

**22 January 2023**

**Journey to New Discoveries Part 18: Source and Resource  
Pastor John Bendixen (WTB)**

**Scripture reference: John 6:35 (NKJV); John 3 :18, 19 (NKJV); Judges 6:27 (NKJV); John 3 :18, 19 (NKJV); John 3:19-21 (NKJV); Acts 26:15-16 (NKJV); Acts 26:16-18 (NKJV); Acts 16:18 (NKJV); Acts 26:17-19 (KJV); Judges 6:1 (NKJV); Judges 6:1-7 (NKJV); Judges 7:1-4 (NKJV); Judges 7:7-8 (NKJ)**

Pastor Sharon Bendixen:

Father, we thank You for this time now where we receive Your Word into our hearts. Our hearts are opened Lord, our hearts are softened because we've been preparing in praise, Lord. Our hearts are soft Lord and so when You speak to us today Father you will not find our hearts hardened, you will find our hearts receptive. You will find our ears listening. You'll find our hearts receiving Lord and You'll find our faith, our faith in Your Words Lord, activated immediately Lord. So we thank You that Pastor John speaks today by Your Spirit, they are not human words of wisdom but they are in demonstration; they are Words of Your Spirit in demonstration and in power, Lord, power for us to live free, for us to be delivered from everything Father, that Your Blood paid for; that Jesus' blood paid for Father. We thank You for that. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Pastor John Bendixen:

Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. What a way to start your message that the Lord gives you on the back of wonderful words and sound and song like that. Amen. You may be seated. Thank you for entering in and for participating. Praise Jesus. As you can see, we are kind of just playing around with a few ways of setting up the auditorium and the seating and and we're putting in some extra lights, and for the conference that Brother Jerry is going to be here we are going to have some... We are renting in a jib and a couple of other things so that we have the highest quality available to us in terms of recording an event that God has prepared for us to have here in South Africa. If you don't recall, I'm going to remind you, that the last time Brother Jerry was here, he ended up writing a book called *Glory*. Out of the seven or eight messages that he preached here, he took the transcriptions of those messages, and he wrote a book called *Glory*. I'm expecting that the same thing is going to happen this time that he's going to have, he's going to have a word from the Lord that'll end up going across the earth, from this platform, amen.

I'm trusting that God will use this moment that he's coming here to speak not only to us, but to speak to our nation, to speak to our continent, and to speak to the world. I have a great expectation that the authority of his own walk with God, his commitment and his dedication to the Lord Jesus, and his love for us will cause him to speak words of God's plan and purpose and direction for us as a people. I encourage you to prepare your heart, to prepare your mind, to prepare your whole being to come and hear what the Word of the Lord has to say. Amen.

Not only is he going to speak, but God has orchestrated it and designed it so that there will be other speakers that will come and speak during the day, especially on the weekend, there will be other speakers that will come and speak. I'm looking forward to hearing from all of them. Amen. Praise the Lord. How do you like the way

the seating is? It's nice, hey? It kind of makes you feel more part of the stage, doesn't it? Makes the whole auditorium feel more intimate with the stage as opposed to separate from the stage. Do you feel that? Yeah. Praise the Lord.

Over the last number of weeks, the Lord has been speaking to us for some time, that Jesus didn't come to fulfill the law, not just to come fulfill the law, but to preach it. Sorry, He came to fulfill the law not to preach it. Jesus came as a fulfillment of promise. So we can be free from performance and in Him know the truth and live in power. Ours is the business to live in power, not performance, because performance has an attitude of comparison and Jesus, the Father never creates a child to be compared with another child. Come on. In God, can you imagine God birthing children out of Himself, and putting a child onto the earth and say, "I want this child to be compared to other children that I put into the earth?" Why would God do that? Why would He birth someone into the earth so that he can or she can be compared with someone else? No, what He would do is breathe someone into the earth to accomplish something that must get done from Him to Earth. So that Earth can have what it requires through the gift, the talent, the calling the ability of that child, as it is submitted to God.

Some people have used their talents, some people have used their gifts and their callings, to promote themselves, and to further their own agenda in life. And sometimes they have sold their soul to get it. Musicians, sportsmen, politicians, people of finance, they will do anything to get a result out of their gift. That is not the way God designed it. God designed it for the gifts to be submitted to Him and then He will accomplish what He needs to do through them. Not so that He can compare them, so that He can complete us. And that He can complete His agenda for the earth.

