



# *ANOINTED SAVIOR*

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Lemme start with this. I love you. I truly, deeply profoundly love you. And, uh, and just the fact that you would join us here to hear God's word, it means the world to me. It's a great honor, and I take it very, very seriously. And for those who join us online, it's amazing why anyone would listen to a guy with a Shrek size head and a questionable disposition and a suspicious sense of humor, um, is really a miracle. It's quite fascinating to me. So, um, as we're in the judges' series, I just have a strong father's heart for you. Uh, every week I just kind of feel a little bit about you. Like I feel about my own kids. I'm, I'm proud of you, I'm excited for you, and I wanna be helpful to you. And that's kind of where my heart's at today. And, uh, and we're gonna be in judges chapter seven. If you've got a Bible, go to judges seven. We're gonna look at the life of a guy named Gideon. And I, I think he's gonna minister to you in a really profound and unique way. And he was particularly helpful to me about a decade ago. Uh, we've all got a season of life that we look back and that was the test and the trial and the trouble. Uh, that was the point where we weren't sure if we were gonna make it through it or if we did what we would be like on the other side of it. Um, here's the story of Gideon. So he's a man living in the nation of Israel. He is a believer. And this is about 3000 years ago. And then there's a series of events. And some of them are national and some of those are personal. But he just starts to take a pounding and a beating. He gets overwhelmed and broken by it all. And the result is he starts withdrawing and retreating. By the time we met him in judges chapter six, he was in full isolation. He was alone, he was sad, he was discouraged, he was depressed, he was overwhelmed, he was anxious. He said he had fear. Uh, in addition, he'd lost hope. He didn't think that his life would get any better, and he didn't think that anything he did would ultimately matter. Uh, his nation had been invaded, terrorized in the press for about seven years. Uh, there was an economic downturn. Furthermore, he was in hiding. He was threshing wheat in a wine press. He's literally hiding. He's reached the point where some people do that. They've just sort of given up any hope that things are gonna get better. They just sort of accept and oppressed and difficult and sad and grievous life. And as a result, just sort of a, a depressed oppression settles on them. And then something amazing happened for Gideon. And I would say this, some of you right now, that's where you're at. You're withdrawn, you're isolated, you're discouraged, you're overwhelmed, you're anxious. Uh, some of you are in the middle of the fight, but you don't think you're gonna win. And some of you've already lost the fight and you've retreated and withdrawn. We've all been there. And if you're not there, uh, it's eventually going to come for you in the future. It's, I say that, not to discourage you, but just to be honest with you, I'll, I'll say this too. I'll, I'll just verbal process this one. Um, I've been there. I, I don't know about you. I like strong, not weak. I like winning, not losing all the verses about being humble and enduring suffering. I believe in them, but I'm not particularly fond of them, if I'm very honest with you. Um, and, and I'm a guy in my life. I, um, I, I built for fighting and war. I just am. And so for me, I, uh, I've been knocked down a lot of times, but, uh, it wasn't until about a decade ago, I got really knocked out. First time life just sort of defeated me and kicked my teeth down my throat. Previously I'd been knocked down, but I always get up and I'm back in the fight. I'm kind of built for war. I lead with a chin and I don't mind conflict. And I'm willing to work. And I have a high pain tolerance and I'll fight my way through it. And about 10 years ago, I got knocked down and I couldn't get up. First time my whole life, I remember getting knocked down and not getting knocked out and not being able to get back up. Uh, canceled, uh, overwhelmed, discouraged, anxious threats to my safety and my family and our future. And it was just overwhelming. And it was kinda like a boxing match where you take a knee, but you get up, you take a knee, you get up, and then you take a knee and you realize I can't get back up. And it was, at that moment, it felt like the Lord just threw the towel in the ring.

