



FOUR PRINCIPLES OF VICTORY

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





Four Principles of Victory

ADRIAN ROGERS

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide this transcript produced from a live sermon preached by Adrian Rogers while serving as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. This transcript is intended for your personal, non-commercial use.

Note: Though it has been transcribed from a version used for broadcast, it may contain stutters, stammers, and other authentic remarks as would be common in a live setting.

In order to ensure our ability to be good stewards of Adrian Rogers' messages, Love Worth Finding has reserved all rights to this content.

Except for your personal, non-commercial use and except for brief quotations in printed reviews, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—without the prior permission of the publisher.

Copyright © 2025 Love Worth Finding Ministries, Inc.

Transcripts are used by permission of the Rogers Family Trust.



Four Principles of Victory

SERMON REFERENCE: Judges 6:1-24, 7:1-21

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1803

In Judges 6, Israel had forgotten God and the victory He had already given them. As a result, the nation was intimidated and impoverished by an oppressive enemy; the people's shame was severe and continuous.

Our nation suffers shame of its own. We've traded authority for relativism, truth for pragmatism. We've traded reason for feeling, convictions for opinion. We've done away with the fixed standard of right and wrong. Everyone does what is right in his own eyes.

But God raised up an unlikely hero, Gideon, to fight for His people. And as our nation begins to fall into the same trap, we must recognize the four principles of victory in Gideon's life, that we may be used like him.

First, there was the principle of vision.

Gideon had a vision of the living God. (See Judges 6:11.) Gideon lived in defeat and fear until he took his eyes from the enemy and fixed them on God instead. We have something far better than Gideon had: the Word of God and the Holy Spirit abiding in us. And there is no excuse for us not to have an encounter with the living God.

Second, there was the principle of valor.

Gideon was a man of valor, not because he felt brave in and of himself. Rather, God took this fearful man and transformed him with His power, enriched him with love, and enlightened him with a sound mind.

Third, Gideon had the principle of vigilance.

After dismissing those who were afraid to fight, God tested Gideon's army further to see which soldiers would be careless and who would remain vigilant. (See Judges 7.)

We don't have to be afraid of our adversary, but we do have to watch, pray, and never let our guard down.

Finally, Gideon had the principle of vitality.

God's plan is to take ordinary people and do something incredible through them.

Adrian Rogers says, "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."

Life Application

How do we win the victory? Through boldness: The God that was with Gideon is the God that will be with us. By brokenness: God never really uses anything until He first breaks it. With brightness: Our commission as men and women of God is to let our light shine in a sinful, dark world.



Four Principles of Victory

SERMON REFERENCE: Judges 6:1-24, 7:1-21

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1803

1) INTRODUCTION

- a) God is the lighthouse of the universe, and we find ourselves sometimes on a collision course.
 - i) The wise thing to do is to alter our course because God will not alter His.
 - (1) This is what the children of Israel found out.
- b) Judges 6:1-6
 - i) It was God who turned them over to their enemies.
 - ii) The Israelites were intimidated and impoverished by the enemy.
 - (1) They were in hiding.
 - (2) This happened for seven years.
 - iii) The Midianites would come and go.
 - (1) They oppressed the people of God.
 - iv) God's people were put to ignominious shame by an enemy.
 - (1) It was severe, and it was continuous.
 - v) This reminds us of what is beginning to happen in America.
 - (1) The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is becoming intimidated and impoverished because of an enemy, and it is getting worse.
- c) We find in the book of Judges the principles of victory.
 - i) God had rather forgive and restore than to judge.
- d) The Bible teaches that the children of Israel had taken strange and different gods.
 - i) Judges 6:7-10
 - (1) God gave them the victory, but they forgot God.
- e) Do you see the parallel in America?
 - i) Americans have forgotten the Lord God of Israel.
 - (1) We have forsaken our Judeo-Christian ethic.
 - (2) And God is turning us over to our enemies.
 - ii) The prevailing rhetoric in America is that all religion is essentially the same, and it is only superficially different.
 - (1) But Christianity is essentially different and only superficially the same.
 - iii) The problem is what people will believe.
 - (1) People will believe almost anything.
- f) There are four steps that have taken place in America:
 - i) We have gone from authority to relativism.
 - (1) There is no fixed standard of right and wrong.
 - (2) Judges 17:6
 - (a) This is the theme of the book of Judges.
 - (b) This is happening in America.
 - (3) A person becomes his own sense of what is right and what is wrong.
 - (a) But we have to have a fixed point, a starting point.
 - (i) There has to be a fixed standard.
 - (b) We pick and choose our morals like it is a cafeteria line.