So, this is a man made thing. It's a demonically originated thing. There is this measure of comparison. It's a competition thing. This is not what God did. He did not create us like that, He did not create us like that, He did not create the world's environment for that. That is something that has come out of the darkness, not out of the light. So, for us, we live in the promise, not in performance and we live in power, not just personality. So, we exchange our lives for purpose, not popular culture. So, God is our source and we are a resource to Him and as we give ourselves as a resource to the Source of all life, He will give us all the resources we need. That's the way it works. That's His God-ordained plan.

And I read to you, <sup>35</sup> **And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."** (John 6:35 NKJV). In Jesus, everything that you ever need is available. As you submit to Him, as you walk with Him, as you live in Him, as you breathe and live and have your being in Him, He gives you all the resources you need because you are a resource to Him. I mean, this is quite simple. This is not complicated - religion complicates it and when men want to further their own agendas, then that is when it gets complicated.

Last Sunday when I was ministering; the last couple of Sundays, God has really led me to make some very bold statements from the pulpit and preach a bold message. And part of what happened in the last couple of weeks is the Lord had me talk about

Gideon and how Gideon was commanded by an angel of the Lord, meaning the Lord Himself, to go and tear down the altar of his father, because his father had become a Baal worshipper. Here is a covenant – here is a covenant-born child of God who was raised, supposed to have been raised, in the Torah, about the ways of Yahweh, the Most High God, the I Am God, and he and his family are now worshipping Baal, the god of fortune and favour – the god - the manmade god of blessing. They are worshipping an image of their own design, hoping that their own design, would bring fortune and blessing to them as they gave sacrifices to something of their own design. So, a god-alternative image is nothing other than a man-made design. It is a man-made design that is inspired by the dark forces of the demon world – because there is, there is a contest for the worship of men.

There is a contest. It's not a contest that God will lose. But it is a contest in every individual's life for what they will do with God. God instructs Gideon to go and tear down his father's altar of Baal. And he said, you must take your father's bulls with a one bull, tear it down and then take those bulls and offer them up on the altar, and make a sacrifice to the Lord. <sup>27</sup> **So Gideon took ten men from among his servants and did as the Lord had said to him. But because he feared his father's household and the men of the city too much to do *it* by day, he did *it* by night (Judges 6:27 NKJV).**

Well, I applaud Gideon for getting the job done. And to me, I have discovered this all of my life, there are a lot of people that say a lot about what they're going to do for God. And then there are those that get it done for God. God is not so interested in by what people say they're gonna do for Him. It's really what they get done for Him. Amen. And you can almost always see the condition of the person's heart by what they're saying versus what they're doing. Gideon got the job done. And I'm going to speak a little bit today about why God required him to go and tear down his father's altar. Well, can you imagine God, the angel of the Lord comes to Gideon, and he says, there is something happening and I'm responding to the cries of the covenant people of God. But still, the man that I'm going to use, has still got to deal with other gods. No, no, let's tear down those gods and then the atmosphere is clear as to who you're going to worship and how you're going to hear. So, from the moment Gideon tore down the altars of his father, he was free and clear to obey God.

Because men of the city came to the conclusion that it was Gideon. So, they wanted to kill Gideon and his father used the wisdom, "Well, if Baal is such a good god, and he's such a powerful god, then let him defend himself. Why must we defend him? I mean, well, if he's a god, then sure let him defend himself." I mean, that was smart. He saved his son's life. Yes?

I'm going to just talk for a few minutes about this light and dark contest. John, chapter three, verse 18, says, <sup>18</sup> **He who believes in Him (Jesus) is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.** <sup>19</sup> **And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.** Who loved the darkness? Men. They loved darkness more than light **because their deeds were evil.** Well, what does that mean? That means I'm doing something that I know is not right and I don't want God to correct me. So I

don't want to believe in this God that will demand that I change my ways. I want to do evil deeds, I want to.

Now, if you ask any reasonable person and you ask them if they're doing evil stuff; they will say, "No, not me, I live my life good and I live my life in order and I have a good way of living my life." Well, you have to define what's evil and evil is the intent of your heart not to pursue God. Because He is the one who measures people's hearts, not just their actions. You see, we as humans, we measure everything that we can see on the outside, but God examines us by our heart, not by what people can see on the outside.

It's very easy to fool people on the outside, but your heart is open before God and so, people **loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.** <sup>20</sup> **For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.** So they don't want to come to the light because their deeds will get exposed. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. <sup>21</sup> **But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."** (John 3:19-21 NKJV).