'cause he could see, uh, his son wasn't getting back up. And it was the first time I really experienced profound, devastating loss in my life. Something that I couldn't fight through. It was over. There was no more rounds. It was time to go home. So like Gideon, I withdrew, I isolated. Um, I was discouraged. I was depressed. I was very anxious. And, um, I wasn't doing very well. I, and I, I told this to real men, um, if you're one of the guys, we'll see you this week. But I was at, I was at a season where I just couldn't handle anymore. And there was one day I was putting my clothes on and a button fell off and I started crying. I'll just be honest with you. Usually I have enough resilience that I can make it through a button situation, right? All of a sudden I started crying and I was like, my button's gone. You know? And it dawned on me, I'm not doing very well. Um, you know, the, the straw that broke the camel's back, well, this was the button that broke the pastor's back. Um, so I picked up the button and the button was fine. The thread had just come undone. And I was like, I don't, I don't even have any threat. I just started crying and I don't know how to sew. I just started crying. And in that moment I was like, I, I am not doing well. I, I think I've breached my limit as a man. And I was frankly pretty embarrassed. 'cause I, I didn't want to have limits as a man. Um, and what was interesting is, um, I was in that same place that Gideon was. So I, I withdrew, I left the internet for 18 months. Um, and it was great, by the way. Um, didn't defend myself. Like, Lord, if you want to defend me, defend me. If not, I'll just be home with grace. You know? So that's good. Um, and just sort of isolated and withdrew. Didn't go out much, didn't go to the grocery store, didn't go out, didn't want anybody to see me. And, um, and it was like Gideon, that kind of season. And then God did something in my life that he did in Gideon's life. And what we see in Judges, six Gideon's in that sort of broken, withdrawn, isolated, discouraged, frustrated, anxious place. And Jesus showed up. Jesus showed up and met with Gideon, and Jesus showed up and he met with me. And then it says that the Holy Spirit clothed Gideon. And then I felt the anointing power and presence of the Holy Spirit. And I remember the father spoke to me, and I remember I was really broken one day, and I was like, what am I gonna do? I got no house. You know, we're, we're moving. I don't know where we're gonna live. I don't have a job. I don't have a church. I'm unemployed. I got five kids, you know, we're under attack. What happens now? And all, all I remember is the father just saying, uh, you've lost everything but my anointing. And that's all you need. It'll go with you. And I was like, you know, great will Chase Bank take that? You know, like, I don't know. I mean, that's what I'm thinking. If I'm honest with you. Like the Lord gave me a word, I, you know, we're good. Uh, um, and then I built an altar at home. And that's what Gideon did. In Judges six. He built an altar at home, a place to worship the Lord. So Gideon starts worshiping the Lord at home in private. And, and I started worshiping the Lord more at home in private time, in prayer and try time in song. And then all of a sudden, um, I was ready to start moving forward again. It's time to reengage. It's time to get active. It's time to demonstrate faith instead of fear. It's time to worship instead of worry. It's time to fight instead of flee. And that's exactly where we find ourselves in Judges. Chapter seven, Gideon, um, was in a bad place retreating. Jesus stopped and met with him. The Holy Spirit clothed him. He worshiped God. And then he is going to get active. And here's what you're gonna see Gideon doing, and I hope and pray this is an encouragement for you. Some of you are in that withdrawn, hiding, anxious place. Uh, some of you are still in the middle of the fight, but you can sense that it's not going to be a winning victory. And uh, for some of you, I believe this is a prophetic word that God has, that it's time for you to meet with Jesus. And it's time for you to receive the Holy Spirit. It's time for you to spend some time at the altar today. And then God is going to activate you and you're gonna get unstuck. And he's got a future for you. And he is got a hope for you. But you're gonna need to

trust him and you're gonna need to walk with him. And so we're gonna pick up the story in Judges chapter seven, and I hope and pray that he is as much of an encouragement to you as he is for me. Let me pray for you first. Father, um, these are your people. Uh, Lord Jesus, you have died for them. Holy Spirit. You have, uh, saved them. And Father, you've adopted them. Uh, these aren't my people. These are your people. And I thank you for the honor of opening your word and serving your people. And Holy Spirit, we invite you to lead and guide our time. I pray for those who are in the place that Gideon was, or those who are in the fight like Gideon had, that Lord, this would be a particularly encouraging and helpful and healing word for them. And God, I just thank you that you love them so much that you're gonna answer this prayer in Jesus name. Amen. Alright, we'll jump into Judges seven then. Abel, that is Gideon. So Rabbel is his nickname. And all the people who were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod. So they're getting ready for war. He is now going to run at his greatest fear. Sometimes when you're afraid of someone or something, you need to run at it. That's what he's gonna do. And the camp of Midian, those are the bad guys they had invaded and oppressed them for seven years, was north of them by the hill of Maura in the valley. The Lord said to Gideon, everything changes when you get a word from God. The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, you're gonna defeat them in war. But I can't send a big army lest Israel boast over me saying my own hand has saved me. Now, therefore, proclaiming the ears of the people saying whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home and hurry away from Mount Gilead. Then 22,000 of the people returned. 