- ii) We have gone from truth to pragmatism.
 - (1) No longer do we ask, "Is it true?"
 - (a) We ask, "Does it work?"
 - (2) People look for religion to serve them.
 - (a) They are making it man-centered rather than God-centered.
 - (b) They look for religion that brings health, wealth, and happiness, rather than asking what is right.
 - (i) God is not here to make us happy or healthy.
 - 1. He is here to make us holy.
- iii) We have gone from reason to feeling.
 - (1) Psychology has replaced theology.
 - (2) Sin is no longer the enemy; sadness is the enemy.
 - (3) The great thing in America is to feel good about yourself.
- iv) We have gone from convictions to opinions.
 - (1) People say, "Well, I feel this way," or "What is truth for you may not be truth for me."
 - (2) Judges 17:6
 - (3) Kids in college are being told that we cannot be certain about anything.
- g) The result of this is moral confusion.
 - i) Our kids don't know how to play the game.
 - (1) They don't know where the sidelines are.
 - (2) They don't know what the rules of the game are.
 - ii) The word "sin" is a forgotten word.
 - iii) The enemy is not sin; the enemy is guilt.
 - (1) We want to live in a no-fault society.
- h) Judges 17:6
 - i) We are not worshipping the God of the Bible.
 - ii) We don't have a fixed standard of right and wrong.
 - (1) Everything is relative.
 - iii) We are living in a pragmatic society, and victimization is the code word of the day.
 - (1) Nobody is sinful; everybody is sick.
 - (2) Nobody is evil; everybody is ill.
 - (3) Nobody is wicked; everybody is weak.
 - iv) Guilt is out of date, and sin is an old-fashioned word.
- i) We are in a battle between light and darkness, good and evil, Heaven and Hell, and God and Satan.
- j) In today's message, we will look in the book of Judges for the principles of victory, which center around a man named Gideon.

2) THE PRINCIPLE OF VISION (JUDGES 6:11-14)

- a) God appeared to Gideon.
 - i) God wanted to give victory, and He wanted to give it through Gideon.
- b) Judges 6:22-24
 - i) "Jehovah-Shalom" means "Jehovah, Our Peace".
- c) Gideon was threshing wheat, hiding in a wine press, and afraid of the Midianites when God appeared to him.
 - i) He had a vision of the Almighty.



- ii) Gideon was living in defeat and fear until he took his eyes off the enemy and put his eyes back on God.
- d) The Bible says that, "Where there is no vision, the people perish."
 - i) Proverbs 29:18
- e) God spoke to Gideon through the angel of the Lord, but we have something better than what Gideon had.
 - i) We have the Word of God.
 - ii) Those who are saved have the Holy Spirit of God living in them.
 - iii) God wants to speak.
 - (1) Do you want to hear?
 - (2) Are you ready to listen to what God is saying?
- f) You will never have victory in your life until you first get a vision of Almighty God.
 - i) We need to see God as big, strong, and mighty.

3) THE PRINCIPLE OF VALOR (JUDGES 7:1-3)

- a) We need to be courageous.
 - i) God had spoken to Gideon.
 - (1) He was Gideon's strength, peace, and victory.
 - (2) Gideon was to trust Him.
- b) When Gideon had his eyes upon the Lord, he gathered an army.
 - i) He gathered an army of 32,000 men, but God wasn't interested in numbers.
- c) Judges 7:1-3
 - i) Everyone who was afraid was to go home.
 - ii) 22,000 left.
- d) God cannot and will not use cowards.
 - i) Fear suits a person for failure and not for fighting.
 - ii) Why did God want the cowards to go home?
 - (1) God wanted them to go home because fear is infectious.
 - (a) Deuteronomy 20:8
 - (2) There is something about fearful people that infects other people.
 - (a) When Joshua sent the twelve spies out, ten came back and gave a fearful report.
 - (i) No one wanted to go into the land.
 - 1. Numbers 13:27-33
 - 2. Numbers 14:1-4
- e) In churches today, we are faced with people who are fearful and who don't believe that God can do what He wants to do.
 - i) The Bible tells us that God has not given us the spirit of fear.
 - (1) 2 Timothy 1:7
 - ii) They don't want to believe God; and because of fear, they are not fitted for victory.
 - (1) Philippians 1:28
 - (2) 1 John 4:4
 - iii) There are people who don't teach because they are afraid.
 - iv) There are people who don't tithe because they are afraid.
 - v) There are people who don't witness because they are afraid.
- f) Fear and faith do not live in the same heart.



