

Gideon – Decline

Small Group Questions



The following questions are intended to start conversations.

Use only the ones your group finds helpful. Explore others as they come up.

- Read **Judges 6:1-13**. What is going on in Israel and why is it happening? How did Gideon understand what was happening? What did he fail to see?
- Although Israel was being pillaged, the deeper issue at play was idolatry—that is, turning away from God and embracing other religious practices. Is this still an issue today? Are there places in our lives where the presenting issue may not be the real issue?
- Compare **Judges 7:1-7** and **7:23-25**. What did God want Israel to understand? Was the calling of reinforcements in step with God’s plan? Why is it so difficult to depend on God?
- Things go sideways after the battle. Gideon takes revenge on several towns (8:13-17) and makes a priestly garment (ephod) that becomes an idol (8:22-27). Despite beginning reasonably well, he ends quite badly. Why did this happen?
- Read **Psalms 92:12-15**. How might we continue to be faithful and ensure we end well?
- Gideon provides a fascinating study of human frailty. At times this is understood as a good thing, as Gideon remains dependent on God. At other times, his frailty leads to arrogance, revenge, and idol worship. How do you understand being frail (weakness)? Have you experienced this as a good thing or a bad thing?
- Just because “Gideon was not perfect does not mean he was discarded completely or vilified. Instead, his story is told candidly and honestly, and recognition of his achievements is encouraged, which places this story under the sign of grace, *promoting a healthy culture of how to talk of leaders with both honesty and loyalty.*” (Hamley) In a culture that struggles with how to remember past (and current) leaders, how does this story help us?
- Read **Hebrews 11:32-34**. Remarkably, Gideon is remembered as a deliverer and man of faith, despite his shortcomings. What does that tell us about God?