22,000 men showed up and enlisted for the military for the fight, and 10,000 remain. So 12,000 guys didn't even make it through day one. They were too scared. And the Lord said to Gideon, the people are still too many. Take them down to the water and I will test them for you there. And any one of whom I say to you, this one shall go with you, shall go with you. And any one of whom I say to you, this one shall not go with you, shall not go. Story then continues. So he brought the people down to the water. And the Lord said to Gideon, everyone who laughs the water with his tongue is a dog laughs You shall set by himself. Let 'em go. Likewise, everyone who kneels down to drink and the number of those who lap putting their hands to their mouth was 300 men. But all the rest of the people knelt down to drink water. And the Lord said to Gideon, with 300 men who lapped, I will save you and give the Midianites into your hand and let all the others go every man to his home. So the people took provisions in their hands and their trumpets, they're gonna send the band to war. Just so you know, if, if the band ever wins a war, that's a miracle. Um, and he sent all the rest of Israel, every man to his tent, but retained the 300 men. And the camp of Midian was below him in the valley. So here's what God says, it's been seven years, but I'm gonna deliver you from your enemies. You're going to defeat and destroy them. Gideon's like, great, let me recruit an army. He's going from coward to courageous. He's going from fear to faith. He's being activated. 22,000 men show up. God says, that's too many men. If they win, they will say, quote, my own hand has saved me. And lemme just say this little sort of excursions, there's a whole false teaching called Pianism that basically says that we save ourselves by choosing God. Okay? We don't choose God. God chooses us. Um, and, and even sometimes the way we tell our testimony, like when I chose God, no, God chose you, then you chose him. He's a father who adopts. I've never seen a kid adopt a father. All right? I've seen a father adopt a kid, right? People are like, I was looking for God, was he lost? Like was he on the back of a milk carton? Like what happened to him? You know, was it dark out? You got turned around like God's not lost. Okay? But we'll even say things like, when I made Jesus Lord of my life, that's silly. He is Lord of your life. It's like there's Jesus, and you're like, I I'm gonna let you be Lord. He is like, oh, thanks so much.

You know, uh, I was hoping we'd get there, you know, just this silly stuff. And so what God says is that sometimes we blame shift. And here's what happens in our life. We, uh, when God does something good, we take credit. When we do something bad, we blame it on God. Have you met these people? Okay, we're these people, just so you know, something could happen. You're like, oh, I was really smart. I worked really hard, boy, I really pulled it all together. God's like, no, I was nice to you. You're like, I, I don't know what happened. God's like, yes you do. That was your fault, okay? And so what God is saying here is not only does he want to deliver them, but he wants them to remain free as worshipers. And that requires giving glory to God for the things that God does. And so what he talks about here is that the seven years of oppression is about to end. Lemme say this, for good to start bad must end. Some of you have been living with bad for so long that you don't think that good can come. They've been oppressed for seven years. Some of you, you have been under an oppression for seven years, and now God is going to deliver him and he's going to deliver them. But for the good to start, the bad must end. And sometimes you gotta have some conflict to get to peace. Sometimes you need to run at your fear to get through your fear. That's what God is going to call Gideon to do. So 22,000 men show up. 12,000 are fearful and trembling. Now he's down to 10,000. God says, Nope, that's too many. We still need to reduce the number of people. So what he says is, the soldiers are gonna be thirsty. So take 'em down near the water. And anyone who drinks like a dog, he's out. Okay? And you think about it, what happens is if you put your face in the water, what are you doing? You're not paying attention to the perimeter. Anyone who is a good security mindset, tell me if this doesn't make sense, man, if there's a road and you're walking with your girl, you walk near the road so that if somebody gets hit by a car, it's you. Amen. That's our theology, by the way. This is what we believe. You're like, we don't know if there are boys or girls. Yeah, there are boys and there are girls and boys should get hit by cars. That's what we believe, okay? To, to protect the girls. That's what we believe. Okay? So what happens if a guy has a security mindset? He's always looking, he's scanning the room, he's looking for the other good guys. They have a little head nod, right? There's a little like something goes down. Like we'll get 'em, right? Yeah, we will. You and me. Yeah, we will, we will. Uh, they do jihad, we do Jesus. We're they're going down. That's how this is gonna work. Okay? And uh, and sometimes too, when you go into a restaurant, when Grace and I were