

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: Four Principles of Victory

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

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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