

{un}faithful - 6
Week of March 12, 2017
Bay Park Life Groups –Participant’s Guide

Like the judges before him, Jephthah is full of surprises. He’s the embarrassing result of his dad’s affair with a prostitute (11:1). His half-brothers drove him away to ensure he had no part of their inheritance, only to call on him to be their leader when trouble came their way (11:4-11). Jephthah starts out as a relatively godly leader who:

- Declared God’s faithfulness to the people (11:15-28)
- Pointed to God as the ultimate Judge (11:27)
- Was used by God as an effective military leader (11:29-33).

But like all the judges before, Jephthah is also deeply flawed and unfaithful. He makes a rash vow revealing a heart that truly doesn’t know God. Though he himself knows what it’s like to be rejected, he perpetuated the sin by rejecting and killing some of his own people (12:1-6). Jephthah and his contemporaries remind us that it’s possible to know of God without really knowing God. That it’s so easy to become self-righteous in our own eyes, but far from righteous in God’s eyes.

Jephthah’s story is timely given our individualistic culture that worships at the alter of “me, myself and I.” The story is also timely because it clearly reminds us of God’s faithfulness and righteousness despite our unfaithfulness and self-righteousness – aka unrighteousness.

Enjoy your time in study together. Note - there’s a map at the end of the study showing each judge’s location as well as some of the cities and nations mentioned in Judges.

Read Judges 10:6-16

1. In what ways is Israel’s predicament the same as in the past? In what ways is it different? What does this teach us?
2. Having abandoned God, God turns a deaf ear to their cry for help by telling them to “go cry out to the gods you have chosen.” How does this square up with God’s love for his people?
3. What’s the difference between Israel’s first cry for help (10:10) and their second (10:15-16)? What does this teach us when we’re dealing with sin in our lives?

Read Judges 11:12-28

4. The Ammonite king accused the Israelites of stealing their land. Jephthah resorted to diplomacy before resorting to war. In light of the accusations, how convincing were Jephthah’s arguments (11:14-27)?

Read Judges 11:29-40

5. Why do you think Jephthah made the vow? Why did he keep it?

6. What lessons can we learn from Jephthah's rash vow? What other passages of scripture can you link to these lessons?

7. What's your one take away from Judges 10-12 and how can we pray for you in regard to it?

The Judges of Israel

Gideon	Major Judges
Tola	Other Judges
○	City
•	City (uncertain)
▲	Mountain Peak