first dating, I'd be like, Hey, we want the, we want the booth in the corner. And uh, I'd say, honey, you gotta scoot in. I need to be able to exit. I need to see the door and I need to be able to engage. She's like, why? I was like, I'm just telling you I'm a boy. Like, this is how we do this, right? Any guys understand this? Okay? You understand this, right? And you show up at your house security perimeter before the family comes in, bedtime, check the doors, check the locks, check him again, security check any guy who goes to drink and he's in battle and he dips his head, he does not see his enemy. He's now vulnerable. And so what God is saying is, I want 300 men that are head up. I don't need 22,000 men with head down. I need 300 men with head up. The second thing I'll say is this. How many of you at home drink right out of the tap? You don't use a glass. Hey, you're filthy animals. That's what you are. You're filthy animals. Like, next time you do this, just realize I'm in judges chapter seven, I'm a filthy animal. You're a filthy animal. Okay? This had to say that. Um, so now we're down to 300 guys. But let me tell you this, 300 guys who are head up and don't have fear, you can do something with those guys. You can. And I, I'm just happy to report that he got 300 out of the nation of Israel. I think I can double that just from trendy church. I'm confident I can double that. So now what you've got though, here's the fight. 300 malnourished civilians against 135,000 battle tested trained terrorists. The odds are one to a 450, 1 to 450. That's not a fair fight. In addition, God's soldiers,

they don't get weapons, they get instruments, right? Right. So this is like, think of it like a old Western. It's like the, the showdown at noon, right in front of the saloon, downtown, 450 gun slingers against a guy with a mandolin or a piccolo. You're like, this is not a good day to be in the band. How much faith does it take to march into war? You know, with a trumpet, you know, your zam fear on the pan flute. Like what? I mean, this is, this is, this is not a strategic battle plan, but here's the big idea. If they win, we know it's the Lord. Amen. Amen. They can't be be like, man, I I trumpeted out, bro. I trumpeted out. So Mark Twain once said, he said, it's not the size of the dog in the fight. It's the size of the fight and the dog, right? And so what we see here, a couple of things. Number one, faith and fear are contagious. The reason why Gideon didn't take 22,000 men to war is because if, uh, one 21,000, now I'm doing math, this is scary. Um, public school, high line, high go pirates. Okay? So 22,000 minus 321,700. Any homeschoolers confirm that. Um, If you go to battle and, and the men are all fearful, what's gonna happen is fear is contagious. When fear gets into a church or a family or a business, it's contagious. This is why a couple years ago, the churches that gave into the spirit of fear and then they welcomed the spirit of fear during the covid thing, they can't get the spirit of fear out. They're in decline and death. 'cause God doesn't bless fear, he only blesses faith. And fear is contagious. And once you get it in, it's like a demon, it's hard to get out. Furthermore, not only is fear contagious, so is faith. Yeah. So what he's saying is, I'll take 300 guys with faith over 22,000 guys, most of whom have fear. And so it's not about how big your business is or your ministry is or your footprint is. The the, the real issue is, is it filled with faith? And I'll just, I'll, I'll tell you something. So here at church, things are surging. We've doubled in the last eight months, and all of a sudden it's like, we have a lot of people. Great. But you know what I want? I want people with faith. I want people with courage. I want people who are willing to run into the conflicts that need to be had. Because too many times the church is, it's like, how big can we get? It's like, here God's like, I'm trying to go from a mega church to a mini church. I'm trying to whittle it down to the people who actually have faith and courage and are up for the conflict. And so number two, faith is like a muscle. The more you exercise it, the stronger it gets. Yeah. Some of you, you, you've had a lot of fear and you've not had a lot of faith. And for you it's like, I don't know, I'm not very strong. Well, this is like first day at the gym, alright? Just keep exercising your faith, obeying God, doing what is right. And over time, your faith will strengthen. And lemme say this too. Faith is not the absence of fear, but it's pushing through the fear. Yeah. Come on. We saw this in chapter six that Gideon had a lot of fear. The Lord showed up and he says, I, I'm afraid and I'm hiding. He goes to tear down the altar at his father's house in the middle of the night. 'cause he was afraid, right? He has fear, but he pushes through the fear. Fear is going to come on you, but you're gonna need to fight it and push through it in faith. And so God's word for us today is it's time for some of us and perhaps all of us to stop fleeing and start fighting. And we start by no longer withdrawing or retreating. Instead, we are stopping and we're meeting with Jesus. We're inviting the Holy Spirit. We're worshiping God privately at our altar, at our home or business. And then we are determining what the next step would be. And we march forward courageously into the obedience of God. And so oftentimes what happens is, I just feel inclined to say this to some of you. A lot of times you're like, God, deliver me, deliver me, deliver me. He is like, why don't you go with me and I'll go with you. But if you wanna be delivered, you're gonna have to walk into that fear and into that future. And the only way to be delivered is to start marching forward. And so that's where Gideon finds himself. The story then continues. Uh, that same night the Lord said to him, so God speaks to him. Arise, go down against the camp for I've given it into your head. He says, I promise victory. Now again, it's seven years of defeat. But if you are