- i) Fear will conquer faith, or faith will conquer fear.
 - (1) But one will conquer the other.
- g) If we are afraid and fearful, then God cannot use us.

4) THE PRINCIPLE OF VIGILANCE (JUDGES 7:4-7)

- a) First of all, everyone who was afraid went home.
 - i) There were 10,000 men left.
 - ii) God told Gideon that they were going to have a test.
 - (1) Every man was to go down to the stream and drink.
 - (2) There were 10,000 people lined along the stream, and the monitors were there to watch.
 - (3) They didn't know they were being tested.
 - (a) Many times, God tests us, and we do not know we are being tested.
 - (i) Luke 16:10
 - 1. God watches in the small things.
 - iii) There were two categories:
 - (1) Those who got down on all fours, put their mouths in the stream, and began to drink.
 - (a) They were vulnerable to the enemy.
 - (b) 9,700 drank that way.
 - (2) The other group got down on their knees, took the water to their mouths, and lapped it like a dog.
 - (a) Vigilantly, they watched for the enemy.
 - (b) There were 300 in this group.
 - (c) These were the ones that God wanted.
 - (i) They were not cowards, and they were not careless.
 - 1. God looks for people of valor and vigilance.
- b) We are not to be terrified by adversaries, and God has not given us the spirit of fear; however, this does not mean that we are to be casual and happy go lucky.
 - i) 1 Peter 5:8
 - ii) There is a balance between these two things.
- c) What kind of people does God use?
 - i) People of vision.
 - (1) People who have seen God.
 - ii) People of valor.
 - (1) People who are not afraid.
 - iii) People of vigilance.
 - (1) People who know to watch and be sober and vigilant.

5) THE PRINCIPLE OF VITALITY (JUDGES 7:9-21)

- a) These are people who have the life of God in them.
- b) Judges 7:9-15
 - i) Gideon and his servant sneaked into the enemy's camp and overheard a couple of men talking.
 - (1) One of the men had a dream.
 - (a) He saw a loaf of barley bread rolling along the ground.
 - (i) Barley bread was the cheapest, coarsest, and the poorest of breads.



1. It was what the absolutely impoverished people would eat.
 - (b) The loaf of barley bread hit a tent, and the tent caved in.
 - (i) Inside the tent, were the enemy's warriors.
 - ii) Gideon was that piece of barley bread.
- c) Gideon, in himself, was nothing.
 - i) When the Lord called Gideon a man of valor, Gideon looked behind him to see whom God was talking to.
 - (1) Judges 6:12
 - ii) Judges 6:15
 - (1) Gideon was the least in his father's house.
 - (2) His family was the poorest in Manasseh.
 - (a) Of all the tribes of Israel, the tribe of Manasseh was the poorest.
 - (b) Yet, God called Gideon a man of valor.
 - iii) God told Gideon to go down to the enemy camp, and God showed Gideon what the enemy thought.
 - (1) The devil knows more about you than you know about you.
 - (2) The dread of Hell is that you will wake up to the power that God has given you and that you will understand just who you are in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- d) God wants to put His life into us.
 - i) Judges 6:34
 - (1) "The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon."
 - (a) The literal translation of this is "the Lord clothed Himself with Gideon."
 - ii) It is not the person; it is God in the person.
 - (1) God wore Gideon like a suit of clothes.
 - (2) Gideon was just the barley bread.
 - iii) It is not your scholarship; it is your relationship.
 - iv) It is not your ability; it is your availability.
 - v) It is not your fame; it is your faith.
 - vi) It is not who you are; it is whose you are.
 - vii) 1 Corinthians 1:26-27
- e) Judges 7:15-20
 - i) Gideon had three hundred people.
 - (1) God doesn't have to have a lot of people.
 - (a) God doesn't win with numbers.
 - (2) He had people of vision, valor, vigilance, and vitality.
 - (3) They understood they had the anointing, the life of God, upon them.
 - (4) These were ordinary men, but they were obedient men.
 - ii) When they blew the trumpets, broke the pottery, shone the lights, and shouted, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," there was incredible confusion in the camp of the enemy.
- f) Judges 7:20
 - i) When they blew the trumpets, that was boldness.
 - (1) 1 Corinthians 14:8
 - ii) When they broke the vessels, that was brokenness.
 - (1) The vessels represent us.



