

SESSION ONE

Before the Session

1. Preview the video for session 1.
2. Consider procuring chalk, masking tape, string, or some other material for the end of the session. If you are in a place where you can, mark a circle on the floor or in some other way symbolically enact the prayer Priscilla used to close the session.
3. Read the Introduction (p. 5) and About the Author (p. 4). Underline a few key phrases as a reminder for step 2 of During the Session.
4. Set out the following: cell phone, laptop, book, map, child's toy, video.

During the Session

1. What memories do you have centered around Gideon? Have you studied him and his story? What do you associate with Gideon?
2. Discuss the theme of the study: our weaknesses, God's strength. Introduce the study using the phrases you underlined in the Introduction and About the Author.
3. Direct members to pages 6-7 for the session 1 viewer guide. Show session 1 [56:39].
4. If time permits, ask what stood out in the video. What did they learn about Gideon? How do they see Gideon's story impacting their own?
5. Explain that each week will consist of five days of homework. Encourage members to complete all the work.
6. Share prayer requests. Pray for your participants. Pray for their requests and that they will be challenged by studying Gideon.

SESSION TWO

Before the Session

1. Preview the video for session 2.
2. Complete week 1 daily study and note items to discuss in group.

During the Session

1. Welcome participants as they enter. Offer snacks or drinks, if available.
2. Don't force anyone to share, but gently remind participants this is a safe environment for sharing.
3. Ask what hashtag statements they jotted down during the week.
4. Direct members to pages 38-39 for the session 2 viewer guide. Show session 2 [40:26].
5. For group discussion, choose from the following questions:

Day 1: God's People in Paradise

- How many Bible chapters tell Gideon's story?
- In which book of the Bible are these chapters found?
- What orders had God given the Israelites for settling the land (p. 11)?
- What "iron chariots" of intimidation keep believers from moving forward in complete obedience to God today (p. 12)?
- How do you see the Deliverance Principle impacting your life (question p. 12 and Digging Deeper I)?
- What comforts or perceived sense of security would you have to abandon to fully obey God's instructions (p. 13)?

Day 2: You Again?

- Have you experienced a problem that was an extension of a difficulty someone didn't fully conquer in the past (p. 16)?
- How do you respond to the statement: today's difficulties are often a result of yesterday's disobedience (p. 19)?
- What, if any, significance do you attach to the fact that the number of Midianites left alive in Moses day equals the number of soldiers in Gideon's original army (p. 20)?

Day 3: God's Story, My Story

- Describe the cycle of redemption in your own words (p. 24).
- What adjectives would you use to describe the state of the Israelites during the stages of decline and consequence (p. 24)?
- What does Judges 2:18 reveal about the heart of God for His people, even when they're suffering the consequences of their sin (p. 25)?
- What realm of your life do you think God wants you to concentrate on while doing this study (p. 26)?

Day 4: Empowered to Act

- Review the hand signs: "Judges were people who were ...
 1. called by God (hands making a megaphone)
 2. empowered by God (arms out, flexing bicep muscles)
 3. to unify the people of God (hands in front, with fingers interlaced, turned toward yourself)
 4. so they could stand against the enemy of God (fingers interlaced, turned out to face away from yourself)."
- What connections do you see between the judges' role in the Old Testament and the role of modern believers (p. 30)?
- How do you think the church fares today in being one body of believers (p. 30)?
- How can we remain true to biblical beliefs and still be unified in the body of Christ today? What do you think we must not do?
- What four attributes did you identify as necessary to maintain harmony among believers (p. 31)?

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Day 5: Turning the Tide

- What were two primary reasons Israel was faltering (p. 35)?
 - Which reason do you think has been the most central to moral decline in our day (p. 35)?
 - How can you creatively share the truth of God with younger people (p. 36)?
 - How can you deliberately position yourself to learn (p. 36)?
 - What similarities did you identify between ancient Baalism and modern humanism (p. 37)?
3. Close by asking for prayer requests and praying for group members. Encourage group members to meet with God daily through their study this week.

