the enemy. 300 of them. And God said, those are the guys I want.

God is looking for people of valor and God is looking for people of vigilance. Now when I tell you that we're not to be terrified by our adversaries, when I tell you that God has not given us the spirit of fear, does that mean therefore we're to be a casual and carefree? Absolutely not.

First Peter 5: 8 says, 'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.' [KJV]

What kind of people does God use to bring victory? People of vision. People who've seen God. People of valor. People who are not afraid. People of vigilance. People who know how to watch, and to be sober and vigilant. But here's the last thing.

Principle #4, we must have SPIRITUAL VITALITY.

I'm talking about people who have the life of God in them. Chapter 7, verse 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. 10If you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah 11and 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. 12The 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.

13Gideon 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.”

14His 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.”

Now Gideon sneaks up and eavesdrops as a man tells about a dream he had, he says, ***‘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.’*** And his friend said, ***‘this can be nothing other than the sword of Gideon.’***

Verse 15 says, ***“When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he bowed down and worshiped. He returned to the camp of Israel and called out, “Get up! The Lord has given the Midianite camp into your hands.” [NIV]***

Time Out: Let’s step away from this story for a moment and look at the reality of our lives in the 21st century.

Many people are weary about world events. Part of this weariness is because hearts are divided: We are trying to maintain a peacetime mentality during a time of war. Since 9/11 our souls have secretly longed to return to 9/10. Yet we cannot hide in the past. As long as we are on earth, we have a role to play as Christians. We must pray for our leaders, support our troops and intercede for mercy to fall upon those in harm’s way.

The argument rises that it is wrong for a predominantly Christian nation to go to war. The objectors point to Jesus as their model. Would Jesus go to war?

Christ set the pattern not for governments, but for His disciples. As His disciple, I follow Him in the way of mercy and redemption.

God's command to governments, however, is different from His word to disciples. Part of the role of government is to administer justice and to exercise punishment.

Some may argue that this is Old Testament thinking, but the New Testament is clear on this subject as well. Speaking about governing (or civil) authorities, Paul writes that a secular government, to the degree that it executes its courts fairly, serves as "a minister of God." Paul warns: ***"If you do what is evil, be afraid; for [a government] does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil"*** (Romans 13:4).

Because I follow Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, my job is to exhibit Christ's love and mercy, not to be "an avenger who brings wrath." Government, on the other hand, in respect to the exercise of punishment against evil, serves as "a minister of God" when it brings wrath upon the "one who practices evil."

The individual who says that governments of "Christian" nations should turn the other cheek, that they should not punish evil or that the wicked should be free to fulfill evil without consequence is denouncing justice. This leads to anarchy. God calls governments to fulfill His standard of justice, and He requires the Church to reveal His standard of mercy.

Some say: ***"Our nation may be in a war, but I am a peacemaker like Jesus. The Lord has not called me to war."*** Really! That's not what the bible says.

Judges 3:1-4 These are the nations the Lord left to test all those Israelites who had not experienced any of the wars in Canaan 2(he did this only to teach warfare to the descendants of the Israelites who had not had previous battle experience): 3the five rulers of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites living in the Lebanon mountains from Mount Baal Hermon to Lebo Hamath. 4They were left to test the Israelites to see whether they would obey the Lord's commands, which he had given their ancestors through Moses. [NIV]

We are all called to be overcomers and more than conquerors. Scripture says that ***"the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make***

peace" (James 3:18). This means we must never forget that our message is the Gospel of peace. At the same time, it is the "God of peace" who has chosen to "crush Satan under our feet" (Romans 16:20).

Peace has a militant side: True peace manifests because we have confronted and overcome our spiritual enemies.

The problem is that too many Christians have confused peace with passivity. They have hollow peace instead of hallowed peace. Their lives are prayerless, and they live in perpetual compromise with heaven's enemies. This is not peace; it IS bondage.

Jesus was the quintessential peacemaker, yet He boldly confronted the advance of evil. And He did so with unbending righteousness and unsheathed spiritual authority. Christ terrified the demonic realm. At His approach, 'evil spirits howled in trembling dread: **"Have You come here to torment us before the time?"** (Matthew 8:29). Jesus was operating in the war mode, and they knew it.

Not only did Jesus exercise authority over every demonic hierarchy up to Satan himself, but He told the disciples that the works He did, including those of spiritual warfare, they would also do (see John 14:12). The disciples learned discernment and understood authority. Jesus specifically gave them authority "over all the power of the enemy" (see Matthew 10:1; Mark 3:14-15; 6:13; 16:17; Luke 9:1; 10:17-19).

When I read the Scriptures, it is plain to me that Jesus was perfectly God-focused, but His radar was continuously sensing the enemy's advance.

