

MESSAGE TITLE

GATHERING OF THE SHEPHERDS

MESSAGE DATE(S)

SESSION 2 – WEDNESDAY SEP 21, 2011 7PM BIBLE STUDY

SCREENS> Judges 7:2-7 The LORD said to Gideon, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, for Israel would become boastful, saying, 'My own power has delivered me.' **3** Now therefore come, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, 'Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead.'" So 22,000 people returned, but 10,000 remained. **4** Then the LORD said to Gideon, "The people are still too many; bring them down to the water and I will test them for you there. Therefore it shall be that he of whom I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go with you; but everyone of whom I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go." **5** So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, "You shall separate everyone who laps the water with his tongue as a dog laps, as well as everyone who kneels to drink." **6** Now the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was 300 men; but all the rest of the people kneeled to drink water. **7** The LORD said to Gideon, "I will deliver you with the 300 men who lapped and will give the Midianites into your hands; so let all the *other* people go, each man to his home."

SCREENS> The 300

As I stated at last year's Gathering, I find myself in both a pastoral and hermeneutic quandary and dilemma. I teach pastors that both the text and the audience should dictate the delivery and/or the homiletic approach. Well in my audience tonight I have hundreds of pastors from across the

nation and even other countries, some of which hold PH.D's others D. Min's and M. Div's and an amalgam of earned degrees from respected accredited seminaries and universities. Along with them are seasoned pastors and leaders who have made a passionate pilgrimage to Cleveland with hopes of gaining not only some theological but methodological constructs for taking their ministries to another level. In the same audience, because it's our Believers Night at "THE WORD", also present are my favorite people in the world, the people that help feed my children, put clothes on my family's back, and allow me the precious privilege of being their servant leader—my members are here tonight. I made a deal with "THE WORD" CHURCH members that since they get me to themselves every week, allow me the pastoral latitude to use this night for Session 2 of our pastors and leaders training! **(Many of you are taking this course for seminary college credit tonight.....)**

In our text tonight we see a most powerful narrative. Your boy Gideon is approached by God and told in essence to take a hard long look at his staff. (Work). Now by now most of you pastors know that a text without some context is a pretext. In chapter 6:12 we see the call of Gideon, **I can teach you a whole lot about pastoring, but I can't teach the call!!!!** The NASB says that God called him a:

SCREENS> Valiant warrior

SCREENS> NKJV- Mighty man of valor

SCREENS> NRSV- Mighty warrior

SCREENS> NLT- Mighty hero

(Work those)

Now Gideon wants to explain his Home of origin issues.

Sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn't they say, 'The LORD brought us up out of Egypt'? But now the LORD has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites."**14** Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go with the strength you have, and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!"**15** "But Lord," Gideon replied, "how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family!"

Notice God never corrects him, He just said, in Judges 6:16:

The LORD said to him, "I will be with you. And you will destroy the Midianites as if you were fighting against one man."

This is so cold blooded- Look at verse 17-18:

SCREENS> Judges 6:17-18 NLT- Gideon replied, "If you are truly going to help me, show me a sign to prove that it is really the LORD speaking to me."**18** Don't go away until I come back and bring my offering to you."

(Work "show me a sign" to death and then work the offering!!!!)

Look at verse 2:

SCREENS> "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, for Israel would become boastful, saying, 'My own power has delivered me.

Let me make the big point of the text, lest I run the risk of a strained exegesis.

In essence God is saying that whatever you accomplish in ministry. Don't forget I did it through you!!

(Explicate the text)

But tonight and this is not some sort of eisogetical massacre, but rather it is me building a bridge of contemporization from the original audience to tonight's crowd.

Therefore, I see this text as God saying to Gideon:

SCREENS> Critique your staff

The wrong people are next to you!!!

SCREENS> Judges 7:3 Now therefore come, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, 'Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead.'" So 22,000 people returned, but 10,000 remained.

SCREENS> Deuteronomy 20:8 Message Bible - The officers will then continue, "And is there a man here who is wavering in resolve and afraid? Let him go home right now so that he doesn't infect his fellows with his timidity and cowardly spirit."

SCREENS> NLT- "Then the officers will also say, 'Is anyone here afraid or worried? If you are, you may go home before you frighten anyone else.

So the first thing we see is:

SCREENS> availability

(Work how they must have a willing heart!!!!)

Have you ever considered, especially with paid staff, that some people that work for you don't want to be there? They just feel obligated? Or right now, they can't do any better?

(Work the leaders in the room)

Look at verse 3. Forgive me but I'm a slave to the text:

SCREENS> Judges 7:4 NLT- But the LORD told Gideon, "There are still too many! Bring them down to the spring, and I will

test them to determine who will go with you and who will not.”

God said, “I’ll help you pick your leaders!”

SCREENS> Hire slowly

SCREENS> Judges 7: 5 NLT- When Gideon took his warriors down to the water, the LORD told him, “Divide the men into two groups. In one group put all those who cup water in their hands and lap it up with their tongues like dogs. In the other group put all those who kneel down and drink with their mouths in the stream.”

SCREENS> Capability

(Work)

SCREENS> The Three Cs

SCREENS> Character, competence, chemistry

SCREENS> The 4th C

SCREENS> Culture

In his book, *Cracking Your Church's Culture Code*:

SCREENS> (Show Chand's Book cover J)

SCREENS> Judges 7:6 NLT - Only 300 of the men drank from their hands. All the others got down on their knees and drank with their mouths in the stream

(Work the 300)

Every leader in here ought to point at your pastor and tell them, “I’m in the 300!!!!”

Alright, I feel like having church now!!

SCREENS> Judges 6:9 NLT That night the LORD said, “Get up! Go down into the Midianite camp, for I have given you victory over them

For about 2 minutes, I need some prophetic praisers that don't even have to have **it** to shout about **it**, because you understand that your praise is a necessary precursor to possess **it**!

Look at verse 10 and I'm through:

SCREENS> Judges 7:10 NLT - But if you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah.

Take Purah down - PURAH MEANS FRUITFUL

Lean on somebody and tell them, “You got to produce something to roll with me!!!”

The man said, “I had this dream, and in my dream a loaf of barley bread came tumbling down into the Midianite camp. It hit a tent, turned it over, and knocked it flat!”**14** His companion answered, “Your dream can mean only one thing—God has given Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite, victory over Midian and all its allies!”**15** When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship before the LORD. Then he returned to the Israelite camp and shouted, “Get up! For the LORD has given you victory over the Midianite hordes!”**16** He divided the 300 men into three groups and gave each man a ram's horn and a clay jar with a torch in it.**17** Then he said to them, “Keep your eyes on me. When I come to the edge of the camp, do just as I do.”**18** As soon as I and those with me blow the rams' horns, blow your horns, too, all around the entire camp, and shout, ‘For the LORD and for Gideon!’”**19** It was just after midnight,

after the changing of the guard, when Gideon and the 100 men with him reached the edge of the Midianite camp. Suddenly, they blew the rams' horns and broke their clay jars. **20** Then all three groups blew their horns and broke their jars. They held the blazing torches in their left hands and the horns in their right hands, and they all shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" **21** Each man stood at his position around the camp and watched as all the Midianites rushed around in a panic, shouting as they ran to escape. **22** When the 300 Israelites blew their rams' horns, the LORD caused the warriors in the camp to fight against each other with their swords.