SESSION THREE

Before the Session

1. Preview the video for session 3.
2. Complete week 2 daily study and note items to discuss in group.

During the Session

1. Welcome participants as they enter. Offer snacks or drinks, if available.
2. Ask what hashtag statements they jotted down during the week.
3. Direct members to pages 66-67 for the session 3 viewer guide. Play the session video [39:23].
4. For group discussion, choose from the following questions:

Day 1: Commissioning Gideon

- What summary idea do you take from Ephesians 1:18-19?
- What expectations do you think believers have of how God reveals Himself?
- How have these expectations been formed?
- How might these beliefs keep people from recognizing a God encounter in their lives?

Day 2: Above Ground Observations

- God used Gideon's everyday task of threshing in his calling and life task. How do you see God possibly using one or more of your daily tasks in the calling He has for your life?
- What do your routine tasks say to you about God's faithfulness?

Day 3: Overlooking the Obvious

- What questions have you had for God during periods of difficulty?

- What insights did you find in the Scriptures you chose to look up on page 53 (from Mic. 6:8, 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:18, Eph. 6:6, Matt. 22:37-38)?
- Why do you think we so often fail to connect what we know God has done previously with facing our present situations (p. 53)?
- How do you see in Gideon's story hints of our tendency to stress our own logic over God's truth (p. 54)?

Day 4: Who Do You Think You Are?

- How would you explain the hashtag statement that behavior does not determine identity (p. 56)?
- Why do you think it is critical for believers to understand their identity before moving forward into their destiny (p. 57)?
- How have you seen an incorrect or malformed spiritual identity hamper someone's spiritual success (p. 57)?
- Which of the pairs of terms on page 57 best describe a disparity you've dealt with between your self-perception and a biblical perception of who you are in Christ. Why did you choose that pair?
- How do you most often deal with what God says about you (p. 58)?
- What would receiving, believing, and walking in what God says about you do in your life? What would change about the next twenty-four hours if you believed what God said (p. 59)?

Day 5: Gideon's Assignment

- Why do you think Gideon beginning his work by destroying the altar of Baal was critical to Israel's overarching success (p. 61)?
- In Genesis 18:19, what did God tell Abraham to concentrate on prior to experiencing the fulfillment of His promises (p. 62)?
- In what ways have you felt like Gideon when he tore down his family altar by night (p. 63)?

SESSION FOUR

Before the Session

1. Preview the video for session 4.
2. Complete week 3 daily study and note items to discuss in group. Pay special attention to group discussion questions.
3. Contact any members needing encouragement.

During the Session

1. Welcome participants as they enter. Offer snacks or drinks, if available.
2. Invite members to share hashtag statements from this week.

3. Direct members to pages 92-93 for the session 4 viewer guide. Play the session video [40:39].
4. For group discussion, choose from the following questions:

Day 1: The Key to Our Strength

- When you focus on your weaknesses, what effect does this have on your emotions, self-image, confidence, and ability to move forward (p. 70)?
- How do you usually deal with a situation when you feel outmatched (p. 72)?
- What would redirecting your focus away from your weaknesses look like in practical terms for you (p. 73)?
- What strategic things do you think believers can do to redirect their attention off themselves and onto the Lord (p. 73)?

Day 2: Less Is More

- On some occasions we have all credited ourselves, or others, with something God did. What do you think contributes to such oversight (p. 74)?
- In what ways have you seen misdirected credit lead to misplaced trust or unhealthy desires and choices in your life or the life of someone else (p. 75)?
- Discuss the statement in the margin of page 76: “Humility is not thinking unkindly about oneself. It’s being willing to set oneself aside for a more important purpose.” Ask: How might we err on the side of pride when we feel overly competent or the side of self-focus when we feel incompetent?
- Invite members to share from page 76 words that contribute to pride and words that stimulate humility in their lives? What lessons can we draw from the exercise?
- What practical strategies can you put in place to foster humility (p. 76)?