This is the confrontation of light and dark; deeds, deeds that get done, deeds. There was a man who thought he was on a godly assignment against the Church and he had an encounter with God on the roadside and I'm speaking to you from his own account, as he speaks before a group of people, defending himself. And this, of course, is the apostle Paul, who was first known as Saul. So he is recounting his story. <sup>15</sup> **So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.** <sup>16</sup> **But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you (Acts 26:15-16 NKJV).**

Can I tell you something, that your life is wrapped up in this verse? Because if you believe that you were born into this earth because God has a plan and a purpose for your life, then your whole being is wrapped up in this verse. Because here was Paul thinking he's on his own man made assignment to come against the church because he's a covenant born child of God. God appears to him, Jesus appears to him and says to him, "I want you, I'm calling you to do this." <sup>16</sup> .. **I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you.**

Today you sit here and you are both a minister and a witness of the things you have already heard and the things that you have already seen that God has done in this church, in this ministry, in the body of Christ, the move of God on this earth - both the darkness that is here, and the light and the life that God is bringing to the earth. You are both a minister and you are a witness. This is good news because if you say, "I am both a minister and a witness," every day you go about your business, you have significance as a minister and as a witness. For the things which you have seen and the things which will yet be revealed to you.

So this is an ongoing process which never ends. We will continue to be a witness and we will continue to minister to the things that we have already seen, that have

already been revealed to us and those things that will yet be revealed to us which we can still witness to. Praise the Lord.

As we prepare to receive Brother Jerry, one that God has placed in my life, that I have great love and affection for, great honor for - I'm delighted that we can celebrate his life, his ministry in our community when he comes. Praise the Lord. We can minister to him and we are both a witness to those things that he has already spoken, that has already been revealed to him, that has already changed our lives and of the things that are yet to be revealed. We will be both ministers and a witness of those things that are yet to come. For this purpose, we are here. For this purpose we are here.

He said, <sup>17</sup> **I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you,** <sup>18</sup> **to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me (Acts 26:16-18 NKJV).** Here is the essence of our life in God given to us, that we are ministers and we are witness, and we are sent to peoples because God wants to deliver them out of darkness to light. And He wants to deliver them out of the power of Satan into the hands of God. Amen.

We have a very wonderful opportunity for this brief moment that you and I are alive on the earth. We have the wonderful opportunity to represent on the earth to all of the spirit beings of the heavenly realm both the light and the dark. We have an opportunity to be the witness of the goodness of God. That He sent Jesus to die for us. That we are ones that have chosen to walk in the light and we say, "All of our deeds, here they are, they are in the light. Observe them, glorify Yourself by our deeds in the light. For those that are still hidden we ask You to expose them. And show them so that we can deal with them so that we can live more in the light." I trust that you are seeing that everything that happens on the earth, even though you may intellectualize their coming into the earth they are always spiritually originated.

There is nothing that is happening in the natural world of men that hasn't yet already originated in the spiritual world. So everything that is on the earth either comes from light or it comes from darkness. There is nothing on the earth that you can look at on any given day and say, "Oh that is just a man made thing. That's just the will of man." For many years I was subjected to teaching of this nature. There is truth in this but in the truth you will also have to examine all of the truth and you know, many people and it was a correction to things that were happening in the church.

So I don't want to downplay it too much but the thing that had happened in the church, is that the devil was to blame for everything. And so it was never anybody else's fault, it's the devil who made me do it. And so there was an overcorrection which was; don't say the devil did it, it's your own lust of your flesh that's doing it. That's your own ego, it's your own pride, it's your own sin nature that's in you that's doing it. Don't blame the devil for everything. Well, there is truth in that because it is the lust of the way the book of Matthew puts it, it's the lust of the flesh, the pride of life and the lust of eyes. It's the lust of your eyes, it's the lust of your flesh and it's the pride of life. And so that is a real component of the natural man that we have to deal with.

But when you become a born-again believer, Jesus comes and lives inside of you as a Spirit life. And the very power of that Spirit life gives you the power to conquer those things. So if you're going to teach that it is the natural man that you're following, then you must also teach that you have the power to conquer that natural man. And even as you're conquering the weaknesses of your natural man, you still cannot say darkness doesn't exist. You still can't say that the devil is a real devil who wants to undermine the light that is in you.

So, if you keep putting the burden on men, that they're following the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. If you keep putting the burden on men and remove the demonic forces that cause men to act according to their lust, then you're removing a big component, and then it becomes a self-willed deliverance of yourself. And so God doesn't want us to be in the business of delivering ourselves. He wants us to turn to the Blood of Jesus that delivers us. And the minute we trust in the power of the Blood, we walk in the fullness of the light. The minute we begin to depend on ourselves, then we're talking in the business of darkness here, because a self-willed person cannot function in the light.

