



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

January 25, 2015

The Three Hundred

The LORD said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.'" –Judges 7:2

The glory of the 300 brave Spartans, who died holding back the Persian army at the Battle of Thermopylae, remains to this day. We live in a world of sin, where evil must be resisted, and the courage to stand against unprincipled power deserves honor. Civilization is built on the shoulders of those who honor country more than life, and we owe fallen heroes a debt of gratitude.

In Israel, 1200 years before Christ, such a hero was hard to find. Gideon, whom we honor for his faith, was living out his days in hiding. His response to the direct call of God was persistent doubt that his Lord had to coax him through. But God chose him and used him to deliver His chosen people from evil forces, which had gathered "like locusts" against Israel. But first, God had a lesson to teach and some winnowing to do.

In the sweep of history, the Spartans and all the Greeks were one in a series of empires God said would rise and fall. God portrayed all these empires as evil beasts. No power on earth stands as righteous and deserving of the honor of defeating evil. All have sinned and every nation is beset by evil—even our own.

The work of God's kingdom is above the aspirations of every kingdom on earth. He uses the sinful powers of earth to accomplish His perfect purposes and bring honor to Himself—the only One who deserves it. And human might, ultimately, dedicates itself to human glory—not God's.

God chose the nation of Israel, despite their sin, to bring His redemption and give Him the glory He alone deserves. And so, the way He worked in them as a people serves as an example of how He works in the lives of His people today. Fallen Man cannot deliver himself from sin. No human power can bring about God's righteousness. Redemption is God's work alone, and we sinful humans will never accept this humbling truth apart from God's patient, persistent revelation.

To deliver His people Israel from their Midianite oppressors, God reduced Israel's army from 32,000 to 300, so He alone would receive the glory. It is human weakness that puts God's glory on display.

"Are you weak and heavy laden?" God is at work to deliver you but also to show you, not only that He will save, but that only He can save. Weakness is what He uses. Need is the material He works with to bring His people salvation. Through our prayers we cast our cares on Him. They are all we have to give.

When we give our needs to Him, God will bring about our good and receive the glory He alone deserves.

But he 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. 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. –2nd Corinthians 12:9-10

Prayer for Northpoint: Pray that in our weaknesses as a church, God will be strong and receive all the glory.

Prayer for the United States: Pray that God will not be done with us as a culture. Ask Him to move His people to pray, realizing we have no hope but Christ. Ask God to humble us, so we look to Him alone to save.

Prayer for the World: More and more, it is becoming clear that seeing our world in a positive light requires faith that goes against the evidence. Evidence of human sinfulness abounds, but our humanistic philosophy resolutely denies it. Implore God to open our eyes to see our sin and turn to Him. The need is great.

Prayer Supporting Ministry:

- *Tuba City:* Pray for Christ's work in Tuba City. Unexpected changes are disrupting what we've been doing there for several years. Ask for wisdom in how to support God's work among the Navajo and Hopi peoples.
- *Women's Conference:* Ask God to speak peace to the women who attend the upcoming Women's Conference, as they learn to trust God to bear fruit in their lives.
- *Congregational Meeting:* Ask God to lead us in unity as a church body at this next all-church meeting.
- *Grief Share:* Ask God to turn the hearts of those who are hurting to Him to find hope and healing.

