

## 300 of Gideon's mighty men of war

By Pastor Ron Shires

My excitement continues to grow as I listen to the commitment of people who sense God's leading for this effort in salting the earth and being a light to the world. It is gratifying to hear the numbers grow, but it is not a numbers game. It is about God's people rising up the power of the Holy Spirit and bringing the oppression from powers of darkness to a halt.

In my more recent devotions in the book of Judges I was blessed by the story of Gideon and his three hundred. I sensed God's stirring in my spirit and began to pray for 300 people to walk the streets with us and pray for God's kingdom to come into the lives of the people there. I felt pretty sure that three hundred people on the streets could cover the city in a day. God checked my spirit and directed my attention that the victory was not because of the number, but because of His Spirit's work. It could have been 2,300 or 120. God wanted those who were tired enough of the oppression of the Midianites that they would go to war. They were not even trained warriors. They were just farmers/dads who were tired of the work of their hands and hopes for their lives being stolen by these marauders. All the detail about the battle the Bible gives is that they broke clay jars to let a light shine and blew a trumpet. God sent a spirit of confusion and fear into the Midianite camp and they beat up on each other and then scattered and became easy targets for a mop up operation.

We will be taking power and light with us that is not from our own resource. When we obey God's prompting He will prepare those we pray for, who want to escape the darkness and break free of their chains of fear to step into the light and freedom.

As a point of direction for those who will be walking and praying, it will be important for us to remember not to take on more than the vision God has charged us with. Our focus is on having an effect of salt and light on the entire city. We are tearing down strongholds, and exposing the deceptions of sin over the lives of our community. We don't want to get caught up in trying to win someone to Jesus or invite them to church. (I can't believe I just wrote that.) Those things will come later.

Remember the parable of the sower and his seed. What we are doing now is preparing the soil for the seed. Softening it for the plow of the gospel and making less of the ground like roadside, rocky and weedy soil. We will see a harvest of righteousness with human souls (God's image in humanity) being rescued from sin, and we will also see a change in the moral climate of our city as we persist in being salt and light in sacrificial ways.

If someone comes up and asks for prayer, stop and do that. If they come to you and say they want to be saved, lead them to Jesus - by any and all means. Be friendly and greet people as you meet them, but don't stop and talk. We want to redeem the time because we are only going to be out there for about 2.5 -3 hours. With over 140,000 people in Salinas, that's a lot of home to pray blessing over.

Praying in the apartment complexes is a case in point. We can't take the time to walk up to each door, but we want to enter into the area where the 'soul' of that community exists and ruin the intentions of principalities of darkness and bring the kingdom of God in its place. With a team of two or three in the apartments you will all be praying and calling out provision, protection and the fear of the Lord for different addresses at the same time. You don't need for people to hear you, but you are speaking so demons or angels will know you are God's obedient agent spoiling the works of sin. We are willingly following Jesus' orders. Use words of Scripture as they come to your mind - or read them. Repeating the words and will of God is an excellent weapon against the bulwarks of Satan's work.

By the way, God wants us to be salt and light all the time - not just on special occasions. We will probably do this again in the not distant future. Between this time and the next time we can bring God's kingdom to our work, to our neighborhood, to our own families and places where we do business - shopping, getting fuel for our cars - and snacks for us... stuff like that.

Well, I got started and went on and on again. Maybe it will be useful.