



AWCI SERMON *Notes & Announcements*

DATE: August 17th, 2025

SPEAKER: Bishop (Dr.) Vincent Collins

SERMON TITLE: “If You Want to Shift the Atmosphere, Start at the Altar

Visit www.agapeworship.org/resources to access a digital copy or scan the QR Code.

KEY PASSAGE

Judges 6:11–27 (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.” 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.”

INTRODUCTION

- Gideon lived in a time of fear and defeat.
- Every harvest, the Midianites stole Israel’s crops; people hid in caves.
- Even Gideon’s family had altars to false gods.
- When God moved, He didn’t start with a strategy—He started with one man’s obedience.
- Gideon’s act of tearing down the wrong altar and building the right one changed his family, and eventually, the nation.
- **Key Takeaway:** If you want to see change around you, start with change within you.

SERMON POINTS

1. The Altar Is Where Fear Gives Way to Faith

- God doesn’t call you based on where you are, but where He’s taking you.
- **Scriptures:**
 - Judges 6:21–23 – The angel consumes Gideon’s offering; God says, “Peace! Do not be afraid.”
 - 1 Samuel 16:7 – “The Lord does not look at the things people look at... the Lord looks at the heart.”

SERMON POINTS

2. The Altar Is Where Idols Are Torn Down

- Before you deal with outside enemies, address the compromise inside your home.
- **Scriptures:**
 - Hebrews 11:6 – “Without faith it is impossible to please God.”
 - Judges 6:25–26 – God tells Gideon to tear down his father’s altar to Baal and build a proper altar to the Lord.
 - Joshua 24:15 – “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”
 - Matthew 6:24 – “No one can serve two masters...”
 - Galatians 1:10 – “If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

3. The Altar Is Where God’s Power Is Confirmed

- When the altar is right, the atmosphere is ready for God to move.
- **Scriptures:**
 - Judges 7:19–22 – Gideon’s 300 defeat the Midianites; the Lord causes confusion in the enemy camp.
 - Proverbs 3:5–6 – “Trust in the Lord with all your heart...”
 - Romans 10:17 – “Faith comes from hearing the message...”
 - Zechariah 4:6 – “‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty.”

BEYOND THE MESSAGE

- **Make prayer your preparation, not your backup plan.**
 - Too often, we try everything else first and only come to God when we’re desperate. Gideon’s victory started at the altar, not on the battlefield.
- **The altar is where you quiet other voices and hear God’s voice.**
 - If you’re unsure about your next step, bring it to the altar. God welcomes your questions—He’d rather you pause to seek Him than rush ahead without Him.
- **Gideon’s altar moments changed more than himself—they changed his family, his community, and the nation.**
 - The same God who met Gideon in a winepress wants to meet you today. No matter how impossible your battle seems, God’s presence at the altar gives you the clarity, faith, and power you need.

- **The altar prepares you for supernatural results.**
 - If your faith feels low, spend more time hearing from God than listening to fear. That means less news, less gossip, less complaining—and more scripture, worship, and time in His presence.
- When faith rises, expect supernatural results that could never happen in your own strength.

Closing Reflection

- Where is God calling you to rebuild the altar in your life?
- What idols or distractions need to be torn down?
- Are you making prayer your first response or your last resort?
- Will you trust that God's power is confirmed when you start at the altar?

NOTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please note: There are multiple ways to sign up for an event. You can scan the QR code, visit our website, or sign the signup sheet in the foyer under the event registration section.

August 13th -August 27th at 7:00 pm- Wednesday Night Series: The Power of Prayer

Sept. 3rd - Oct. 8th at 7:00 pm: Wednesday Night Bible Study: Blueprint of Faith: The Nehemiah Bible Study!

Sept. 7th - at 1pm-3pm- Next Step Class: All new church members and guests looking to learn more about AWCI are invited to attend.

Sept. 20th - Our next water baptism celebration—scan the QR code and sign up throughout August to take this powerful step of faith! If you'd like to be baptized sooner or in August, just let us know and we'll gladly work with you.



Sept. 20th at 10:00 am-4:00 pm —Annual Church Picnic. More details coming soon.

Oct. 15th-Nov. 19th at Various Dates & Times: Fall Into Fun: Agape's Interest Groups. Scan the QR Code to sign up today. For more information, contact the Christian Education Department.



SPIRITUAL GROWTH & FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES

Sunday School

- Every Sunday at 10:10 am-10:55 am.
- Scan QR Code to Sign Up & receive a digital copy of the Sunday School Book.



Men's Ministry Meeting.

- Every 3rd Saturday, 8:30 AM.
- At Agape Worship Center International
- All men are invited.
- More information: Contact Deacons Teddy Spence or Eureka Washington.

Breakfast For Champions: Weekday Devotion & Prayer

- Monday-Friday at 7 am
- Call In: 717-908-1690 Access Code: 577625

Intercessory Prayer

- Every 1st, 2nd, and 4th Monday at 6:30pm-7:30pm

Virtual Midday Bible Study - Starting Back August 14th, 2025

- Every Thursday at noon
- Call In: (470)869-2200 (US East)
- Meeting ID: 393-678-9202
- Virtual:meetings.ringcentral.com/j/3936789202

CONNECT, GROW, BELONG!

Whether you're a first-time guest or a long-time member, we invite everyone to fill out our Connect Card—just scan the QR code to update your information, share prayer requests, and take your next step, whether that's joining a membership class, signing up for baptism, finding a life group, volunteering, or simply learning more about our church.

