

**{un}faithful**  
**Week of February 12, 2017**  
**Bay Park Life Groups – Leader’s Guide**

For many, heading to post-secondary isn’t just a test of their academic abilities but of their ability to survive on their own. In the first weeks, or even days, of arriving on campus, it is clear which students’ parents have prepared them to live independently and which ones haven’t. Even simple tasks like cooking, cleaning, and doing laundry need to be taught. Likewise, setting the foundation for spiritual growth and development – having a strong devotional routine, a consistent prayer life, living with integrity and resisting temptation – all start in the home. Judges 2:6-3:6 gives us a glimpse into what happens when one generation fails to properly instruct the next generation.

**Read Judges 2:6-10**

1. These verses serve as a flashback to when Joshua was still leading the Israelites. It didn’t take long for the Israelites to turn away from solely worshipping God. Why do you think they followed God while Joshua and the elders were alive, but then turned away after they died?

*It is much easier to serve God when some strong leaders such as parents or pastors or youth leaders have a big influence on our life. But many times this is just outward obedience. We serve God because we are concerned with what that person will think or are scared that we will be rebuked or lose their respect if we don’t serve God. This is not true service to God at all. This is not an independent relationship with Him. A true relationship with God will go on no matter where we are or who is around us.*

2. Compare Judges 2:7 with 2:10-11. Within a generation, Israel had gone from being people who “served the Lord” to people who “served the Baals”. There is no automatic passing of faith from one generation to the next, from parents to children. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 20-25. What do we need to do to pass our faith on to the next generation?

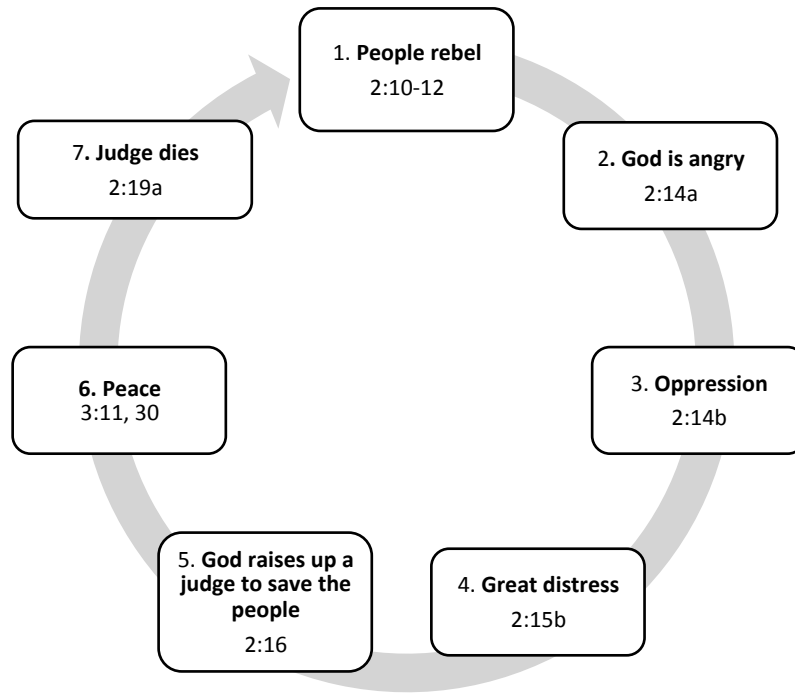
*Love God whole-heartedly – to have these commandments on our hearts (verses 5 and 6). We must not be hypocritical or inconsistent in our behaviour and must openly repent when we are.*

*Apply and reflect on the gospel practically, not only academically. Verse 7 refers to the routine of daily life. Passing on truth is not about giving lectures, but about showing how God relates to real, daily living, influencing our decisions, reactions and priorities.*

*We are to give regular, personal testimony to the difference God has made, and is making, to us (verse 20-25). Our faith needs to clearly be a personal, living thing.*

**Read Judges 2:10-21**

3. Verses 10-21 illustrate a cycle that the Israelites found themselves in. This cycle repeats itself a few times in Judges. Sum up each phase in a few words (see example in phase 6).



### Read Judges 2:20-3:6

4. According to this section, what are two reasons God did not drive out Israel's enemies? Compare this passage with Hebrews 12:6-11. Share a time in your life where "unpleasant discipline" eventually led to something more fruitful.

*We see (in 2:19) that despite all God's judges and deliverers, the heart of the nation remained unchanged. God says that "therefore" he will not do what he had promised to do—namely, "drive out" the enemies. Since the people had violated their side of the agreement, God is no longer bound to his. But here we see again something of the "unconditionality" yet "conditionality" of God's promises. Though he does not drive out the Canaanites, he now uses their presence to accomplish two things for Israel. First, he leaves the enemies there "to test" Israel (2:22; 3:4). Now, a test is both a negative and a positive, a judgment and a mercy. Tests can be failed, of course, and thus they can remove us completely. But tests also challenge us. They force us to learn and study and pull ourselves together and rise up to meet them. In this way, the presence of the enemy often created difficulties that forced the Israelites to think about their relationship to God and the wisdom of his ways. Secondly, he says that the enemies are there "only to teach warfare" (3:2).*

5. The Israelites' failure, as a group, to take all of Canaan resulted from their failure, as individuals, to give God exclusive lordship over their whole lives. A good way to determine if Christ is Lord of an area of your life is to ask two questions: a) am I willing to do whatever God says about this area? b) am I willing to accept whatever God sends in this area? Reflect and share about some areas in your life where you are not passing these tests. What is truly controlling you in that area?