

Study Series: Gideon: Your Weakness. God’s Strength.

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Lesson Title: “Lingering Consequences” (pp. 109-122)

Session 8

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The main point of this lesson is: God’s people often deal with consequences left over from a previous generation’s sin but He calls them to reverse the situation with His help.

Focus on this goal: To help adults consider where God might be calling them to begin a new legacy

Key Bible Passage: Judges 6:1-10

Before the Session

1. Enlist a learner to share a brief personal testimony about breaking the bondage of generational sins. (Step 3)

2. Gather note cards and pens/pencils to take to the session. (Step 3)

3. Enlist a learner to prepare a brief overview of the life of Gideon. (Step 4)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

To introduce this session, ask learners if they have ever been driving a familiar road to a destination, only to discover that the road had been closed and a new road had been built. Speculate that the new road provides a more direct path to the destination without some of the potholes and twists and turns. State that in life we often have to “close the roads” our ancestors had used in order to travel a more direct path with God.

Explain that in today’s session, God called the Israelites living in the promised land to reverse many of their ways learned from previous generations and to begin a new legacy.

Step 2. God’s People in Paradise

Call on a volunteer to read Judges 6:1-10. Invite learners to call out descriptive words of how God’s people were living in the promised land. State that it was easy for the Israelites, and it is easy for believers today, to slip into partial obedience.

Read the author’s statement from Day One (p. 110): “Shortsightedness often makes partial obedience appear to be the best, safest, most reasonable choice, but it always leads to hardship, eventually making our lives more difficult than they need to be.” Discuss how Christians may think partial obedience seems to be the path of least resistance but how it can lead to unforeseen and heartbreaking consequences. Share, or invite volunteers to share, a personal testimony of such an experience.

Form the class into three groups and guide learners, as they are comfortable doing so, to share their answers to Day One, activity 1 (p. 110).

Step 3. You Again?

Point out that the Israelites’ problem with the Midianites was nothing new, but was a lingering continuation of the cycle their ancestors had started. Provide brief background information on the Midianites and their history with the Israelites and highlight that God’s instruction to the Israelites to annihilate the Midianites was carried out only partially.

Invite the person enlisted earlier to share a brief testimony about breaking the bondage of generational sins. Direct learners to write their answers to Day Two, activity 1 (p. 112) on a note card. Read Psalm 119:45 and during a time of prayer tell learners to toss that note card into a trash can to illustrate letting go of unhealthy generational sins by focusing on God’s Word.

Step 4. God’s Story, My Story

Read this quote from Day Three (p. 113): “The main message of the entire Bible is God’s redemption of humanity.”

Draw a circle on a dry erase or chalk board depicting the four-part pattern of God’s redemptive story (p. 113). Challenge learners to share examples of God’s redemptive work from both the Old Testament and New Testament. Next, invite learners to share examples of God’s redemptive work in their own lives (Day Three, activity 1, pp. 113-114).

State that the events recorded in the book of Judges falls squarely in the decline and consequences phase of the redemptive cycle, and God called Gideon as a judge to be His voice to the people amid their rampant sin. Call on the person enlisted earlier to summarize Gideon’s role in God’s redemptive work.

Remind learners that God calls each believer today to be His voice in the world.

Step 5. Empowered to Act

State that each believer must rely on God’s Spirit to live out their calling faithfully.

Read this quote (p. 116) from the author: “Apart from His Spirit, these judges could not have functioned with any sort of effectiveness,” and restate it: Apart from His Spirit, we cannot function with any sort of effectiveness. Guide learners to repeat the revised statement in unison.

Assign Day Four activities 1 (p. 116), 2 (p. 117), and 3 (p. 117) to each of the same three groups formed earlier (Step 2). Direct each group to work through their activity, then call on groups to report to the entire class.

Step 6. Turning the Tide

Briefly compare ancient Baalism to today’s humanism and discuss why it is easy for believers to slide into humanistic ideas and practices. Read John 17:14-15.

Invite learners, as they are comfortable doing so, to share their responses to Day Five, activity 1 (p. 119). Challenge learners to brainstorm ways we can avoid slipping into humanism.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Close in prayer, asking God to reveal to each learner where old roads need to be closed and new roads built in relationship to God.

After the Session

Contact individuals who have missed a few sessions and tell them about the study on Gideon. Pray for learners by name during the week.