- (a) 2 Corinthians 4:7
 - (2) Men throw broken things away, but God only uses broken things.
 - (3) We are to be broken before God.
 - (a) Psalm 51:17
- iii) When they let the lights shine, that was brightness.
 - (1) Matthew 5:16
- g) Judges 7:21
 - i) Every man stood in their place with boldness, brokenness, and brightness.
 - (1) And God gave the victory.
- h) What would happen if ordinary people (barley bread) stood in their place?
- i) What would happen if, with no uncertain sound, we blew the trumpet and were bold for the Lord Jesus?
- j) What would happen if we laid our pride in the dust with brokenness?
- k) What would happen if we let our light shine with brightness?

6) CONCLUSION

- a) These were people of victory, vision, valor, vigilance, and vitality.
- b) If God wants to wear you like you wear a coat, then with boldness, brokenness, and brightness, give God the glory.
 - i) When God's people begin to do that, they don't have to fight the enemy.
 - (1) The enemy turns on himself.
 - (a) It is a Biblical principle.
 - (b) God sends fear into the camp of the enemy.
- c) If you are not a child of God, then this does not apply to you.
 - i) You have to be saved first.
- d) To be saved means to have every sin forgiven.
 - i) It means that Christ lives in your heart.
 - ii) It means that when you die, you will go to Heaven.
- e) You are not saved by joining a church, being baptized, giving money, obeying the Golden Rule, or by keeping the Ten Commandments.
 - i) These are all well and good, but that is not being saved.
- f) Salvation is when you repent of your sin and trust Christ.
 - i) Acts 16:31
 - (1) The word "believe" in this verse means "trust".
 - ii) If you will trust Jesus, then He will save you.
- g) Romans 10:13
- h) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- i) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) John 3:16



Four Principles of Victory

SERMON REFERENCE: Judges 6:1-24, 7:1-21

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1803

Be finding please, Judges chapter 6. Max Lucado told a story that is taken from the proceedings of the US Naval Institute. A man is telling what happened one day in the maneuvers. Two battle ships were maneuvering, they were in a training process. They were at sea and the seas were heavy and the visibility was not good and the captain was there on the bridge, on the watch out to take care of the ship. And a message came. The message came from the man on the lookout, and this is what he said. 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 a stern?" The answer came back from the wing, "It is steady sir." And so 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." And so they flashed that signal to the other light and a signal came back and it said, "No, you alter your course twenty degrees." And the Captain was infuriated and he said, "Send the message back, 'I am a Captain. You alter your course twenty degrees.'" And 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 battle ship. Alter your course twenty degrees." The message was flashed back, "I am a lighthouse. You alter your course twenty degrees." And then according to these proceedings the man said, "We altered our course."

Now God is the lighthouse of the universes. 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. Look if you will in Judges chapter 6 verse 1 through verse 6, "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord: and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Median seven years." Now notice it was God that turned them over to their enemies. "And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Median seven years. And the hand of Median prevailed against Israel: and because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds." That is, they were intimidated by the enemy; they're in hiding. And now verse 3, "And so it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, even they came up against them; and they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no substance for Israel neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. For they came up with their cattle and tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it. And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord." They were intimidated by the enemy. They were impoverished by the enemy and this happened for seven years. And the Midianites could come and go. They oppressed the people of God and God's people were put to ignominious shame by an enemy. And it was severe, and it was continuous. And it reminds us of what is beginning to happen in America today. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is becoming intimidated and becoming impoverished because of an enemy, and it is getting worse. And yet we find here in the book of Judges the principles of victory. Because as I said before, God had rather forgive and restore than to judge.

Now, what happened is simply this, the Bible teaches they had taken strange gods and different gods. Look if you will in Judges chapter 6 verse 7 through verse 10, "And it came to pass, that when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord because of the Midianites, that the Lord sent a prophet unto the children of Israel," and would to God that he would raise up prophets in America. "The Lord sent a prophet unto the children



of Israel, which said unto them, 'Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, 'I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage; and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land; And I said unto you, 'I am the Lord your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed My voice.'” Very clearly God gave them the victory, but they forgot God. Do you see the parallel here in America? Americans have forgotten the Lord God of Israel. We have forsaken our Judeo Christian ethic. We have forgotten God and God is turning us over to our enemies.

Now you know the prevailing rhetoric in America is, “Well, all religion is essentially the same. It’s only superficially different.” You’ve got it backward dear friend, Christianity is essentially different and only superficially the same. Our faith is different and the thing today is not that people don’t believe, that’s not the problem today. The problem today is what people will believe. It’s not the agnostics, it’s the ig-nostics. I mean friend people will believe almost anything.