Day 3: Double Trouble

- Has your confidence in your ability and in God been enhanced as you’ve moved forward with less? How (p. 80)?
- Has the Lord been stripping anything from your life that may have been dampening your spiritual sensitivity, distracting you from God’s purposes, or heightening your fleshly desires and tendencies (p. 81)?

Day 4: Letting Go

- How do you see the “bigger is better” mentality emphasized in your spheres of influence? How has this pressure affected you? Your family (p. 82)?

- If you had to pinpoint an area of your life to label “the 300”—an area where you feel depleted or deficient—what category(s) would it fall into (p. 83)?
- How do any of the thoughts on page 84 relate to your experience and difficulty in letting go?

Day 5: The Unseen Supply

- What conclusions do you draw from the similarities and differences between the armor of God passage in Ephesians 6:10-17 and Gideon’s situation (p. 89)?
- If you had to pinpoint something that most often distracts you from remembering and using your unseen supply, what would it be (p. 91)?

SESSION FIVE

Before the Session

1. Preview the video for session 5.
2. Complete week 4 daily study and note items to discuss in group. Pay special attention to group discussion questions.
3. Contact any members needing encouragement.

During the Session

1. Welcome participants as they enter. Offer snacks or drinks.
2. Invite members to share hashtag statements they have written or seen from others this week.
3. Direct members to pages 118-119 for the session 5 viewer guide. Play the session video [44:33].
4. For group discussion, choose from the following questions:

Day 1: The God of Patience

- So far, what circumstances can you recall from the story of Gideon that reveal God’s patience (p. 95)?
- While you’ve been in this study, how have you seen the long-suffering of God demonstrated to you (p. 96)?
- Based on the fact that God initiated the conversation that sent Gideon to eavesdrop on the Midianite camp, what can you infer about how God felt about Gideon’s need for reassurance (p. 97)?

Day 2: Gideon’s Gifts

- Which is more difficult for you: offering your gifts back to the Lord, offering your desires to the Lord, trusting Him with when your gifts are used, or trusting Him with how your gifts are used (p. 100)?

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- What do you sense God asking you to do in this season of your life as you go through this study? What gifts has He given you to accomplish this task (p. 101)?
- What practical things could you do to “prepare” the gifts that the Lord has given you (102)?
- Which part of this process is hardest for you: having the patience to faithfully prepare your gift or having the courage to present your gift to God (p. 102)?

Day 3: The Fleece, The Dew, and the Threshing Floor

- Are you easily satisfied with the confirmation God gives you or do you always need more (p. 106)?
- Why do you think God became angry with Moses in Exodus 4:1-14 but did not express anger to Gideon (p. 107)?
- What are the differences between seeking confirmation from God out of caution and seeking it because of doubt and disbelief (p. 107)?

Day 4: The “Dew” and the “Do” of Heaven

- How should the grace and favor bestowed on believers refresh us and make us different than the culture around us (p. 110)?
- What are three distinct ways you are different from the world around you (p. 110)?
- Are there any areas of your life that you no longer talk to God about because you feel like “that’s just the way things are”? If so, what areas are they (p. 112)?

Day 5: Faith Squared

- How might the instruction to go listen to the talk in the Midianite camp underscore the patience and kindness of God even more than the other encouragements He granted Gideon (p. 114)?
- How can our group strategize to walk together in accountability long after this study is over, to remind each another of what God has accomplished (p. 115)?

SESSION SIX

Before the Session

1. Preview the video for session 6.
2. Complete week 5 daily study and note items to discuss in group. Pay special attention to group discussion questions.
3. Contact any members needing encouragement.

During the Session

1. Welcome participants as they enter.

2. Invite members to share hashtag statements they have written or seen from others this week.
3. Direct members to pages 146-147 for the session 6 viewer guide. Play the session video [44:52].
4. For group discussion, choose from the following questions:

Day 1: Unusual Weapons

- From the exercise on page 123, ask if anyone would be willing to share a difficult scenario facing her right now, her natural response, and a Holy Spirit–revealed divine weapon God has led her to use.
- What “logic” does the enemy typically use against you to disguise the spiritual nature of your struggles and to mask his role in the middle of them (p. 124)?
- How can some of the weaknesses in your life be a weapon for your warfare through which the power of Christ is most clearly seen (p. 125)?