Self-willed? Yes, self-willed. Well, my self-will has done me very good up to this point in time in my life, and it's helped me accomplish much. Yes, I hear your words. Are you hearing your words, in your own thoughts? My self-will has helped me accomplish much and given me this place in my life to where I am today. I don't hear too much of God in that sentence. Oh, but I was serving God all that time. I was praying every day. But where is the emphasis here? On yourself or God?

So, yes, it is our own self-will that we have to deal with. But if you do it in the light, and you do it in submission to God, and here's the key thing is that people don't want to submit their desires to God. They want to promote their own desires in life. So they remain in the dark. Otherwise, God will expose their own desire. When God exposes your desire, you now are faced with a decision. And you have to give God the space to deal with it. I'm preaching good today.

So <sup>18</sup> **to open the eyes in order to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me; Jesus (Acts 26:18 KJV).** So God wants us to live in an inheritance. He wants us to live as sanctified inheritance people. Again, He's not trying to take your ambitious results away from you, He's saying to you, "Why don't you submit your desires to Me, and watch what we can accomplish, which is much more than you can do on your own."

Now, you don't get sorrow with it, you get joy with it, praise Jesus. And so, I go back to Gideon, and Gideon is charged by God, he's called by God as a result of the cry of Israel, and so I go back to Judges chapter 6, verse 1, and I'm going to just read to you the condition of what was happening.

<sup>6</sup> **Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord (Judges 6:1 NKJV).** What is the evil that they did in the sight of the Lord? They worshiped idols; man-made gods. Man-made gods. Man-made gods. Man-made gods. Man-made gods. So, if I pulled out an idol today, and it was a figure, probably one of the most revealed figures would be the statue of Buddha.

Because it's been something that has been promoted through television and, and through movies, through Hollywood, if I had to bring a statue of Buddha and put him up here today, and have him take a place here and say, "Come on, this is the god that we must worship. This is the god of fortune. This is the god of favour. Let us bring our sacrifices, let us bring our offerings, let us bring all of our stuff and bring it to the feet of Buddha, because he is the one that is going to bless our lives." What would you say to that today? You would chase me out of the church. And you should. Yes?

So, you would know for sure I've lost my mind, yes? I think, I think all of you would kind of collectively get together, have conversations, and say, "Which one of us is going to sign the order to institutionalize him? And we'll do it lovingly and very kindly. And we'll give him all the spiritual counseling that we can, and we'll give him all the Kenneth Hagin and Kenneth Copeland and Jerry Savelle tapes that he can listen to, day in and day out, so that he can get his mind back. Right? Yeah. Because that would just be stupid. Right? And it would be so obvious that we wouldn't fall for such a thing. But if I put this up here, and say, "Come, let's give our worship to this." We say what?

This phone, all the things I can do with this phone? We say what? "No, Pastor John, that's not an idol in my life." No. No, you don't think? Okay, some of you have got a handle on this. What about your application to education? What about commitment to your career? Getting promoted, earning wealth. What about your dedication to sporting achievements? What about pursuing the opposite sex, to have any kind of relationship? Let's just talk about sex in general to have what, any kind of sex relationship you want to have, because you just want to have it. This can happen in marriage as well as outside of marriage. If it's not dedicated to the Lord, it can become just as much of a lust and something that controls your life as something that happens outside of marriage. It's quiet in this Presbyterian Church today. That's all right. I'm gonna speak the truth whether you like it or not.

Idols have taken on a different form and a different shape. They are no longer just an idol that is presented on an altar that you come and do all kinds of things, some places in the world, those idols are still real, altars are still real. If you go to India and I have been to India and you go and see all the different religions there and all the different places that they go to, they build grand, they build grand places and sometimes in the streets, they have just they have altars, to have shrines dedicated to different gods. And they will fight you for the right to worship at those shrines at those altars at those places of worship, they will fight you to say, "This is my god, this is the one, this is my religion. This is my birthright religion and don't tell me that this god isn't as real as your God."

No to them, they have made that their god. So it is real to them that there is this god, because they have made that god their god. It's their choice that they made that god their god. I don't have to defend my God, my God is alive. Their God is in a shrine. My God lives in you. He's alive in you. That makes my God different from any other God because all the other gods are dead. I want to tell you, that's why, that's why we don't have the proliferation of little, little images and graven images like they used to have in days gone by. It has been replaced by forces. It has been replaced by

performance. It's been replaced by intangible gods that are no longer visible, but they drive our lives, no less, in no less way than they did previously. So God is busy exposing that because He wants the church to be free of worshipping idols because He's got a job for us to do. And it's the same job He had for Gideon.