afraid to go down, he's what? He's still struggling with his fear. We all struggle with our fear. Go down to the camp with rah your servant, bring another guy. And sometimes when you're fearful, you just need to find a brother for the battle and you shall hear what they say. So God's prophesying the future and what's gonna happen. And afterward your hands shall be strengthened to go down against the camp that he went down with Rah, his servant to the outposts of the armed men. So these are soldiers who were in the camp and the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the east. Those are all the bad guys lay along the valley like locust and abundance. And their camels were without number as the sand that is in the seashore in abundance. When Gideon came, behold a man was telling a dream to his comrade to anonymous guys. And he said, behold, I dreamed a dream and behold a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of midn and came to the tent and struck it so that it fell and turned it upside down. So that tent lay flat. Then there's the interpretation of the dream. Next slide please. And his comrade answered. This is no other than the sword of Gideon, the Son of Joe Ash, a man of Israel. God has given into his hand, Midian in all the camp you remember in chapter six, God showed up. Jesus showed up and called him mighty warrior. That's not who he was, but that's who he's becoming. God will speak destiny over you, my friend, and you're not there. But that's where you will be when he's done with you. As soon as Gideon heard the telling of the dream in its interpretation, he what He worshiped. There's the key. When you have fear, stop and worship and you will find faith. Amen. And he returned to the camp of Israel and said, arise for the Lord has given the host of mid and into your hand, God made a promise we're gonna win. And he divided the 300 men into three companies and put trumpets into the hands of all of them and empty jars with torches inside the jars. Can you imagine being one of those guys? Hey guys, we're going to war. Here's your jar. Like, Huh? Why? Okay Ro And he said to them, look at me and do likewise when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. I love that Gideon goes into the battle. Too. Few leaders go into the battle. War would be different if commander in chief had to enter into the fight. When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me then blow the trumpets also on every side of the camp. And I'm not sure about this one and shall for the Lord and Gideon, that one I'm not so sure about. Okay? So, um, here's what we're going to see is a miracle. So God says, A man is going to give you a revelation here. It's a dream. This is a supernatural miracle of God. Um, he already had miracles. Uh, God spoke to him. It speaks to him. Here again, Jesus came down from heaven. Uh, he was clothed in the Holy Spirit. And now there's a prophetic dream. So there are supernatural things happening in the life of Gideon. And we're gonna deal with this a little further in a few months. I'm working on a sermon series. If you think about it. I wanna deal with the miracles of Jesus signs and wonders. And we're gonna look at the 30 plus miracles of Jesus and how our God heals and delivers and speaks and reveals. We worship a supernatural God. And Gideon is here experiencing this supernatural God, and he gets a prophetic dream. Let me explain what this is. A vision is something you receive. It's a revelation. When you're awake, it's kinda like watching a film. A dream is similar, but you're asleep. And God's grace I've experienced both many times. And it's God preparing you for the future. So a prophetic dream is a revelation because God knows and rules the future. He reveals it to you to prepare you for it. So that's exactly what's happening here. God says, here's what's gonna happen. And he does so, uh, through these anonymous servants of his. And so now he is getting this dream and a correct interpretation. So there are two things. There's a barley loaf. This represents Gideon and God's people. Uh, a a barley loaf is small and it's the food for the poor. So at that point, God's people, they're small in number and they're poor. And then the tent represents the Midianites. They're semi nomadic people. They're like gypsies. They travel, set up a tent,

travel set up a tent. And so a tent represents the Midianites. When it shows the the little barley loaf rolling in and collapsing the tent, it's showing that God's people, the nation of Israel, are ultimately going to, by God's grace, take down the mighty nation of the Midianites. That's the prophetic dream with the interpretation. And let me say this, there is a, an erroneous teaching that God no longer does signs and wonders, the supernatural and the miracle. I absolutely reject that. And I have in the pulpit for 30 years. I just do. Um, and throughout history, God has shown up in signs and wonders and supernatural ways. Amen. Um, I'll give you a story from church history. That's one of my favorites. Uh, the Protestant reformer, Martin Luther, uh, he, um, he got saved reading the Bible. He was a Catholic priest. And then he decided that God was calling him to be married. So he married a gal named Catherine who happened to be a nun that he jailbroke out of a convent on Easter. Awesome story, right? Awesome story. And, uh, and so then he married her and she was a prophetic spirit-filled, incredibly helpful woman of God. When he would write his letters and some of his theological work, she would sit at his side and help. 