**APRIL 26/27, 2014**

**50 Days of Unleashing**

**HOPE**

“And now these three remain: faith, **hope** and love.”

**1 CORINTHIANS 13:13**

**FOUNDATION #2**

**Raise Your Expectations**

**(The Example of Gideon)**

**Judges 6:1** Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites. **2** Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds. **3** Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country. **4** They camped on the land and ruined the crops all the way to Gaza and did not spare a living thing for Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys. **5** They came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count the men and their camels; they invaded the land to ravage it. **6** Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the LORD for help.

**Setting the Scene:**

* Israel is not just defeated - they are occupied.
* Gideon is not just afraid - he is petrified.

**Why should I care:**

We don't get what we deserve we get what we expect.

**ATTITUDE Adjustments That Raise God Honoring Expectations**

1. **Change your definition of possible.**

**Judg. 6:12** When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, “The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.”

**13** “But sir,” Gideon replied, “if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?’ But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian.”

Beware: “Things will never change” thinking.

Application Question: Who/What has the permission to define your identity?

1. **Adjust your perspective**

**Judg. 6:14** The LORD turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?” **15** “But Lord,” Gideon asked, “how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.” **16** The LORD answered, “I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together.”

Application Question: What battle has God promised to fight with you?

1. **Build a Monument to Faith Moments**

Judges 6:22 “When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the Lord, he exclaimed, “Ah Sovereign Lord! I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!”

23 But the Lord said to him, “Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die.” 24 So Gideon built an altar to the Lord there and called it The Lord is Peace. To this day it stands in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

Application Question: Who/What is the source of your peace?

**Final Thought**: **Dismantle “Plan B”**

Judge 6:25 “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. 26 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.”

BIBLORAPHY FOR WIERSBE JOSHUA THROUGH ESTER, HQ BY RAY JOHNSTON AND UNGERS BIBLE DICTIONARY