

“And They Stood Every Man In His Place”

Introduction. Because of the evil of the Israelites, God allowed their enemies, the Midianites and the Amalekites, to afflict them. The affliction was so severe that many went and hid themselves and their enemies destroyed their crops and herds so that there was no food. There were so many Midianites and Amalekites that the text says “they came as grasshoppers for multitude” (Judges 6:1-6). When the people cried out to the Lord to deliver them, he called a brave young man to lead and deliver the people from their enemies. The man’s name was Gideon. The story of Gideon’s defeat of the Midianites and Amalekites is a compelling story (Judges 7:2-25).

Surely, there is a lesson for us. Why did they win the battle? How did only 300 men defeat a vast army? First, we know they won because the Lord was with them. They did not even take swords into battle! Second, the faith of Gideon also helped in the victory. However, we will focus on a point that is overlooked. Gideon did not go into battle alone, nor could he have fought this battle alone. God used not only Gideon but also his army of 300 men (Judges 7:21). This is still important for God’s church today because we are engaged in a spiritual warfare.

I. ***They Were Courageous***

A. They took a united stand.

1. It takes courage to take a stand. Gideon and the 300 had the courage to take their stand against a far more numerous foe. They could not have stood if they had not been united together (Mark 3:24-25; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). Sin in the camp of the Israelites had once caused them to flee before their enemies instead of standing strong (Joshua 7:3-5).
2. The apostles had the courage to take a stand and preach Jesus, even when they were threatened, beaten and jailed (Acts 5:20). We must have the courage to take our stand (2 Thessalonians 2:15).
 - a) The apostles acted with great boldness (Acts 4:13, 29, 31; 9:27, 29; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8).
 - b) It would be good for us to pray for boldness (Ephesians 6:18-20).
3. Whether it be a kingdom, an army, a house or this congregation, we cannot stand long if we are not united together (Philippians 1:27; 4:1-3; Ephesians 4:1-3; 1 Corinthians 1:10). We are not 300 strong, but we, like Gideon and the 300 brave soldiers, must be willing to take a united stand.

B. They stood firm.

1. It is one thing to take a stand and quite another to stand fast when

the enemy and the battle surges toward you. Three hundred men stood firm and followed Gideon, the Lord and their battle plan, even though it was the middle of the night and the valley was filled with the enemy and the sounds of battle roared around them.

2. We must be willing to stand in the thick of the battle (1 Corinthians 16:13; Ephesians 6:10-14; Revelation 2:10). We stand firm by standing in the truth (2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 1:9). I admit that I have been weak in the flesh before and have not stood in the truth as I should. Have you become afraid of or embarrassed by the truth (Matthew 26:69-75; 2 Timothy 1:7)?

II. ***They Were Responsible***

A. No one evaded their duty.

1. A victory was won because every man of the 300 took part. They were whittled down from 32,000 to 300 men, so they needed every man! Too often, duty or responsibility is what is laid at the feet of others. Oscar Wilde said, "Duty is what one expects from others, it is not what one does oneself."
2. If this congregation is to stand for the truth and grow, then every member must take part (1 Corinthians 12:14-25). No one can look at the assemblies as a "spectator sport." or a TV show that they watch each week. This is an effort that requires every member, whether it be the assemblies, gospel meetings, teaching Bible classes, etc.
3. Imagine Gideon going into battle against the Midianites that dark night and half of his men deciding to stay home! Or one third of them came, but they came just to watch!

B. No one forgot to be diligent.

1. Every man did his part and stood fast. Three hundred standing firm caused thousands to flee. In the church, the Lord commands each of us to do our part. Every member is responsible for his or her own salvation and for their own spiritual work (Philippians 2:12; Galatians 6:4-5).
2. The faithfulness of someone else will not get you into heaven. You cannot and will not get into heaven by lukewarm action (Revelation 3:16). I can be tempted and I can sin, but I sure do not what to end up in hell because I am lazy. What a waste! Are you ready to be judged for your work (John 15:1-6; 1 Corinthians 3:8)?

III. ***They Were Dedicated***

A. Every man helped the other.

1. When each man did his work, they all together won the battle. You cannot be a Christian alone. You need other Christians and they

- need you (Acts 11:23). God gave us each other to help us all get to heaven, but you must do your part.
2. No one will go to heaven alone. Either he will take someone with him or he will not make it. Paul's instruction about each bearing his own burden is preceded by the demand that we must bear each other's burdens (Galatians 6:2; Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-34; 11:27-30).
- B. Every man knew his place.
1. Gideon and his 300 won a great victory because every man knew his place. Where is your place? On Sunday night, will it be here? On Wednesday night, will it be here?
 2. If you are not a Christian, your place now is in the kingdom of darkness with all those who are disobedient to God (Colossians 1:13-14; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9).
 3. If you are a Christian, your place is in the light with the fellowship of God and His saints (1 John 1:7). If you have fallen from this place, repent (Acts 8:22)!

Conclusion. Every man was in his place. Gideon and his 300 men won because every man not only knew his place, but he was standing in it. I have never found one Christian who did not know where their place was, but I have seen many not standing in their place where they ought to be! If you had been one of Gideon's men, would you have been standing in your place?