Let me continue to read. **<sup>1</sup> So the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Midian for seven years.** Now, I just want you to understand that whenever you put an idol or an alternative God in the place of the Most High God, He is jealous for your love. That word jealous means He is passionately intent to have your worship. He is a living God, He is not dead. Other gods are dead. The devil exists, he's not alive. Only everything that is in God is alive, everything else exists. So the enemy of God, the devil that comes out of darkness exists, he's not alive. So but he thrives on the worship, and maintains his existence on the worship of men because he can't get that out of anywhere else.

So this continues. And so when you go against the things of God, what happens is the enemy has a place to come into your life and devastate your life. And so, if you are under the hand of God, he will not permit that. If you are no longer under the hand of God, he must permit that. Do you see that? **<sup>1</sup> So the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years, <sup>2</sup> and the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel. Because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the dens, the caves, and the strongholds which are in the mountains.**

Why? They went there to hide away from this great force of people. **<sup>3</sup> So it was, whenever Israel had sown, their seed for a harvest the Midianites would come up; also Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. <sup>4</sup> Then they would encamp against them and destroy the produce of the earth as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep nor ox nor donkey. <sup>5</sup> For they would come up with their livestock and their tents, coming in as numerous as locusts; both they and their camels were without number; and they would enter the land to destroy it. <sup>6</sup> So Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites, and the children of Israel cried out to the Lord. <sup>7</sup> And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried out to the Lord because of the Midianites (Judges 6: 1-7 NKJV).**

He calls Gideon. Now, I want to just talk to you how this is happening in the church, in the church right now or in the world right now. What is happening in the world right now is there is a, there has been and there continues to be a great affection shown for the ways of the world rather than the ways of God. So, there is a great affection for power, there is a great affection for wealth. There is a great religion that is emerging out of the ether literally out of the ether and it's called 'Save the planet.' It's a religion, it's a god, 'Save the planet.' So, people are sacrificing wealth and they are sacrificing all of their stuff on the altar of save the planet. In the meantime, there is an elite group of people and the elite group of nations that are accumulating for themselves wealth under the guides of this new religion, wealth and power.

And I will tell you that this new emergence of this new thing is like a locust coming into the lives of people and it is feeding on all people's lives, and it is destroying wealth, it is destroying health, it is destroying relationships, it is destroying



everybody's future. People are blaming the whole deal on it's killing the planet. No, it's killing people at the altar of the planet. And that is all happening at the altar of wealth, but they are not gonna tell you it so that they can get wealth. They are going to tell you it's so that we can have a future for our children. So, what does that mean, we must kill our current generation of children so we can save the next generation. If they so cared about the current or the future generation of people, then they should stop abortion. But they don't care about the next generation of people, they also don't care about the planet. As much as they say so. They care about the wealth that they can get because they are driving new technologies into Earth that will take the wealth out of the existing channels of wealth, which is coal and oil and natural elements in the earth, and they are replacing it with their own self-made opportunities for wealth.

I'm not just a pretty face. Praise the Lord.

So, what am I talking about? I'm talking about a vast hoard of forces that are coming against the nations of the earth and against the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, to suck all the life out of us, to suck all the resources out of us, to take our children and keep feeding into a system. A system that the world dictates, "We will teach your children what we think they should know." And, "We will indoctrinate them and brainwash them into our predetermined agenda." So, that system accuses us, being the religions of the world, accuses us of being narrow minded. They accuse us of being fundamentalists. We don't have liberal thinking stuff. I'm happy to entertain your liberal ideas. Just come and tell me how you care about people. And so, they say, "Well, we care about all people's" because this is where they go with their arguments. "We care about all peoples, not just the people that you think fit into a predetermined out of date, sexual group." "We care about all peoples". So, what they're actually telling you is that they marginalize their argument to embrace all peoples on the altar of all the people.

So, the marginalized people end up dictating the agenda of all the people because, "We care about older people." Again, if they cared so much about all the people, let's talk about all the people but you know, "We don't want you to worship your religion." "We want you to we want you to be quiet in your pulpits." "We don't want you to worship the Most High God we want you to worship the way we worship."