Let me give you the four steps that have taken place in America today. Number one, we have 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 17 verse 6, “In those days there was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” That’s America folks. “Every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” We have gone from authority to relativism. There is no fixed standard of right and wrong. A man just simply becomes his own sense of what is right and what is wrong.

When we built these marvelous buildings, and I thank God for them, I used to come out here before there was a congregation and preach. I would just stand around and preach, there wouldn’t be anybody to preach to! But I’d just say, “God is love. Jesus is wonderful. Hallelujah! Praise God!” But right here, somewhere on this platform, I found a poured piece of concrete. And in there was a nail, and around that nail was written some inscription that led me to believe this was the bench mark for this entire building. I’m glad it was put right here where this platform is. And this was the point that they took all the rest of the measurements from. This was the point that showed what was up and what was down. When you say up you have to say up from what or down you have down from what. If you say east, you have east of what or left, left of what. You see, you have to have a fixed point, a starting point, and so it is with morality. There has to be a fixed standard. But we have gone from authority to relativism and, “Every man does that which is right in his own eyes.” We just pick and choose our morals like it is a cafeteria line.

And number two, not only have we gone from authority to relativism, but we have gone, therefore, **from truth to pragmatism**. No longer do we ask, is it true? We just simply ask, does it work? And people are looking for religion to serve them. They’re making the whole thing man centered rather than God centered. And people are looking for religion that brings them health and wealth and happiness, rather than asking what is right. And by the way, God is not here to make you happy or healthy; He’s here to make you holy. But we’ve gone from authority to relativism, from truth to pragmatism.

We’ve gone **from reason to feeling**. And in our world today psychology has replaced theology. And sin is no longer the enemy, sadness is. And the great thing in America is to feel good about yourself.

And as a result of that we’ve gone **from convictions to opinions**. And people say, “Well, I feel this,” or “What is truth for you may not be truth for me.” “Every man just simply does that which is right in his own eyes.” And our kids are being told in college, “You can’t be certain about anything.” One professor stood up in a class, I’m told, and said, “We can know nothing for certain.” A student said, “Professor, are you sure about



that?" He said, "I'm absolutely certain." You think about it. You see, the result of all of this, the result of all of this is moral confusion. Our kids don't know how to play the game. 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 of the game are.

The word "sin" is a forgotten word in America. "Every man does that which is right in his own eyes." In America, the enemy is not sin, it is guilt. What we're saying is today, we want to live in a no fault society. Nobody is guilty anymore. Nobody is sinful; we may be sick. Nobody is wicked; we may be weak.

Let me give you some illustrations. A man was shot and paralyzed while committing a burglary in New York and he recovered damages from the store owner who shot him. Now, here's what the jury was told and here's what the lawyer argued. Now, here's the man in New York, he commits a robbery, the owner of the store shoots the man who's robbing him. And they said, "Now, well wait a minute. This man who was doing this robbery was a victim of society and he was driven to crime by economic disadvantage. And therefore, the man who shot him was guilty of insensitivity, because he had a callous disregard for the thief's plight. I mean, this man, after all, society had done this to him. And so this poor criminal is going to be in a wheelchair for the rest of his life." And the jury agreed and they made the store owner pay a large amount as a settlement to the man who'd robbed him. And several months later the same man who had done the robbery was arrested in another robbery, this time in a wheelchair; holding up another institution.

There was a Bernard McCummings. He 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. And the mugger who was shot and paralyzed, he sued the New York transit authority. And the reason he sued them is that he really shouldn't have been shot for just mugging this poor old man. And so the man that was mugged, who's a cancer patient is still paying his doctor bills, but the man who did the mugging was awarded four point eight million dollars. He mugged and beat up this old fellow. And so to them, he's a greater victim than the man that got mugged who's still paying his doctor bills while the other man is a multi-millionaire.

Let me tell you this, a drug dealer and the cocaine addict from the Bronx was acquitted of murder after he killed eight children and two women. He shot them in the head at point blank range. The largest mass killing since 1949 in New York. Do you know what the jury decided? They said, "Well, drugs and stress were a reasonable explanation for his actions." They said the man acted under extreme emotional distress and the influence of drugs and so they gave him a light sentence and that's it. I mean here is a man who killed eight children and two women.