A word here to women who find warfare a macho topic. Some women argue, "I'm just a housewife, a mom. I don't have a war mode." If your child were seriously ill, would you not fight that illness with everything at your disposal? You would fast and pray, and you would do so from your war mode.

If your marriage were under spiritual attack, would you not get before God and war with fervency? The fact is ladies; you know how to fight. Ask your husband if he thinks you have a war mode. [Guys be careful how you answer]

My point is that the war mode is in us all. It may be attached to our instinct for survival, but it is more directly connected with our love for people. I love my nation, so I am warring in prayer on its behalf.

Because of love for my family, I war in prayer on their behalf. I love my church, my city and my nation, so I war to protect what I love.

If you have a LOVE mode, you also have a WAR mode. God has created the WAR mode so we can protect the people we LOVE.

One of the problems of interpreting end-time events is the tendency to focus only at the fact that Satan is raging or that lawlessness, wars, earthquakes and famines are escalating, we might conclude that difficulty and darkness are all that we have awaiting us until the Rapture.

But the same Spirit who predicted the perilous conditions at the end of the age also forecasts that, in spite of difficulties and battle, the Gospel of Christ's love will be proclaimed worldwide to all nations (Matthew 24:14).

Back to our story: Just so you know, barley is the cheapest, coarsest, bread, it's the bread of the poor. That barley bread is Gideon. When Gideon heard that he said, Hallelujah, hallelujah.

Gideon realizes he was that piece of barley bread. My family is the poorest in Manasseh and I'm the least in my father's house. He said, "Of all the tribes, Manasseh the poorest of all the families, my family's the worst. And God called him a man of valor.

The devil knows more about you than you know about you. And the dread of hell is that you'll wake up to the power that God has given you. I mean, that we will understand just who we are in Christ.

God wants to put his life into you. It's not your scholarship, it's your relationship. It's not your ability, it's your availability. It's not your fame, it's your faith. It's not who you are, it's whose you are.

Listen to 1 Corinthians chapter 1: 26-28, '**Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27But God**

chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are...’ [NIV]

The Victory

Look how this battle was won by men who had vision, valor, vigilance, and vitality.

16Dividing 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. 18When 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.’”

19Gideon 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. 20The 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!” 21While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled. [NIV]

He’s got only 300 people. God doesn’t need a vast army. God doesn’t win with numbers. He’s got people of vision. He has people of valor. He has people of vigilance, and he has people of vitality. They understand they have the anointed life of God in them. **These were ordinary men, but they were obedient men.**

He blows the trumpet. They break all that pottery. There is the sound of the breaking of pottery. A light shines all around the camp of the Midianites and they shout, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. When they did that, friend, there was incredible confusion in the camp of the enemy.

Now what’s all of that about? It’s all in verse 20. When they blew the trumpets, that’s **boldness**. If the trumpet gives an uncertain sound who will prepare himself for the battle? the Bible says. That’s boldness.

When they smashed those vessels, that's **brokenness**. What does that vessel represent? That's us. The Bible says, 'We have a treasure in an earthen vessel.' That's brokenness. Men throw broken things away; God uses broken things. God says, 'A broken and a contrite spirit he does not despise.'

'Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works.' That's **brightness**. The Bible says, 'They stood every man in their place, boldness, brokenness and brightness. The sword of the Lord and of Gideon **and God gave the victory**.'

This is precisely what all Christians must do. First, you must shine; break the pitcher which conceals your light; throw aside the bushel which has been hiding your candle, and shine. Let your light shine before men; let your good works be such, that when men look upon you, they shall know that you have been with Jesus.

Then there must be the sound, the blowing of the trumpet by proclaiming Christ crucified. Take the Gospel to them.

Remember that the true war cry of the Church is Gideon's watchword, "The sword of the Lord, **and** of Gideon!"

If we only cry, "The sword of the Lord!" we shall be guilty of an idle presumption; and if we shout, "The sword of Gideon!" alone, we shall manifest idolatrous reliance on an arm of flesh: we must blend the two in practical harmony, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!"

The Spirit of God does not want us merely to tolerate oppression; He desires us to conquer it. He has not called us to passivity; He has called us to fight the fight of faith! God has anointed us with the power of His Holy Spirit, and Jesus has given us His authority over all the power of the enemy (see Luke 10:19). This authority of the Lord is not just for guard duty or defensive maneuvers. The Holy Spirit desires that, as we follow Christ, we take the battle to the enemy as well.

We must develop Christ's attitude toward evil. He came "to destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). The Bible says, "Hate evil, you who love the LORD" (Psalm 97:10).

We can do nothing of ourselves, but in Christ we can do all things. What would happen if everybody stood in their place? If with no uncertain sound we blew the trumpet, bold for the Lord Jesus. What would happen if we laid our pride in the dust with brokenness? And what would happen if we let our light shine with brightness?