Why? Because when we stand the pulpits and talk about the Most High God, we walk in the light and our deeds are in the light and our deeds are obvious and open for anybody to see. But those people want us, they want to walk in the darkness. This is a real thing that's happening right now in America and in our own country. It's a real thing. That actually since the parents of people have started to rise up and say "We don't want critical race theory taught in schools, and we don't want our young children taught about sexual practices and alternative choices in terms of their sexuality from a young age." Since the parents have risen up and said, "We want to ban this out of our schools." And, and there's a swell of momentum of this in America, the teacher's unions have got together and they said, "We're gonna..." they have a whole strategy to negate the parents who don't want their children to have this exposed to them. And that's an underground strategy that seeks to keep the parents in court over marginal issues, while they keep teaching this theory in classes.

Do you think the devil is not sneaky? He's very sneaky. If we go around, as a church, and we say, "Our church belongs in a Sunday service, where we can praise God, we can give out a little bit of offerings, and we can just worship and feel good about ourselves", we are fooling ourselves that we think we've got life. We are still worship at the altar of all the gods out there because we choose it. If you choose not to see the truth, then by definition, you are choosing to walk in darkness. If you choose not to see the light, then you will walk in the darkness. If you choose not to see the truth, then you will walk in the lie. It will be a choice. "Don't rock my comfort boat, don't rock my boat. I've worked all my life to bring myself to this place where I can present myself as who I am." And that means what eternally? And that means what? Okay.

So, God chooses Gideon and what is the first cause of action that Gideon must do? God said to Gideon, "Gideon, I want you to go and kill your father's god. Go kill your father's god." Why? Because your father permitted a worship into your life that he should not have permitted. And he's too invested in his life, he's too invested in his community and the status that he has in that community for him to kill his own god.

So, Gideon, there's a horde that keeps coming against the covenant people of God, keeps coming against the church, I want you to go and deal with it. But I can't deal with the 'whole darkness' until you deal with the 'home darkness'. So Gideon has to go and first deal with what's at home before he can deal with something that's beyond his home. But what's God's agenda? God's agenda is to deal with what's at home and then I will use you for what's beyond home. Because how can I use you for what's beyond home if you can't deal with what's at home? *Kom nou julle mense.*

You chose to come to this church. Yes, I have a part to play in this. I prayed you into this church. God ordained you to be in this church because He knew you would want to hear the truth. You didn't want to be in that darkness, you wanted to be one of those that would say, "I'll deal with my stuff at home and then I can deal with stuff that is nation wide and beyond our borders." Hallelujah. It is because of our willingness that He has connected us with ministries that are international and He has given us an international profile. Come on now.

I want you to just see this for a minute and I've got much to preach on this subject and God willing I will get through it next Sunday before Brother Jerry comes. Because I believe that this will be a platform for him to speak on because we are going to be free of these things that are holding us down. The stuff that has come to consume our lives, we are dealing with it. We are tearing it down.

Do you know what his name was, Gideon? What his name was, that wasn't a covenant name, it was a community name. His name was, Jerubbaal. Jerubbaal, otherwise pronounced as Jerub-be-baal. So they named their child after their god. "The god that fortunated us with this son." His name used by God is Gideon. The community name was Jerubbaal.

**<sup>1</sup> ... all the people who were with him rose early and encamped beside the well of Harod, so that the camp of the Midianites was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley. <sup>2</sup> And the Lord said to Gideon, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest**

**Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.'** (Judges 7:1-2 NKJV). Come on. I'm all for what the Word says; work hard, use your gifts, use whatever God has given you. But if you don't give the honour and glory to God, then you are going to take all the glory for yourself. And you give what room to God?

They will say, <sup>2</sup> ...**'My own hand has saved me.'** <sup>3</sup> **Now therefore, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, 'Whoever is fearful and afraid, let him turn and depart at once from Mount Gilead.'** **And twenty-two thousand...** (Judges 7:1-3 NKJV) there were 32 000 people that pitched up to go and fight against the Midianites, under this one man's name, Gideon, who called them.

So, why did they all come? Why did 32 000 people come? They came because God used what He did to pull down one false god. He used one man and His anointing was able to be released to bring the nation together to fight against this force. And God says, "No, too many people. This is going to be strength against strength. I won't have that because they'll say they did it and not Me. So, tell them, whoever's afraid, whoever doesn't want to fight this fight, let them go home."