It gets worse. An FBI agent was fired after he embezzled \$2000. He took the \$2000 to a casino, gambled it away in one afternoon. Later he sued the man who fired him. Now, he's embezzled \$2000, he sues his employer for firing him and here is what he argued, that his gambling addiction was a disability. And so his firing was an act of illegal discrimination. The owner of the business had discriminated against a man who had a disability. And moreover, he won the suit and he was put in therapy for gambling addiction. And that had to be paid under his employee's health care insurance. That's the America we're living in. Judges 17 verse 6, "And in those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

And so, we're not worshiping 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 code word of the day. Nobody's sinful, everybody's sick. Nobody's evil, everybody's ill. Nobody's wicked, everybody's weak. And



guilt is out of date and sin is an old fashion word. 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.

I want to give you four principles, four principles right here in Judges chapter 6 and 7. They center around the name of a man named Gideon. Principle number one is the principle of **vision**. Look if you will in chapter 6 verse 11 through 14 now, "And there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, 'The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor.' 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.'" Verse 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 I not sent thee?'" Now God appeared to Gideon and said, "Gideon, I want to give victory, and I want to give it through you."

Fast forward down to Judges 6 verse 22 through 24, "And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord, Gideon said, 'Alas, O Lord God! Because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face.' And the Lord said unto him, 'Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.' Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah shalom: unto this day." That means Jehovah our peace. 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. And here's Gideon living in defeat and fear until he took his eyes from the enemy and put his eyes one more time on God.

The Bible says in Proverbs 29 verse 18, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." We need to see if God appears to us in an angel as He did to Gideon so long ago or whether God speaks to us in another form. And by the way, you say, "I wish God would speak to me as he spoke to Gideon through the angel of the Lord." Look at me. You have something better than Gideon ever had. You have the Word of God. You have the Word of God and you have something more than Gideon ever had. You have the Holy Spirit of God living in you and don't you go whining and complaining about God not speaking. God wants to speak. Do you want to hear? Are you ready to listen to what God is saying? But I'm saying that 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 first of all we get a vision of Almighty God. There is the principle of vision and you need to see God big and strong and mighty. There is the principle of vision.

I'm going to leave that and rush right on lest I not get finished. Second principle, not only the principle of vision, but the principle of **valor**. We need to be courageous. Look in chapter 7, beginning in verse 1. Now God has spoken to Gideon and God has said to Gideon, "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. He gathers an army of 32,000 men but God doesn't seem to be interested in numbers. Look if you will in chapter 7 verses 1 through 3, "Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley. And the Lord said unto Gideon, 'The people that are with thee are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against Me, saying, 'Mine own hand hath saved me.' Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, 'Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead.'" And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand."



Here's Gideon, he's got an army of 32,000 soldiers and he says, "Everybody listen to me. God has said that I'm to tell you that anybody who is afraid can go home." Gideon thought maybe a couple of dozen would leave, and there's a stampede. And after the dust settles, 22,000 had left. Now what's the principle here? The first principle is the principle of vision. The second principle is the principle of valor. God cannot and God will not use cowards. And God says, "Everybody who's afraid, go home." Fear suits you for failure and not for fighting. And why did God want the cowards to go home? I'll tell you why. Because fear is infectious. Put this verse in your margin, Deuteronomy chapter 20 verse 8, "And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, 'What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart.'" You know, there is something about fearful people that infect other people.

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, who don't believe God can do what God wants to do. And the Bible tells us in Second Timothy 1:7, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear. God has given us the spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind." One pastor was talking to another pastor and he said, "Do you have any standing committees in your church?" Oh he said, "We've got some standing committees and some sitting committees and we have some just plain lying down. We've got all kinds of committees in our church." He said, "Well what's the most powerful committee in your church?" He said, "It's the bucket brigade, it's the bucket committee. He said, "What's the bucket committee? He said, "Well, we've got a committee that anytime any of us get an idea about doing anything good and holy and great for God, the bucket committee just comes and pours cold water on it." He said, "You got a committee like that in your church? He said, "Yeah, and I can tell you who the chairman is." You know, these are the kind of committees and people in churches who don't want to believe God, and because of fear they're not fitted for victory.

Listen to me, the Bible says in Philippians 1:28, "We are in nothing to be terrified by our adversaries." And then First John 4:4, "Greater is He that is in us than he that's in the world." I'm speaking to some people today who could teach, but you don't teach because you're afraid. I'm speaking of people who ought to tithe, but you don't tithe because you're afraid. I'm speaking to some people who ought to witness, but you don't witness because you are afraid. Some of you could sing, but the icy fingers of fear would grip your throat and you cannot sing as you have been gifted to sing. Second Timothy 1 verse 7, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of love and of power, and of a sound mind." Fear and faith don't live in the same heart. Fear will conquer faith or faith will conquer fear. But one will conquer the other.

