

Transformed – teen devotion – June 17, 2018

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When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he bowed down and worshiped. He returned to the camp of Israel and called out, “Get up! The Lord has given the Midianite camp into your hands.”

Judges 7:15

Fear<less: Numbers don’t count.

Everyone loves underdog stories. We all want to see the scrappy team from the small town win the state championship. People love to root for the underdog. But nobody wants to be the underdog. When it gets down to it, we would definitely prefer to be the top dog with no one to challenge us.

Gideon didn’t want to be the underdog either. He was given the job of rescuing God’s people, the Israelites, from the invading Midianites. Israel was outnumbered badly. From a military point of view, their best course of action would be surrender and hope they were treated well as prisoners. Gideon knew that, but he still tried his best to muster the best fighting force he could, a little over 32,000 men. He was as ready as he could be to face the enemy. The opening whistle of the most important match in Gideon’s life was about to sound.

But God had a lesson to teach Gideon.

You see, God had already promised to save the Israelites and to help them defeat Midian. And God wanted them to trust his promise to the win that victory for them. So, what did God do? He commanded Gideon to dismiss almost his entire army. At the end of that day, Gideon was left with less than one percent of his original force, only 300 men! You can’t even fill a large gym

with 300 men, but that was Israel's entire army. This meager army was up against an enemy so large that you couldn't even count their camels, let alone soldiers. Gideon was about to learn a lesson on trust.

Israel did win the battle that day. But they didn't win because of numbers, or strategy, or ferocity. They won because God was on their side.

God wants us to know the same thing. God is on our side so power, might, wisdom, or numbers don't matter. If God is for us, who can be against us? With our trust in God, we really have nothing to fear.

It is true that even Christians sometimes suffer during their lives. Does this mean they didn't trust in God enough? Or maybe God doesn't care about them? No.

We believe that God will protect us spiritually above all else. He has already won the greatest victory possible for us. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, he suffered for every person through all of time. Jesus' death paid the price for our sins. The battles against sin, death, and the devil have all been won for us. "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:31-32)

God may not help our team win every championship. In fact, we will face troubles in life, but that doesn't really matter. What matters is that we can trust God's promise that he has won the final victory for us and is waiting for us in heaven.

That inspires the same confidence in us as in Gideon to call out, "Get up! The Lord has given this into our hands!" If God is for us, who can be against us? He will fight for us in life so that we might enjoy an eternity with him.

Prayer: Dear Father in heaven, thank you for fighting the battles we couldn't. Thank you for watching over us and protecting us. Help us to remember your promises and to always put our trust in you. Amen.

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