**Connect Study—Altar Your Life**

Every great man and woman of God knows how to build altars. In the Old Testament, altars to God were built with stones and wood, and later bronze and gold. Now under the New Covenant, we build spiritual altars by faith. An altar is a place of:

* Worship and prayer
* Sacrifice
* Cleansing and forgiveness
* Warfare
* Covenant

There are many different types of altars mentioned in the Bible e.g. personal altar, family altar, community altar, church altar, altar of peace, intercession, or repentance.

Today we will look at the altar of peace built by Gideon. Judges 6:24 says “And Gideon built an altar to the Lord there and named it Yahweh-Shalom (which means “the Lord is peace”). The altar remains in Ophrah in the land of the clan of Abiezer to this day”. That one altar changed the destiny of the town and eventually the nation.

The nation of Israel did evil in the sight of God, therefore God handed them over to the Midianites for seven years. They were like a swarm of locusts, sweeping in just before harvest and destroying and devouring everything that the Israelite had including crops, cattle, donkeys, etc. Then the Israelites cried out to God and God in turn sent an angel to recruit Gideon. Gideon led an army of 300 men against a formidable enemy with 135,000 warriors and yet he prevailed. The altar of peace was the key to success.

How did Gideon build the altar of peace?

First, he made peace with God.

Gideon was questioning God, ““if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn’t they say, ‘The Lord brought us up out of Egypt’? But now the Lord has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites.” To build an altar, you must believe that God will reward those who diligently seek Him.

2. Acknowledge the presence of God

Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress, a sign of fear and timidity. But when the angel said to him, “Mighty Hero, the Lord is with you…”. Gideon had to begin to see himself and the circumstance through the eye of God. That requires us to have in faith in the promises of God. That’s why it’s so important to read the word of God when we are building our altar.

Peace is not the absence of something (problems, conflicts, challenges, etc) but the presence of someone. Only then will you be assured that the God of peace in you will soon crush Satan under your feet.

3. Bring an offering

The Hebrew word for altar means a place of slaughter or sacrifice. Gideon brought an offering and the fire of God flamed up and consumed all he had brought. We need to bring our lives as a living sacrifice before God.

4. Tear down the old altars and idols

God told Gideon to tear down his father’s altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole standing beside it, and to build in its place an altar to the Lord. There must be a tearing down before a building up. We cannot build an altar on top of a hidden life filled with immorality, lust, perversion, and addictions.

**Discussion questions:**

Put in your own words – what does it mean to build an altar?

Have you ever experienced a period of vicious attacks from the enemy?

Have you have experienced the peace of God (which surpasses all understanding) in the midst of chaos and confusion?

What is still lacking in your life? e.g. bringing your life as a living sacrifice, tearing down altars, seeing yourself and your circumstance through God’s perspective, to build an altar of peace in your family?