'cause she was a brilliant mind. And she also was a peripheral woman. And there were times that God, uh, gave revelation to her. One was a dream. Martin Luther, um, was scheduled to travel to go speak in an event. And she was asleep and she had a prophetic dream that it was a trap and it was set up for his execution of murder. And so God revealed to her that there would be men lying in wait, and they were going to assassinate him. So God woke her up, revealed it to her, and she said, Martin, you can't go. I just got a prophetic dream from the Lord. God said, it's a trap. You can't go. Well, he's like, honey, I I love you. I trust you. He didn't go. It was true. Martin Luther would've died. Protestant Christianity as we know it, the team that we're on may not exist had he not had a spirit filled wife who rightly interpreted a prophetic dream. And so this is what God can do. And I've had this in my own life. Usually when I get a prophetic dream, uh, in it, God usually speaks a scripture and then wakes me up and I know it's from the Lord. And I can recount literally dozens of prophetic dreams that have come true in very specific detail. And so the point is this, our God is very creative. He's very free. He can reveal himself to whomever he wants, however he wants, whenever he wants. That's just the freedom of our God. And Gideon enjoys and experiences that here. A few things I just want to hit before we continue the story. I want you to see here that God does perfect work through imperfect people. Is Gideon imperfect? Nope. He's met with Jesus, been filled with the Holy Spirit and got a promise from God. And God's like you're still a little scared, aren't He's like little bit, you know, he's a little nervous. So he's not perfect, but he's imp process. And you need to know our God is okay with the process. And God does perfect work through imperfect people. Gideon's not perfect, but God's gonna do a perfect work through him. This should be an encouragement to you and me. We're not perfect people, but our perfect God can do perfect things even through his imperfect servants. That's the goodness of our God. In addition, I want you to see here as well, we always need to worship, especially when God shows up or we're entering a new season in his life. God showed up and now he's entering into a new season. I was a civilian, now I'm a soldier. I was hiding. Now I'm fighting. I've never been here before. And so it says that he worshiped. Okay? And for some of you, you have fear and anxiety because the season that you're earning into, it's new for you. Like, I've never been married, I've never been a parent, I never been divorced. I've never been diagnosed with cancer, I've never been unemployed. I never moved across the country. I've never lost my job. Like this is new for you. Worship instead of worry. Right? And that's what he does. He stops and he worships. And then the men follow his example. They worship God as well. And I love seeing men worship God. And I wanna honor the men in this church. The men in this church. You are worshipers, you sing, you raise your hands. Um, and,



and it's this beautiful thing just to see men activated and worshiping God. Amen. Amen. And that's what his men do. But let me say this, their song is a little curious for the Lord and for Gideon, that's just a little odd. My son's name is Gideon, and, uh, his oldest sister's a bit of a Bible nerd. We don't know where she got it. But anyways, when he played basketball, she showed up at his basketball games with a huge sign that quoted this verse for the Lord and for Gideon. So I was a Christian school, so it was fine. But this is a bit of a weird song. Pray for our, our worship department. They're working on songwriting. They wanna release an album for a birthday in the fall. They're working on originals. And I hope I'm not in any of them. Um, just, just think about it. Measure. We had a worship song. You're like, thank you Jesus. And Pastor Mark, I'd be like, huh, you know, what would Mark do? Bracelet? You know, I mean like, it's a little, if you accepted Mark in your heart, it's just a little weird, you know? Um, so, but it's kind of weird to be singing a worship song that includes not only your God but your leader. Amen. Amen. I mean, I'm not totally opposed to it. I'm still praying about it. No, I'm I'm opposed to it. I'm opposed to it. Yeah. Yeah. Especially if the guy's singing. It's got frosted tips. Don't mention me. I don't wanna be involved all. So back to the story. Uh, so, so Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle of the watch. This is the middle of the night, uh, when they had just set the watch. So the guards are changing. This is a vulnerable time, late at night. And they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars that were in their hands. Then the three companies, so three fighting units of a hundred men blew the trumpets and broke the jars. They held in their left hand the torches and in their right hand the trumpets to blow. And they cried out a sword for the Lord. And Gideon, every man stood in his place around the camp and all the army ran. They cried out and fled when they blew the 700, the, excuse me, the 300 trumpets. The Lord said, every man soared against his comrade and against all the army. And the army fled as far as Beth Shiau had to be rough to be a cheerleader at that high school toward, probably shouldn't have said that, toward Zarah as far as the border of Abel Majola by Tabba. Uh, next, uh, I gotta get out of this. And the men of