I've said this about this church many times; if you are not up for the spiritual fight to be in this church because we will speak the truth, then maybe you should go to another church - because this church, we are going to deal with the matters of life head-on, we are not afraid of it, we don't back down from it because I have a confidence in the light and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not something new to me. This is something that God has allowed me to be tested in my life. It's part of the reason I love Brother Jerry so much because he's been unafraid to live with God completely and he has allowed his own walk with God to be tested.

So, 22 000 people go home. I want to tell you that in the Church of the Lord Jesus there is not a great appetite to go to war. There is not a great appetite to confront the issues of the day, the gods of the day. There is not a great appetite for it. And if you give people a choice, they will flock back to their own way of doing things very easily. More than two-thirds of the body of Christ will take this course of action. There is not a great appetite for war.

And so, 22 000 departs. <sup>3</sup> ...**and ten thousand remained.** <sup>4</sup> **But 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. Then it will be, that of whom I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' the same shall go with you; and of whomever I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' the same shall not go."** (Judges 7:4 NKJV). So, he got them to drink water and basically what He said to Gideon was; those people that go down and lap with their tongues, they use their hands and they lap with their tongues, just watch out for those people and those people that kneel and bring water to their mouths, watch out for those people. So, of the people that went down on their hands and basically on their belly to lap water with their tongue out of the water, there were 300 of them. Everybody else knelt on one knee and brought water to their mouth.

Well, there's a lot of similes or there's a lot of things that you can draw from that because God wants, you can say this and rightly so and I'll tell you about it for your

own interest's sake, you can say, "Let God use the people that are ready to put down all the stuff of their life and go before their living water, completely humble, completely prostrate, with any self reliance whatsoever." You could say, "For sure" and you would be right to say, "Those who went on a knee and brought the stuff, there's a measure of self-protection, self-correction, self... in that. Because I don't want to bow on both knees, I don't want to lie prostrate, I'm still going to do this on my own terms."

As it is, God chose the three hundred that lapped with their tongues. Because there is nothing you can do to protect yourself when you are that far gone, you have to depend on almighty God when you are prostrate before Him like that. Verse 7, <sup>7</sup> **Then the Lord said to Gideon, 'By the three hundred men who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the other people go, and here is the important point I want to make to you as I close this session today. Let all the other people go, every man to his place.' So the people took provisions and their trumpets in their hands. And he sent away all the rest of Israel, every man to his tent, and retained those three hundred men. (Judges 7:7-8 NKJV).**

Now I just want to make a differentiation here, because on the first thing that God said, *whoever doesn't have an appetite, let them go*. And they all went home. They went on with their lives. Whatever life that was, because they had no knowledge of how God was going to deliver them from this hoard that came to steal their stuff every year. But they were willing to go back to their place because they had no appetite to go to war with these, or this hoard that comes to steal their stuff every year. They went home. The other ten thousand didn't go home, they stayed in the tents, which means there was a whole bunch of people that were in readiness to go to war if required.

And so, you know, there are those who God will use that will come out and say, "I'll be one of three hundred. Because I will prostrate myself before You, Lord." But then there are those that you can't say necessarily are at fault, but they've still got to yet make a different commitment. They don't go home, but they find themselves in their tents, waiting to see what God will do. I'd say those people are in a better place than going home. And maybe you find yourself in that place today, maybe you find yourself in a space where you are saying, "Hmm, I'm not sure that I'm ready to go all out for God, I'm not sure that I'm ready to go and lie prostrate and lap the water and be completely prostrate before God."

Maybe, maybe you're gonna go home or go to your tents. That I say to you that when God begins to do His business; be ready. Because what happens next is that God uses 300 men strategically. He divides them up. He gives Gideon an indication of what's going to happen through the mouth of a Midianite. He gives Gideon an indication of what's about to happen and he takes 300 people and this whole nation of people that have come year after year, 7 years they've come to consume all of Israel stuff. They chased them and chased them and absolutely obliterated them. The 10,000 join in first after the 300 have done the breakthrough the 10,000 join them in the battle and they take all the spoils of war and they kill the kings that came against them.

And I'm here to declare to you today that God has used this church and is using this church, you people as His 300. Because we are willing and ready to take on the systems that are worshiping the gods of this earth. The gods of this world and we are prepared to speak light. We are prepared to do something extraordinary and worship the most high God and give Him our lives and our children's lives. And we are prepared to say, "We will go all the way with the living God." And God does miracles. He gives us victories in ways that are absolutely astounding. They are absolutely not within the scope of realm or reason even though they may present themselves in the natural world as reason. It is God's hand that does them. Amen.

