

Arms Raised and Hearts Abandoned

Stand-Alone Sermon

Small Group Notes

Introduction:

Have you ever been to a game, and you were there to support the visiting team instead of the home team? How did having other supporters with you encourage you to cheer for your team?

Have you ever been in a situation where you felt like you were the only one and it was easier to remain silent?

In the sermon, we heard these points that reflect how some of us may feel in these situations:

- Pride keeps our arms tethered down.
- Accountability should feel less like Pharisees policing sin, and more like Aaron and Hur holding up Moses' weary arms.- Josh Howerton

In this session, we are going to see how when we understand who are in the Lord and the call that He has upon our lives to trust in His protection and presence, then we do not have to let pride keep us silent, rather we can live fully surrendered lives that reflect our heart's worship with the help of those around us.

Discuss:

1. Read Exodus 17:8-13

- There is always a battle brewing.
- Those around you are a gift from the One before you.
- No vulnerability shared, no help given. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

Explain: Without warning, the Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. The Amalekites were descended from Esau (Gen. 36:12), and they lived for the most part in Kadesh Barnea. Moses did not hesitate to order Joshua to engage the enemy. The Lord demonstrated his power through the symbolic gesture of Moses his servant. When Moses raised his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. Naturally he grew tired, so some aides placed a stone for him to sit down, while Aaron and Hur each held up a hand of Moses. And the result was a victory over the Amalekites.

Ask:

What daily challenges can make us feel like we're in a battle? What's your typical reaction when you feel under attack?

When you are facing a difficult situation, who or what do you look to for confidence? Why? Has it always been that way, or has it changed for you?

How do you respond when it seems a battle lasts longer than expected? How does having someone like Aaron and Hur in your life help in those moments?

2. Exodus 18:13-18

- You can take the cape off and put your arms up.

Explain: Moses acted not just as a representative for the people to God but he also used his wisdom to serve as a judge when it came to understanding interpretations of the law as people interacted with each other. He had presumably been judging the people regularly already, but a number of complicated cases had presumably continued unjudged because of the difficulty of holding court while on the move. Furthermore, if Moses was giving such a large proportion of his time to judging legal disputes, he could not do much else. This troubled Jethro to see Moses acting in this way and he confronted him about it and offered him counsel in saying that the task was too heavy and that he couldn't do it alone.

Ask:

In what ways did Moses' priorities need to change? What are ways that our priorities can get easily misaligned?

What have you seen is the impact of your life when you try to do it all? What does it communicate to others when you do not let them share in the responsibilities?

What are times that you try to be the "savior" to others that may be causing more harm than good in your relationships?

3. Exodus 18:19-23

- Sharing the weight makes the load lighter.
 - o Not everyone can be a Moses or Joshua, a DL Moody or Billy Graham, but all Christians can be like Aaron and Hur and help hold their hands as they obey God.- Warren Wiersbe
- Jesus held up His arms, so we could lift our arms to Him. (Colossians 2:13-15)

Explain: Jethro did not suggest that Moses discontinue judging, or that he stop serving as a representative of the people's problems to God, or that he leave off being God's spokesperson to teach the people God's decrees and laws. The people surely needed someone "to show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform," and Moses was indeed that person. By Moses sharing the role of judge to others at Jethro's recommendation, this would allow Moses to lead the people in other ways that he was

designed to lead in. Therefore, what started at the battle of the Amalekites, showed Moses his need for accountability and community.

Ask:

Read Galatians 6:2-6. What similar principles do you see apply to what we have discussed so far?

What are ways that you have seen the impact of accountability and community in your life that has helped you to walk through tough seasons? How does knowing you have a responsibility to hold up each other impact how you view your group?

Share with the group an area that you still need them to hold up your arms in today.

Group Prayer Time

- **Local**
 - **Green House Ministries** Pray for wisdom and discernment working with people.
- **National**
 - **Mt Hope Church Rhode Island** Pray for leaders to rise up in the church body.
- **International**
 - **DEAF PEOPLES.** Pray for Southeast Asian Deaf believers, Ace and Dee, who have struggled this year.

Suggested Mission activity: For September, collect supplies for Doors of Hope. Also register at www.newvisionlife.com/serve for Servant Saturday on September 24.