Israel we're called out from Naftali and from Asher and from all man. And they pursued after Gideon, Gideon sent messengers through all the hill country of Ephraim saying, come down against the Midianites and capture the waters against them as far as Beth Barrah and also the Jordan. So all the men of Ephraim were called out and they captured the waters as far as Beth Barrah and also the Jordan. And they captured the two princes of Midn. So they got two political leaders, AIB and Zeeb. They killed orb at the rock of Orb and Zeeb, they killed at the wine press of Zeeb. And this gets dark. Then they pursued Midn and they brought the heads. They beheaded these two guys of orb and zeeb to Gideon across the Jordan. They won the war. Lemme explain this, the Holy Spirit in chapter six of judges clothed Gideon, chapter seven, for war. We live in a, a weak woke passive cowardly time of Christianity. And what God sometimes does, he anoints people with a warrior spirit. 'cause evil doesn't stop itself and it needs to be stopped. And so what God does, God anoints Gideon with a warrior spirit to go to war. And as our culture gets darker and more negative, we don't want to be mean. Uh, but we need to be active. And ultimately we don't wanna pick fights. But when they pick a fight with God, we wanna be willing to get in the middle. And so what we're seeing here that God anoints certain people for conflict and, and oh, let's see how far I go with this. But, um, my thing is, every once in a while I'll meet somebody at church and I'm like, well, you're very controversial. I was like, I don't know why every pastor isn't in trouble. I don't know why every pastor hasn't been canceled. I don't know why every pastor isn't getting talk trash about like there is a spiritual war. And what God is looking for is soldiers and not those who will surrender. And, and, and God in this age needs to, uh, empower

us as he empowered them to have this warrior spirit of courage. In addition, here's how the battle went. They attacked at night. So there was an element of surprise. And that day, your wars were during the day, the two armies would go out into the field of battle and they would come with banners or raise flags, and then you would have a war. And the reason they had the raise flags or banners in a war hand-to-hand combat, you're exhausted, you're disoriented, you get lost, you get hurt. And you're like, okay, where's base? Okay, I know where the flag is. I'm gonna fight my way back home so I can be safe at the base, middle of the night, total disorientation. And what happens is they're up on the hills, so they're blowing the trumpet, they're breaking the jars, they're setting the torches so that everyone can see it. And what happens is God sets a spirit of confusion among their enemies. This is powerful. Some of you have enemies and you don't need to attack them, you just need to wait. And they'll self-destruct. I've been in the fight 30 years and I don't wish I ill for anyone. I really want everybody to love Jesus and be blessed. I mean, that would be great, but that's not what everybody wants. And sometimes there are people, they attack you, they fight you, they criticize you, they maligned you, they hurt you and those you love. And your first thought is, I need to destroy you. I need to defend myself and my family. And the issue is well just wait. 'cause if you attack them, then you're gonna be seen as the one who is unloving and unkind and a bully. And you could escalate the violence. 'cause vengeance just continues to escalate. If you do nothing, God could send them a spirit of confusion and they'll self-destruct. Amen. I've seen this over and over in my life. It's the craziest thing. I've seen people completely shipwreck their whole life and we didn't say or do anything, we didn't want that for them. But if you're gonna go against the Lord, eventually you're going to self-destruct, okay? And so in addition, what we see here, they do defeat their foes. God's good for his promise, and then they hunt down those who are fleeing and then they grab the two princes. They kill them, and their names are a bit prophetic and pathetic. Uh, Arab means raven or unclean, and zeeb means a wolf or vicious enemy. And they behead the two guys and they bring their heads back to get in. These are the parts of the Bible that not a lot of teaching happens around. You're like, yeah, I, I didn't see the beheading veggie, veggie tail. I missed that. I didn't, you know, we didn't, we had the flannel graph in the Baptist church and you know that that would've been a great Halloween story. You know, um, and here's why we go through the Bible, because we wanna know the fullness of who God is and what God does and what God says. And we live in this day when we just cherry pick the nice parts and we just turn God into the world's sweetest therapist who's just always trying to build up our self-esteem instead of the Lord of the universe who's holy and deserves honor. And if you cross him, you're going to hurt yourself. Right? And so there's, there's a sobriety here. And, and what I love is that, um, that they die for their sin. And I love that Jesus died for my sin. And, and I love is they're getting justice. I love the fact that Jesus got justice for me. It makes me all the more grateful for Jesus. Couple of things I want you to know. Friends, number one, faith always defeats fear. See, Gideon and his men had faith. The Midianites had fear. Faith always defeats fear. In addition, worship is part of spiritual warfare. Yeah. This is a spiritual war between God and Satan. It's playing out in the physical, but it is in fact originating in the spiritual. A war is not against flesh and blood, but powers, principalities and spirits. The apostle Paul says in Ephesians six, and what we see here is they aren't warring. They're worshiping, they're worshiping and they let God do the warring. And sometimes you don't need to engage your enemy. Sometimes you need to ignore your enemy and engage your God. Preach. See, when someone attacks you, they fight with you. They maligned you. The first instinct is to, to fight back. I'm a counter puncher by nature. But if you're responding to them, you're not responding to him. That means you've now allowed them to be

