

Title: "I am not, but I am..."

Passage Context: After 40 years of peace under the leadership of the Judge Deborah (Judges 4-5), Israel yet again reverted again back to her old ways of idolatry-serving and worshipping the false gods of surrounding nations. Because of their unfaithfulness, God gave Israel into the hands of the Midianites who oppressed Israel for seven years. The Israelites got sick and tired of being sick and tired, so they turned back to God for help. God send a prophet to rebuke Israel and help turn them back to Himself. In the midst of all this madness, God raises up a new Judge to deliver Israel from her bondage: On the stage of Israel's history steps in Gideon (Summary of Judges 6:1-10).

Passage: Judges 6:11-28 (NIV); ¹¹ The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. ¹² When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, "*The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.*" (*Midian=strife*)

¹³ "*Pardon me, my lord,*" Gideon replied, "but if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

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 "*Pardon me, my lord,*" Gideon replied, "but 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, leaving none alive."

¹⁷ Gideon replied, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. ¹⁸ Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you."

And the Lord said, "I will wait until you return."

¹⁹ Gideon went inside, prepared a young goat, and from an ephah of flour he made bread without yeast. Putting the meat in a basket and its broth in a pot, he brought them out and offered them to him under the oak.

²⁰ The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And Gideon did so. ²¹ Then the angel of the Lord touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of the staff that was in his hand. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the Lord disappeared. ²² When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the Lord, he exclaimed, "Alas, 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.

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."

²⁷ So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the LORD told him. ***But because he was afraid of his family and the townspeople, he did it at night rather than in the daytime.***

²⁸ In the morning when the people of the town got up, there was Baal's altar, demolished, with the Asherah pole beside it cut down and the second bull sacrificed on the newly built altar!

Message: I am not, but I am...

1. I am not what my _____ say about me, but I am what _____ says about me (11-13).

- He and his people were under oppression by the Midianites for _____ years.

- Gideon's Call (v. 12-13)--In the midst of the people's crisis, God calls Gideon. A call often rises out of the midst of a crisis.
- Gideon was asking the *why God question*...O my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites."

2. I am not what I _____ about _____, but I am what _____ says about me (v. 14-15).

- *What did Gideon think about himself?*
 - He was asking "Why is all this happening to me and my people" (v. 13)?
 - He thought of himself as weak and poor-**the least person in his family who were nobodies in their community** (v. 15).
 - His faith was so weak that he asked for several signs to know that God was truly with him (v. 17-18, 36-40).

3. I am not what my _____ and _____ say about me, but I am what _____ says about me (v. 15).

- *What did Gideon's friends and family think about him?*
 - He was the least important person among his family (v. 15).
 - The people of the city wanted to kill Gideon for making a stand (v. 30).
- *What does God say about you?*
 - **I am now part of the family of God** (John 1:12, Romans 8:15).
 - **I am now God's masterpiece** (Ephesians 2:10)
 - **I am chosen by God to shine his light to a dark world** (I Peter 2:9-10)-**I Peter 2:9-10** ⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

4. I am not what my _____ spread about me, but I am what _____ says about me (v. 16-17).

- *What do you think Gideon's enemies were probably thinking about him?*

- **What does God tell you about your enemies?**

Romans 8:31; If God is for us, who can be against us?

Romans 8:38-39; ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Today's Big Takeaway: *I am not what others think about me, but I am what God says about me.*

Action Steps to become **practically** in everyday what you already are **positionally** in Christ:

1. *Get rid of stink'n t_____ 'n.*
2. *Kill your father's b_____.*

Bonus-Between your **calling** and your **conquest** stands your **consecration**.¹ You cannot be all that God has called you to be until you cut down the idols in your life and surrender your entire self on the altar. If you want your life to totally alter, you have to lay yourself totally on the altar.

→ Take out your axe and cut down that which stands in the way of your potential.

3. *Even though you are scared to _____, do the _____ thing anyways!*

Responses-

- 1) **Calling**—I need to embrace God's calling on my life.
- 2) **Consecration**—I need to demolish the idols and worldly altars in my life.
- 3) **Conquest**—I need to pick the Sword of the Spirit and take upon me the spiritual armor of God and make a positive difference in the world around me.

¹ Quote from Pastor Matthew Woodward.