

{un} Faithful - 1
Week of February 5, 2017
Bay Park Life Groups – Participant’s Guide

There are few books in the Bible that can compare to Judges for colour and intrigue. Fans of historical romance, military history, soap operas, conspiracy theories, spy novels, swashbuckling adventure, or political trickery will find it all here in the book of Judges. Judges is the story of a deteriorating nation and it serves as a sober warning against decline in our own lives. It highlights a variety of people who are called to become leaders of a nation that is lost in its identity and purpose. Whereas Joshua, the book before Judges, is centred around victory, Judges seems to be mainly concerned with themes of defeat, failure, and disobedience.

As with other Old Testament books, we want to see the broader and deeper message - it is the gospel unfolding in the lives of ordinary people. This book is about the God of mercy and long-suffering, who continually works in and through and for his people, even despite our best attempts to resist His calling. As we explore Judges together over the next several weeks, we hope that underneath the stories of the Israelite’s disobedience you will see the very same grace that is evident in our own lives.

Read Judges 1:1-36

1. List the reasons given (or hinted at) for why the tribes of Israel failed to settle in all the land God had promised them, pushing the Canaanites out.
2. What examples of whole-hearted obedience do verses 12-16 show us?
3. How does Judges chapter 1 show us the difference between common sense and faithful obedience? Can you think of times in your life you have been brave because of your faith? When do you find it hardest to follow God’s commands instead of your own “common sense”? Why?

Read Judges 2:1-3

4. How does God assess the reasons for the Israelites’ failure to drive out the Canaanites? In verse 2, what does He say was the real purpose of this campaign?
5. Like the Israelites, we sometimes make excuses for why we can’t do certain things. How have we been unwilling to act in the following areas:
 - a) Forgiveness
 - b) Sharing the gospel
 - c) Being tempted

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13.

6. This verse is meant to be a reminder that despite how difficult or overwhelming life may be, God is still gracious and loving. Spend some time with your Life Group reflecting on the hope found in this verse and how we can transform those “I will not” times in our lives to “in God’s strength I will” times.