And so I declare to you today that, I've been in the military, I've been in the corporate world at an executive level. I've been there and all that time I have chosen to follow God in that space. And for me sometimes it would be a simple decision. Like when I was in a management meeting and people would use foul language. I would not enter in with their foul language. I would keep my mouth clean. And when other people were politicking on the backs of opinions and they were giving stuff about other people things so that they can present themselves politically in a favorable light. I kept my mouth clean and I let God do the promoting, and so God did the promoting. Against all odds God did the promoting. It's too late for anybody to tell me that the ways of God don't work. I'm too far gone in my life, down the ways of God, because He's always come through for me. His light has always shone in me, through me, and around me. It's too late for anybody to tell me that God is not the God of relationships, and He restores relationships, and He makes relationships beautiful and a fragrance to enjoy.

And my wife, of many, many years – 40 plus years - is still the joy of my heart, still the love of my life, because our marriage is on the Word of God, not because we are great. In a time when two thirds of all marriages are ending up in divorce, our marriage has just had the highest quality. And so, it's too late for anybody to tell many of you, because you have watched and observed our witness, and you have said, "We will take that witness and live it in our marriages." And you have begin to enjoy the fruits of that. Yes? [*Congregation responds with a yes.*]

It's too late for people to say to me, "What about your children?" My children serve God. They are experiencing the blessing of God in their lives, and my grandchildren. It's too late for anybody to say... [*Pastor John's alarm goes off*] I did well, hey? I'm already down the end straight here on my alarm. I'm already landing, and my alarm has gone off. Praise the Lord. I've been focused today. Glory to Jesus. It's too late for anybody to tell me that the ways of God and the true living God that is living in us is not the way to live. I don't want to go and worship some godmade image. I don't want to go and worship at some altar of finance, or some altar of academic excellence or some altar of some kind of relationship-breaking system, because whatever you compromise to gain, you will eventually lose. So if you compromise your relationship to gain wealth, or to gain power, or to gain some political gain, or to gain some kind of position in an institution, you will eventually lose something. It will cost you, because performance requires a price to pay. Jesus says, "I will give you all the benefits in Me, and I will add no sorrow with it." There will be no sorrow with what you do, if you do it in Jesus. Hallelujah.

This is a great joy, this is a great benefit, this is of great value, this is of great peace in your life when you know the ways of God and you walk in them. And you are all in agreement with this this morning are you not? [*Congregation: Yes*] and you all say? [*Congregation: Amen*]. Stand to your feet, please.

Praise Jesus. Hallelujah. So, you see, do you see? [*Congregation: Yes*]. So, you see, God had to tell Gideon, he has to deal with it in his own house before he can deal with it somewhere else. Amen. And so that's why God's got me speaking and preaching like this, because we have to deal with these gods in our lives. If God wants to use us on a broader scale, we have to deal with these things in our own life, in our own church, in our own ministry so that we can do things on a broader scale.

And it's not a coincidence to me that God would have me minister this right before Brother Jerry's coming. Because he's going to come and say, "Come let's shout together and let's destroy the Midianites, these locusts that have come to destroy our lives, let's kill them, let's get rid of them. And let's have God restore all the stuff that the years of the locust have eaten out of our lives, in Jesus' name." Amen.

So, please put your hand on your heart and let's make a declaration today and say, "I am a child of God. I love Jesus. He lives in my heart. I give my whole life to Him. I submit my future to Him. I will obey you, Lord, as You command me I will obey You. In Jesus' name. Amen." Hallelujah.

I'll tell you if you prayed that prayer, if you've never prayed that prayer and today you prayed it with a belief in your heart that you are speaking to God, you have gone from unsaved to being saved. Because the Bible says that if you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart, you will be saved. And that goes for every area of your life. Whatever you believe in your heart and you speak with your mouth, He will save your marriage, He will save your finances, He will save your life in every area. Hallelujah.

And so now, you have great peace today and I declare that this week you will walk in peace, you will walk in joy, you will walk in the blessing of God, you will be blessed going out and blessed coming in. We pray and we ask the heavenly Father that His angels will have charge over you, and He will protect you. No weapon formed against you will prosper. I pray that you will accurately be able to discern the difference between light and dark, between evil and good and you will be able to follow the voice of the good shepherd, the Father Himself, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. You will follow the voice of the good shepherd and you will not stray from that voice; you will follow His voice and you will walk in those ways, and prosperity and blessing will become yours. In Jesus' name. Are you in agreement with that? Say Amen [*Congregation: Amen!*].

Thank you for being at church. You have an hour to eat and then come back for message moments. Amen.