

## Start With A Plan

### Scripture Reference:

**Judges 7:1-7 (NIV):** *Early in the morning, Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all his men camped at the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was north of them in the valley near the hill of Moreh. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Gideon, "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.' <sup>3</sup> Now announce to the army, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.'" So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained. <sup>4</sup> But the LORD said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will thin them out for you there. If I say, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go; but if I say, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go."<sup>5</sup> So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the LORD told him, "Separate those who lap the water with their tongues as a dog laps from those who kneel down to drink."<sup>6</sup> Three hundred of them drank from cupped hands, lapping like dogs. All the rest got down on their knees to drink. <sup>7</sup> The LORD said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the others go home."*

**Main Idea:** God illustrates through the example of Gideon that His desire is to reveal what He is calling us to. Additionally, He wants to train us in His way of thinking so that we can develop a plan that will help us fulfill His purpose for our lives.

### 3 Results of a Godly Plan:

1. **Clarity and Focus**— The first direction God gave to Gideon was to tear down the idols and offer a sacrifice to God. To hear God clearly, we must remove anything that would raise take His place as ruler in our life. When God's voice is the only authority we allow, we can then focus on what He has asked of us.

**Judges 6:25-26 (NIV):** *That same night the LORD said to him, "Take the second bull from your father's herd, the one seven years old. Tear down your father's altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it. <sup>26</sup> Then build a proper kind of altar to the LORD your God on the top of this height. Using the wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second bull as a burnt offering."*

**Question:** Have you ever faced an obstacle to your worship that you did not create? At what point di you realize you are responsible for its removal?

2. **I'm in Divine Company**— It seemed that the Lord was putting Gideon at a disadvantage when He narrowed down Gideon's army to just 300 men. What Gideon quickly learned is that if

the company you keep has been orchestrated by God then you will never be at a disadvantage.

**Judges 7:2 (NIV):** *The LORD said to Gideon, "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.'*

**Judges 7:4 (NIV)** *But the LORD said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will thin them out for you there. If I say, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go; but if I say, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go."*

- 3. Full Confidence in the Sovereignty of God:** As we start to follow God's plan, He will lead us to a place where our only option is to trust Him. Gideon's obedience to God resulted in over 30,000 soldiers going home. Gideon had followed God too far down this path to fall back on any other option. When we follow God's plan, it positions us in a place to trust Him because His plan requires faith that He is in control.

**Judges 7:7 (NIV):** *The LORD said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the others go home."*

**Question:** Have you considered that your close relationships can be a vessel that God uses to bring freedom to you and those around you?

**Closing Thoughts:** The first victory Gideon experienced concluded with a plan that He came up with. It flowed from His constant leaning and trust in God. Walking with God was not a comfortable or smooth transition at first though. Perhaps the most difficult part of following Him is that very often He does not reveal the whole plan at once. We have to continue to trust Him step by step. The beauty in this journey is that we become more like Him with each step of faith we take. What God desires to do is give us a creative mind that will form a plan to bring victory to our lives, but most importantly, glory to our God.

**Call to Action:** Lets examine in our own lives the qualities of fear and selfishness the soldiers who went home operated in. If we allow God to steady us when we fear we need to run when things are scary, and correct the selfish desire to gratify ourselves, then He will help remove those the wrong people from our lives in a healthy and divine way.