

Life Group Guide: Unstuck – Part 4 “Gideon and Giddy Up”

Based on Judges 7

Overview

This week's sermon continued the series on Gideon, picking up in Judges 7. Pastor Chris walked through how God systematically reduced Gideon's army from 32,000 to 300 men, not out of cruelty, but to make one thing unmistakably clear: the victory belongs to the Lord. Through the story of Gideon's unlikely triumph, we were challenged to examine where we place our trust, how well we see beyond ourselves, and whether we believe God can anoint ordinary, weak things to accomplish extraordinary purposes.

Key Takeaways

1. **God will sometimes reduce what you are trusting in so that you will trust him more.** When circumstances strip away our supporting structures, God is often positioning us to rely fully on him.
 2. **Those who are with you in one season are not always meant to come with you into the next one.** People falling away does not disqualify you from your calling. Keep your eyes on Jesus and keep moving forward.
 3. **Your capacity to serve Jesus is directly correlated to your willingness to see beyond yourself.** The 300 men who lapped water like dogs could nourish themselves while keeping their eyes on the horizon. Receiving from God and giving to others are not opposites.
 4. **Divine discernment starts with a scripturally aligned heart.** Like David with Goliath, seeing situations clearly requires being deeply rooted in God's word.
 5. **Jesus anoints the unremarkable to shatter what the world deems powerful.** Trumpets, empty pitchers, and torches defeated a vast army. A shepherd's staff parted a sea. God delights in using ordinary things surrendered to him.
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Discussion Questions

Opening Question

Take a few minutes to get the conversation started. There are no wrong answers here.

- When you were a child, what was something ordinary you owned that you treated like it was special or powerful? What made it feel that way?
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Section 1: Trusting God When Things Are Reduced

Reference: Judges 7:2-3 -- God tells Gideon the army is too large and instructs him to send the fearful home. 22,000 men leave.

1. Pastor Chris said, "There are times in your life where God needs you to be reminded that you are where you are because of the grace of God and nothing else." Can you think of a time when God stripped something away -- a relationship, a job, a plan -- that you later recognized as him drawing you to depend on him more fully? What did that feel like in the moment versus in hindsight?
 2. He referenced Solomon as someone who received great blessing but gradually forgot the one who gave it. What are some practical habits or rhythms that help you stay grateful and God-focused even during seasons of blessing?
 3. When 22,000 men walked away, Gideon still had 10,000. Then God said it was still too many. Have you ever had a moment where God kept reducing your resources or support, and you had to decide whether you would keep trusting him? How did you respond?
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Section 2: When People Leave

Reference: Judges 7:3 -- The fearful are sent home. Gideon watches more than two-thirds of his army walk away.

4. Pastor Chris said, "Sometimes those who are with you in one season are not meant to come with you into the next one." How have you experienced this in your own life -- in friendships, ministry, or family? How did you process it?
5. He challenged the group not to use the absence of others as a reason to stay stuck. Is there an area of your life right now where you have been waiting for someone else to be present before you take a next step? What would it look like to take one shaky step forward anyway?
6. What does it look like practically to keep your eyes on Jesus when people you expected to walk alongside you are no longer there?

Section 3: Eyes Open While Being Nourished

Reference: Judges 7:4-8 -- God tests the men at the water. The 300 who lap water while keeping their eyes up are chosen.

7. Pastor Chris illustrated the water test this way: the 300 could receive nourishment while keeping their eyes on the horizon, while the others buried themselves in the moment. On a scale of one to ten, how would you honestly rate your current ability to receive from God while also staying aware of the needs of people around you? What pulls you toward one end or the other?
 8. He gave several practical examples -- noticing someone who needs prayer at church, recognizing a neighbor who needs community, seeing a coworker who needs Jesus. Which of those resonates most with your daily life? What is one specific thing you could do this week to keep your eyes open in that space?
 9. Pastor Chris said, "Culture doesn't need to be tweaked a little bit. Culture needs to be turned upside down." Do you agree or disagree? How does that statement shape the way you think about your role in your workplace, school, neighborhood, or family?
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Section 4: God Anoints the Unremarkable

Reference: Judges 7:16-22 -- Gideon's 300 men use trumpets, empty pitchers, and torches to defeat a vast army.

10. The weapons Gideon's men carried -- trumpets, pitchers, torches -- were not weapons at all by military standards. Pastor Chris said, "When you bring your weakness to the Lord, when his hand actually begins to get in your hand, what is weak and what is ordinary suddenly becomes very anointed and very powerful." What is the ordinary thing in your hand right now -- a skill, a relationship, a platform, a job -- that you have perhaps underestimated because it does not seem impressive?
 11. He referenced Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 4, where God asked, "What is that in your hand?" and Moses answered, "A rod." The rod only became extraordinary after Moses threw it down and God touched it. What does it look like for you to "throw down" what is in your hand -- to surrender it fully to God rather than holding it on your own terms?
 12. Pastor Chris said, "God doesn't need a church of 50,000 to turn the city upside down. God just needs some people who say, we're not all that in a bag of chips, but we know the one who lives in our midst." How does this reshape the way you think about what your group, your family, or your church is capable of?
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Closing Reflection Question

Pastor Chris closed with this challenge: God confirms his presence and direction as you walk, not before you walk. He said, "Some of you need to get unstuck. Take one scared step at a time and keep going."

- What is one scared step you sense God is calling you to take this week? Share it with the group so they can pray for you and follow up with you.
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Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to put into practice before your group meets again.

- **Audit your trust.** Spend 10 to 15 minutes in prayer this week asking God to show you anything you have been trusting in more than him -- a relationship, a financial safety net, your own abilities, another person's approval. Confess it and ask him to reorient your heart.
 - **Keep your eyes open.** Choose one environment you are in regularly -- your workplace, school, neighborhood, or church -- and intentionally look for one person who needs encouragement, prayer, or a conversation about Jesus. Take a step toward that person this week.
 - **Throw it down.** Identify something ordinary in your hand -- a talent, a resource, a relationship, a role -- and spend time in prayer surrendering it fully to God. Ask him what he wants to do with it when it is in his hands rather than yours.
 - **Take one scared step.** Name the next step you have been avoiding out of fear or discouragement. Write it down. Tell someone in your group. Then take it before you meet again.
 - **Stay in the word.** Pastor Chris emphasized that divine discernment starts with a scripturally aligned heart. Commit to reading one chapter of scripture each day this week and ask God to show you something about his character as you read.
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Suggested Closing Prayer

Close your time together by praying specifically for each person's "one scared step." Ask God to confirm his presence as each person walks forward, to anoint what feels ordinary in their hands, and to keep their eyes open to the needs of people around them. Thank him that he meets people right where they are -- even in a winepress.