Now here's the principle, look first of all there is a principle of vision. You need what Gideon did and see the Lord. I mean look at God. See who God is and after you've seen God, see if anything else seems truly big to you. See God. There's the principle of vision. Then there is the principle of valor. God says, "If you're afraid, if you're fearful, I can't use you."

Now here's the third principle and it balances off the principle of valor. It's the principle of vigilance. Look if you will in Judges chapter 7 verses 4 through 7 now, "And the Lord said unto Gideon, 'The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be that of whom I say unto thee, 'This shall go with thee', the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, 'This shall not go with thee', the same shall not go.'" So he brought down the people unto the water: and the Lord said unto Gideon, 'Every one that lappeth the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.' And the number of them that



lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. 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.'"

Now first of all, He said, "Everybody who is afraid go." They all went home with 10,000 left. God says Gideon we're going to have a test. Bring them down here to the stream and let everybody refresh themselves. Tell every man to drink. Now here 10,000 people lined among the stream and the monitors are there to watch. The people did not know that they were being tested. And by the way, you know, many times God is testing us and we don't know we are being tested. The Bible says Luke 16:10, "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. Now you don't know when God is testing you. I was reading about a man when he would hire people would take them for a drive in their automobile. He'd say, "Would you take me somewhere?" And when he got in the automobile he'd look around to see how messy the car was. And if it was a messy car he wouldn't hire the person. The man had no idea he was being tested, isn't that amazing?

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 is thinking now that he's being tested by the way he puts salt on his vegetables.

And God is watching in the small things. And these fellows are saying, "Go out here and get a drink of water." And two categories. There first of all there were those people who got down on all fours put their mouths in the stream and began to drink down in the mud. Well, you talk about being venerable to the enemy. You'll be venerable to the enemy down there on all fours, your belly in the slime and your snout in the water, sucking up the water. That's the way some were drinking; 9,700 of them drank that way. But there was another group there that got down on their knees, like this and they took the water to their mouths and just kind of lapped it like a dog. Not putting their mouths in the water, not down on their bellies drinking up the water, but vigilant, watching for the enemy. 300 of them, God said, "Those are the 300 I want." They were not cowards and they weren't careless. That's the balance, don't be a coward and don't be careless. 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 is not given us the spirit of fear, does that mean therefore we're to be casual and happy go lucky? Absolutely not. First Peter chapter 5 verse 8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and there is the wonderful balance between these two things. And so, what kind of people does God use? Number one, people of vision; people who've seen God. Number two, people of valor; people who are not afraid. Number three, people of vigilance; people who know to watch and be sober and vigilant.

But here's, here's the wonderful thing. Number four, people of **vitality**, people who have the life of God in them. Now go to Judges chapter 7 and look if you will at verse 9 through 11, "And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him, 'Arise, and get thee down unto the host;'" that is, to the enemy camp, "'for I have delivered it into thine hand.'" Not I will, I have. "'But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host: And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands



be strengthened to go down unto the host.” And, “Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host.” Now they go down to reconnoiter, they’re going down at night time. They’re sneaking down to the camp of the enemy.

Now notice in Judges 7 verses 12 through 15, “And the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude. And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow.” Now Gideon sneaks up here and he’s listening, perhaps by campfire, he is ease dropping. And this man says let me tell you what I dreamed last night. “Behold I dreamed a dream and lo a cake of barely bread tumbled into the host of Midian and came into a tent and smote it that it fell and overturned it, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, ‘This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.’ And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, ‘Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.’”

Gideon and his servant go down there. They sneak closer and closer. There’s a campfire, couple of fellows talking, one of them said, “Man I had a dream. It was a nightmare. It’s the awfulest thing.” He said, “I saw a piece of barley bread.” Now folks barley is the cheapest, the coarsest, the poorest bread, it’s what the absolutely impoverished people would eat, is barley bread. This man said, “I saw a piece of barley bread, loaf of barley bread, it’s rolling along the ground and here’s one of our tents and inside are our warriors. And this piece of barley bread hits the tent and it all caves in.” The other man said, “Boy, that’s Gideon. That’s Gideon. That barley bread, that’s Gideon.” When Gideon heard that he said, “Hallelujah, hallelujah.”

