

Small But Mighty Part 1: Gideon and the 300

God doesn't need the biggest army. He needs and wants the most committed hearts.

Sermon Content

1. Small but Mighty, A Series Begins

God is not impressed by big numbers.

What God is looking for is commitment: wholehearted, fully surrendered, nothing-held-back commitment.

- A large pile of wet wood produces only smoke
- A small pile of dry wood burns hot and bright
- God is looking for 'dry wood' — people fully surrendered and ready to burn for Him
- Key question: Are you dry wood or wet wood?

2. Meet Gideon — The Unlikely Candidate

God chose the least likely person to lead one of Israel's greatest victories.

Because when God uses someone who thinks they have nothing to offer, there is no question about who gets the credit for the victory.

- Gideon was hiding in a winepress, afraid of the Midianites
- The angel called him 'mighty warrior' — before he had done anything mighty
- Gideon's objection: 'My clan is the weakest... I am the least in my family' (v. 15)
- God's answer: 'Am I not sending you?' (v. 14) — the mission rests on God's presence, not our ability

3. Courage Before the Battle, Tearing Down the Altar

Before the miracle, God tested Gideon's heart at home.

Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is doing what God tells you to do even when your hands are shaking, even when you're afraid.

Gideon honored God. He chose God's honor over his own safety.

- God told Gideon to tear down his father's altar to Baal — a dangerous, public act of defiance
- Gideon obeyed — though he did it at night because he was afraid
- Gideon honored God before the breakthrough came

- God is looking for faith that costs something — not just Sunday morning faith

4. Too Many Men: God Whittles the Army

God intentionally reduced Gideon's army so the glory could only go to Him.

Israel won an epic victory that no military strategist could ever explain on a whiteboard. It could only be explained one way, Yahweh.

- Starting number: 32,000 men vs. 135,000 Midianites
- God's response: 'You have too many men' (v. 2)
- God's reason: Israel must not be able to say 'my own strength saved me'
- Round 1 — Send home the afraid: 22,000 leave → 10,000 remain
- Round 2 — The water test: 9,700 leave → 300 remain
- Final count: 300 men, torches, and trumpets — and the Midianites fled in confusion
- Like pruning a rosebush: the cutting back is purposeful, not a mistake

5. God is Doing a New Thing

The step of obedience always precedes the movement of God's hand.

- Gideon's faith was being tested. God was preparing him for a new thing.
- The Lord tests our faith to build character and produce perseverance
- Isaiah 43:19
See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland.

5. Wholehearted or Lukewarm — Which Are You?

Jesus calls us to be fully on fire — not smoldering in the middle.

Jesus would rather have a smaller number of people who are genuinely on fire for Him than a massive crowd of people who are just going through the motions.

- God did not need 32,000 men. He needed 300 who were fully ready.
- The challenge: Stop playing it safe spiritually
- Be dry wood — fully surrendered, fully available, fully committed

- The promise: God will do with your surrendered life what He did with 300 men and a handful of torches
- A simple prayer of commitment: 'God, I'm all in. No more lukewarm. I'm dry wood. Use me.'

6. Key Scriptures

Judges 6:12 — 'The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.'

Judges 6:14 — 'Go in the strength you have... Am I not sending you?'

Judges 7:2 — 'You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, "My own strength has saved me."'

Revelation 3:15–16 — 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot...'

Isaiah 43:19 — 'See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?'

Discussion Questions

For personal reflection or group discussion

1. In what area of your life have you been 'wet wood' — present but not fully committed? What would it look like to change that this week?
2. Gideon obeyed God even though he was afraid. Is there something God has been asking you to do that fear has kept you from? What is one step you could take toward obedience?
3. God reduced Gideon's army so the glory could only go to Him. Can you think of a time when God 'pruned' something in your life? Looking back, what did that season produce?

4. Jesus warns against being lukewarm in Revelation 3. On a scale of cold to hot, how would you honestly describe your spiritual temperature right now? What would 'all in' look like for you?

5. The sermon ended with a challenge to be 'one of the 300.' What specific commitment are you willing to make this week in response to this message?

Key Takeaways

Main points to remember and apply

1. God is not looking for the biggest group — He is looking for the most committed hearts.
2. Courage is not the absence of fear. It is obeying God even when your hands are shaking.
3. God reduces and prunes on purpose — so that only He gets the glory for what follows.
4. Lukewarm faith is not neutral — Jesus calls us to be fully hot or fully cold.
5. A small group of fully surrendered people in God's hands can do what no human strategy can explain.

Additional Notes

- Next Week — Part 2: David and His Mighty Men (1 Samuel 22). Before David was king, God used a band of rejects, misfits, and broken men to become Israel's most legendary warriors. Same principle. Different story. Don't miss it.
- This Week's Challenge: Pray this simple prayer daily — 'God, I'm all in. No more lukewarm. I'm dry wood. Use me.' Then watch for the ways He responds.