

From Fear to Faith

Overcoming fear

Ice Breaker: Where do you go, what do you do, to get away from it all?

God Is Fearless (Read Judges 6:1, 2; 11-16)

1. Gideon was a man who seemed to feel that God had forgotten him. Have you ever experienced a time when you thought God had forgotten you?
2. Why is the angels' greeting so surprising (v. 12)? Evidently Gideon believed in God, so what was his problem? What excuses did he give? (Ever felt like Gideon?)
3. Discuss the tension between focusing on our circumstances and remembering the resources God makes available to us. What actions can you take to help keep God's perspective?
4. Share any fears that you might be facing in life.
5. What's the greatest encouragement you get from these verses? How can we use them to encourage one another?

Signs: Good or Bad? (Read 6:17-24; 36-38; 39-40)

1. Even after God promised to be with Gideon, he wanted a sign from God. Are signs good or bad . . . How can they be helpful? When are they harmful, e.g. Matthew 16:1-4?

Faith, Obedience and Victory (Read 7:16-22)

1. What does this incident tell us about God?

2. What were the keys to Gideon's success?

3. Which weakness of yours does this story prompt you to see differently today?

Wrap up:

- Is there a step of obedience we can take to our faithful God today?

- What non-believer do you know who could use a word of hope or encouragement?

LIFE Groups

Providing an environment to nurture caring relationships and spiritual growth.

- L** ♦ Learn..... applying Biblical truth for everyday living
- I** ♦ Invite.....welcoming others to our fellowship
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From Depression to Hope

***Believers are not immune to depression but God can lead us through depression to hope**

Ice Breaker: Which is your most favorite season of the year? Least favorite?

READ 1 Kings 18:36-40; 19:1-16

Anyone Can Experience Depression (reread 19:1-5a)

1. Have you ever become depressed . . . what was it like?
2. What possible reasons might Christians have for not wanting to admit they are depressed?
3. Is anyone presently experiencing depression?

Realize That Depression Requires Care (reread 19:5b-8)

1. How do physical and emotional exhaustion affect your spiritual life? (How did exhaustion contribute to Elijah's depression?)
2. What do these verses mean to you regarding depression? (How did God care for Elijah?) In helping ourselves? Others?

God's Presence Gives Encouragement (reread 19:9b-13a)

1. Based on his response to God's question, how would you describe Elijah's state of mind?

2. What can distract us and keep us from hearing God when he speaks to us? How do you sense God's presence?
3. Is there any action you can take to find God and draw encouragement when we feel alone and discouraged? (Or do you have to wait for God to call you out of your "cave"?)

Serving God Builds Hope (God isn't finished with you yet) reread 19:15-16)

1. List the instructions God gave to Elijah.
2. Discuss how serving God builds hope.

Wrap up:

- Who would like to be prayed for today? How/why?
- What non-believer do you sense God would have you contact this week?

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From Loneliness to Fellowship

What can I do about my feelings of loneliness?

Ice Breaker: Have you ever visited a cave? What was it like?

Realize Life Can Become Lonely (Read 1 Samuel 19:1-2; 22:1-5)

1. David was battling loneliness because he was a fugitive trying to escape from King Saul. Four hundred men were hiding with David. How is it possible to be surrounded by people, busy with life and yet still be lonely?
2. What are some of the causes of loneliness in our lives? Can you share about a time when you felt particularly lonely?
3. Do you think our business sometimes contributes to feelings of loneliness? How?

God Hears And Cares (Read Psalm 142:1-6)

[By the heading this Psalm was written while David was in a cave, perhaps referring to 1 Sam. 22.]

1. Although David was extremely distressed, what hope did he possess? How does David express it . . . how would you describe David's "fellowship" with God?
2. The Hebrew noun "compliant" in verse 2 conveys the idea of "my troubled thought". How do you feel about sharing your "true feelings" with God? (see Matthew 11:28; 1 Peter 5:7)
What drawbacks do you see in praying only during times of trouble?

Incline Yourself To the Support Of God And His People (Read Psalm 142:7)

1. David knew God would help him and promised that he would tell others about what God had done for him. What does that tell us about faith? Discuss the values in sharing about God's goodness and care or how He is working in your life with others.
2. Sometimes we can be used by God to help a friend or someone who is lonely just by being a good listener. Who has served as a "good listener" to you and why? How did it help to "talk it out" with them?
3. How does this help us better understand the meaning of Christian "fellowship"?
4. How might this lesson be applied to demonstrating love to a non-believer?

Wrap up:

- How can God use you to reach out to someone who might be lonely this week?
- Ask God to reveal someone you can invite to join our small group.

Special Prayer: How can we pray for one another today?

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From Failure to Purpose

How can I know that failure is not final?

Ice Breaker: What is one thing you failed at the first time you tried but then later accomplished?
(e.g. riding a bike, swimming, tying shoes, etc.)]

Everyone Fails Sometimes (Read John 13:36-38; 18:15-18, 25-27)

1. How would you describe Peter? (Compare this account of Peter and his actions in the garden, 18:10)
2. Why do you think Peter denied Jesus? If you were there what would you have done on Jesus' behalf?
3. What feelings must Peter have had after the rooster crowed? What do you suppose Peter did at that point? *Have you felt like Peter?
4. How does the fear of failure affect you in your everyday life? Or how do you explain the ups and downs in your own spiritual life?
5. How does this story of Peter humble and/or encourage you?

Failures Can Open New Opportunities (John 21:14-17; Acts 2:14, 37-41)

6. It is a serious sin to disown Christ yet, how would you explain what Jesus is doing in John 21:14-17?

7. How should we respond to Christians who make mistakes?

8. Name some other Biblical characters God used although they had failed, e.g. David?

9. "Some failures are too big to overcome." Based on today's lesson how can we be encouraged to move beyond failure?

10. How might this lesson be used in witnessing to a non-believer?

Wrap up:

- Is there a friend who has failed and needs to be encouraged to become active in serving God again?

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