What is the principle? Gideon was that piece of barley bread. Gideon in himself was nothing, nothing. When the Lord said unto him, “Hail thou man of valor.” He looked behind to see who God was talking to. “He couldn’t be talking to me.” He said, “I’m the least in my father’s house. 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 of all the kids, I’m the runt of the litter. I mean, I’m the least in my father’s house.” And God called him a man of valor. He’s just a piece of barley bread. But God said, “You go down there, and I will show you what the enemy thinks. You listen to me. 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. That is the dread in Hell. I mean, that we will understand just who we are in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the army of Gideon. Let me tell you friend, God wants to put His life into you. Let me give you a verse that’ll thrill you. Look, go back if you will, chapter 6 and verse 34. The Bible says, “But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon.” Do you see that? “The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon.” May I tell you what a literal translation of that is, “The Lord clothed Himself with Gideon.”

I brought my special coat today, I want you to see it. I don’t want you to miss it, wore this one on purpose; but let me take this coat off. See that coat? You’ve never seen a coat just like that. That is an incredible coat. It can do magnificent things. I want you to look at that. Now watch this, don’t take your eyes from that, I want you to see what this coat can do. Are you ready? Coat, stand erect. It’s awful when you have a disobedient coat. Coat, wave your arms. Coat, hold up my Bible. You say, “Wait a minute Pastor, you’re being silly.” No, no, no, this is a great coat. I’m just not doing it right. Let me put this coat back on. Watch Coat, stand erect. Did you see that? Coat, wave your arms. That’s pretty neat? Watch this, coat, hold up my Bible. Say, “Pastor, that’s dumb. That’s not the coat, that’s you in the coat.” That’s exactly what I’m trying to tell you. It’s not the man,



it's God in the man. The Bible says in this verse, verse 34, that, "God clothed Himself with Gideon." God wore Gideon like a suit of clothes, Gideon's just that barley bread.

Friend 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 this verse, First Corinthians chapter 1 verse 26 and 27, "For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

I want you to see how this battle was won and we have just a few moments. But look if you will now in chapter 7 verse 15 and following through verse 20, "And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned to the host of Israel, and said, 'Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.' And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers," like you pour water out of a pitcher, "and lamps within the pitchers. And he said unto them, 'Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow the trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye trumpets also on every side of the camp, and say, 'The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.'" So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outside of the camp. In the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitcher, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, 'The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.'"

Now look, we're almost finished. He's got three hundred people. God doesn't have to have a lot of people. God doesn't win with numbers. He doesn't have to have a lot, He's got people of vision. He has people of valor. He has people of vigilance and he has people of vitality. They understand that they have the anointing, the life of God upon them. These were ordinary men, but they were obedient men. He says, Gideon says, "Alright now listen, you get this trumpet, you get these pitchers, take a torch and light it and put it under the clay pot and then three hundred of you get over there, and a hundred of you get over there, and a hundred of you over here, and get ready, watch what I do. When I blow the trumpet, when I break the pitcher, when I hold up the torch and when I shout you do the same thing. Now here are the Midianites, they're all there, and Gideon says, "Alright!" Tah-Tah! 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, it's all in verse 20, listen here's what it's all about. When they blew the trumpets, that's boldness. First Corinthians 14:8, "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound who will prepare himself for the battle?" the Bible says. That's boldness. When they broke those vessels, that's brokenness. What does that vessel represent? That's us. The Bible says in Second Corinthians 4:7, "We have a treasure in an earthen vessel." We are that earthen vessel. That's brokenness. Men throw broken things away, God only uses broken things. We sit in our churches so heady, high-strung, high-minded, but we're to be broken before God. Psalm 51 verse 17, "A broken and a contrite spirit thou wilt not despise, oh God." But what about the light? Matthew 5:16, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works." That's brightness, to let the light shine. The Bible says they stood every man in their place, boldness, but brokenness and brightness. The sword of the Lord and of Gideon and God gave the victory.



Just look at yourselves today just look around see who's here today. What would happen if everybody stood in their place, everybody, ordinary people, barley bread, what would happen? 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? Folks this book is not only an old book, it's as fresh as tomorrow's newspaper. These are people of victory: people of vision, people of valor, people of vigilance and people of vitality. And God wants to wear us like I wear this coat, then with boldness and brokenness and brightness we'll give God the glory. I'm going to tell you something folks, when God's people begin to do that we don't have to fight the enemy, they'll turn on themselves. It's a Biblical principle. God sends fear into the camp of the enemy.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Father, I pray today that you would help us to understand Your Word and to live by it. And Lord we pray that we might learn these principles of victory. Now, while bowed and eyes are closed, if you're not certain that you're saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life." Could I lead you in a prayer? We'll call this prayer the sinner's prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? "Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen."



2941 Kate Bond Road | Memphis TN 38133 | (901) 382-7900