

I. The antidote to idolatry is to vividly remember the gospel (1-10)

- This time when the people cry out to the LORD for help, he does not send them a Warrior. He sends them a Preacher! It was not the Midianites that were the true problem the people Israel faced; it was their own hard hearts. Their hard hearts which were not remembering & trusting the LORD who had delivered them from slavery by grace.
- This should remind us that what we most need in the Church is not strong leaders to overthrow our enemies by force, we need *PREACHERS* to vividly proclaim the truth of the gospel of God, call us to repentance, call us to faith & obedience!
- Never forget the words of Dr. Steven J. Lawson, "God has one Son and He made Him a preacher!"
- Some problems cannot be solved by physical strength; they must be healed by spiritual medicine!
- 1) You need to hear the preaching of the Gospel *FROM YOUR PASTORS!* (2 Tim. 4:1-6)
- 2) You need to hear the preaching of the Gospel *FROM YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST!* (Col. 3:16)
- 3) You need to hear the preaching of the Gospel *FROM YOURSELF!* (Psalm 42:5-6, Psalm 103:2, Psalm 116:7)
- Ps.42:5-6 "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God." Ps.103:2 "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits!" Ps. 116:7 "Return, O my soul, to your rest; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you." **The antidote to idolatry is to vividly remember the gospel.**

II. If the LORD declares something, it is so (11-12)

- The Angel of the LORD said, Gideon, you are a "mighty man of valor" (v. 12) and so he was. **Q.** Why? **A.** Because...
- The Word of God goes forth from *the mouth* of God and accomplishes *the will* of God for *the glory* of God!
- This is why Paul says things like, "[God] gives life to the dead & calls into existence the things that do not exist" Rom. 4:17
- Napoleon: "if the king says you are a general, you are a general."
- So if the King declares you "*righteous*," you are righteous (Rm.4). If the King says "*your sins are forgiven*," you are forgiven (Mk.2). If the King says "*adopted*," you are a child of God (1Jn.3)! If the King says "*I will lose nothing of all that is given to me*" then you will not be lost (John 6). If the King says, "*I will raise [you] up on the last day*," then up shall you be raised (John 6). **For every action there is a reaction; for every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God there is the effect He desires. If the LORD declares something, it is so.**

III. It is not the strength of the one used by the LORD that matters;

The LORD works powerfully in our weakness by His Spirit (13-16, 34)

- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 9 But [Jesus] said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
- Do you know you are weak? Good. Then the LORD will not need to humble you. Do you think you are strong? Get ready for some humiliation! **It seems the LORD only refuses to fill by His power those who are already full of themselves.**
- It is not the strength of the one used by the LORD that matters; The LORD works powerfully in our weakness.

IV. Weak faith craves repeated assurances, & the LORD gives them (17-24,36-40)

- Now, the os *DE*scriptive, not *PRE*scriptive. The point here is *not* that we should ask the LORD for signs, or even expect the LORD to give us miraculous signs in our own time and space in order to strengthen our faith. **The point is this:**
- The LORD does not scoff at the weak faith of His people; He does not scorn those who ask for assurance. "A bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench" (Isaiah 42:3).
- Jesus said, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign" in Mt.12, yes, but he also said in Heb. 6, "So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath."
- Weak faith craves repeated assurances, & the LORD gives them. Look to the Manger! Look to the Cross! Look to the empty tomb!

V. You cannot serve your heart-idols and the LORD at the same time (25-35)

- Just as "A house divided against itself cannot stand" so it is within your heart (Mk.3). "You cannot serve God & [idols]" (Mt.6).
- **Q.** What Idols have you taken into your heart? What are you looking to other than Jesus for you "hope or happiness, significance or security"? **A.** By the strength that God supplies, tear them down! Trust the LORD! Serve the LORD!
- Repentance & faith go together! They are inseparable. **You cannot serve your heart-idols & the LORD at the same time.**

VI. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins (26)

- Hebrews 9:12-14 "12 [Jesus] entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God."