

LIFEGROUP NOTES: JUDGES 6-8

As ever, please use (or discard!) these ideas as is most suitable for your group. Don't feel you have to use everything.

Sermon Summary: The story of Gideon shows us how God can take a weak and discouraged person and make of him or her a hero of faith. The path by which Gideon was transformed included

- a personal encounter with God
- standing for God in front of his family and neighbours
- being equipped by the Holy Spirit
- being given assurance that God really would grant him the promised victory
- learning to depend totally on God for the battle.

And so the victory was won. Yet Gideon was spoiled by success, and soon led the Israelites back into trouble. His story teaches us not only how God may raise us from defeat into victory, but also how easily we may fall from victory into defeat if pride captures our hearts.

FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Sum up Israel's situation described in 6:1-6. Why did God give them a replay of their history in 6:7-10? To what extent can you identify with these patterns of behaviour in your own experience? What causes us to forget God's goodness to us in the past? In which areas of your life today do you need to take God's commandments and promises more seriously?
2. Consider Gideon's reluctance to do as God told him (6:11-15) - and our own reluctance too, especially in the area of public witness. How did God deal with Gideon's fears (6:14,16,23,34,36-37,39)? Discuss your own fears in serving God, and how God's promises in Scripture might answer them.
3. Why does God sometimes prefer our resources to be small (7:2)? How does the battle-plan underline this principle (7:16-22)? How do you react to God's ways of working when you look at a) your personal circumstances; b) CBC's mission to reach our neighbourhood with the gospel?
4. After the victory, what was wrong with what the Israelites proposed (8:22)? How did Gideon resist them (8:23) - and how did he then lose his way (8:24-27)? What were the tragic consequences (8:27,33-35)? Consider what leads us to make the same mistakes repeatedly. How can the cycle be broken? How can we avoid the danger of pride when we are enjoying a measure of success? How can we show that for us, God is truly our King (cf.8:23)? Compare Philippians 2:5-11.

Responding in Prayer

- To what extent have you allowed the promise of God's adequacy to feed into your life? Pray God's promises over situations where you most need them.

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