Day 2: Finishing Well

- Might you ever be inclined to pacify your insecurity instead of staying inside the boundaries set up by God? If so, why do you feel the need to do this (p. 128)?

Day 3: Friendly Fire

- Recall the last time you were on the receiving end of a dose of criticism. What effect did it have on you (p. 131)?
- What tempts you to make critical comments or causes you to sometimes find it difficult to affirm another person (p. 131)?
- How have you seen feeling special and exceptional play into a critical nature (p. 133)?

Day 4: Weary, Yet Pursuing

- How have you responded to people or things that have not given you what you hoped they would? How was your response similar or dissimilar to Gideon’s response (p. 139)?
- What does waiting on the Lord look like practically in your life (p. 139)?

Day 5: The Domino Effect

- Have any of your divine assignments taken a turn toward personal interests? If so, what circumstances have caused you to change your focus (p. 142)?
- How do you think our confidence and success become the enemy of our fellowship with God (p. 144)?
- How is your relationship with God affected when you feel weak and uncertain about yourself or a task? How is it affected when you are confident and secure (p. 145)?

SESSION SEVEN

Before the Session

1. Preview the video for session 7.
2. Complete week 6 daily study and note items to discuss in group. Pay special attention to group discussion questions.
3. Contact any members needing encouragement.

During the Session

1. Welcome participants as they enter.
2. Invite members to share hashtag statements they have written or seen from others this week.
3. Play the session video [27:15].
4. For group discussion, choose from the following questions:

Day 1: No Other Gods

- What insights did you gather from the interview questions on page 150?
- How did you define the word “idol” (p. 150)?
- Discuss this statement from the video message: “We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience.” How does this relate to your definition of an idol (p. 152)?

Day 2: Good to Bad, Bad to Worse

- Review the case studies on page 155-156. In what way would you say these things have become “rulers” in these women’s lives?
- Have the two good things you chose from your interview begun to assume an illegitimate role of authority in your life? If so, how (p. 156)?
- What does the progression in Israel from calf worship to full-grown cow worship suggest to you about the potential of idolatry in our own lives (p. 158)?

Day 3: Feeling Fine

- In what ways can achievement, prosperity, and success contribute to a misdirection of loyalty (p. 161)?
- How does impatience play a role in idolatry for modern-day believers (p. 161)?
- Why was it so important that Yahweh select the king for the people of Israel (p. 162)?

Day 4: The Problem with Me

- What positives and negatives of your response to admiration did you identify (p. 166)?

- What are some practical ways you can authentically live out Psalm 115:1 (p. 167)?
- From the four questions/indicators of self-idolatry on page 167, which resonates most with you and why?

Day 5: Convenient Christianity

- In what ways do we seek to make Christianity fit our terms (p. 172)?
- What might have been Gideon's intentions when constructing the ephod in Ophrah (p. 173)?
- What were the results of Gideon's ephod (p. 174)?
- What are some of the modern consequences you've seen of convenient Christianity (p. 174)?

VIEWER GUIDE ANSWERS

Session 1:

moving forward; context; what was evil; again; own eyes; judges; called, empowered, unite, stand against; devastation, oppression 1. information, heads; teaching; young, listen. 2. hearts, passion. 3. doing, right.

Session 2:

unexpected; head, water, resurfaces; 1. powerful, reach. 2. position, calling; heart, circumstances; Scripture, true. 3. dictate, capability. came, appeared, looked.

Session 3:

Baal fighter; same person; record, work; tremble, fear; environment, posture; beginning, finish, end; stand, vantage point; too many. 1. same person. 2. going. 3. need, need.

Session 4:

patient, long-suffering; held, mercy. 1. saved. 2. changes. 3. positioned. worthy, worthy. 4. strengthened.

Session 5:

1. your, knees. 2. stance, victory. 3. assigned place. 4. right time. 5. right weapons.

Session 6:

1. authority? 2. credit? 3. deflect? 4. belongs? snare.