your Lord. They're now in dominion over you. And so when they attack you, don't engage them, ignore them, engage him. Lord, what do you want me to say? What do you want me to do? And I'm gonna worship and wait and I'm gonna let you go to war. And so as they're worshipping, God is warring. And oftentimes in our life, especially those of us who are a little foot forward, and we don't mind the conflict. It's like, well, somebody needs to do something. God's like I know. So you worship me and watch me go to war. And so when we worship, you need to know that it is an act of spiritual warfare and it is surrendering to God and then trusting God to go defeat enemies physical and spiritual. In addition. Um, I love this about the story and I want this to be a particular encouragement to you. Was this a winnable war? No, because our God wins unwinnable wars right now. Some of you are, you're in an unwinnable war. I don't know what it is you do. You're saying, I, this is not going to work. I am not going to win. Well, here's hope. Our God wins unwinnable wars they had lost for seven years and they won with trumpets. That's God winning an unwinnable war. In addition, the battle belongs to the Lord. Uh, I'll give you a few scriptures on this. And the story of Gideon is a bit of an illustration. Psalm 20, verse seven, some trust in chariots summon horses, but we trust, and the name of the Lord are God. His name is Jesus Christ. He's, he's the angel of the Lord who met with Gideon in judges six one Samuel 1747. The battle is, it's the Lord's. And he will give you into our hand. And I love Zechariah four, six, not by my, not by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts. I'm gonna bring the band up at this time and I, I wanna, I want to tie this into an amazing section of scripture. So Gideon is a battle 3000 years ago and then hundreds of years later, there's a prophet named Isaiah. And Isaiah in chapter seven, chapter nine, he has prophecy 700 years in advance about how Jesus Christ would come as the greater Gideon. Most of you, when you get Christmas cards, you're gonna have at least one that has Isaiah nine. But they start at Jesus and they don't start with judges Chapter seven in the Battle of Gideon. So I wanna read the whole thing together and I want to encourage you, and I want you to see that the little story of Gideon is part of the big story of Jesus. And that Jesus is the greater Gideon. He comes as a worshiper and a warrior. And our judge, here's what it says in Isaiah nine, there will be no gloom in the former time he brought into contempt the land of zeum and the land of naft. If you remember what we just read in judges, where was the battle right there? The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. They lived in a dark time like our own. Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness on them, the light is shown. He's intimating Jesus Christ, the light of the world for the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor. You have broken as on the day of Midian, judges seven. And here's what he says, the war in judges seven. The battle of Gideon against Midian was ultimately pointing to Jesus Christ. For to us, a child is born, a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder and his name shall be called wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting father, prince of peace, of the increase of his government and of peace. There will be no end on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness. From this time forth and forevermore, the zeal of the Lord of hosts, that's an angelic army will do this. Let me close with this. Let me just encourage your heart. And as you're looking out, I want you to start looking up and I want you to look through the story of Gideon. And I want you to look at the story of Jesus. Gideon came as a judge and Jesus is coming again to judge the living and the dead. Gideon came clothed in the spirit and Jesus came anointed as the Christ. Gideon appeared in a dream as barley bread. And Jesus is the bread of life. He was born in Bethlehem, which means house of bread. He multiplied bread to feed a multitude. And he taught us to pray for our daily bread. Gideon started his battle by blowing a trumpet, and in the end, an angel's trumpet blast will announce the return of Jesus

Christ. Lastly, Gideon worshiped. Gideon worshiped while the Lord won a war. And today we are right now going to worship knowing that Jesus is our victor, that he is coming again to defeat all enemies and he will be our forever delivery. Amen. Alright, why don't you stand and let me pray and let's worship. Lord, we invite the Holy Spirit to clothe your people. Jesus, as you came down to meet with Gideon, we invite you to join us right here, right now. We declare that this time and this place is our altar. This is a thin place. We wanna be closer to your presence. We wanna worship you, and we're inviting you to go to war for us. Lord God, we thank you that you are Savior. We thank you that you are deliverer, and we thank you that you are the same God who showed up in the life of Gideon. And we invite your presence and power right now in Jesus' name. Amen.