



Small Group Guide

Judges 6 | The Lord Is With You

Before You Meet

Read Judges 6 on your own before gathering with your group. Pay attention to the condition of Israel, the character of Gideon, and the patience of God throughout the passage.

Key Takeaways

- 1. Persistent hardship is worth examining.** Not every trial is a result of sin, but when we face long seasons of suffering, it is worth asking God honestly whether there is something in our lives He is using to discipline us back to Himself.
- 2. God longs to extend mercy, not punishment.** Discipline from God is always aimed at restoration, not pain. He does not wait for us to clean ourselves up before He comes to us. He enters into the wreckage.

3. God speaks identity before it is visible. When the angel of the Lord called Gideon a mighty man of valor, Gideon was hiding. God declared what He intended to make Gideon become. He does the same for us in Christ, calling us holy, blameless, and without fault.

4. God's presence is the foundation of courage, not our own ability. When Gideon listed his weaknesses, God did not argue with him or build him up with affirmations. He simply said, "I will be with you." That was enough.

5. God is patient with small faith. He waited under the tree while Gideon prepared a meal that took hours. He meets us exactly where we are.

Discussion Questions

Opening

1. Have you ever been part of a team, a project, or a situation where things kept going wrong and no one stopped to ask why? What eventually changed, or did it?

Digging In

2. The pastor drew a distinction between punishment and discipline, saying that punishment is meant for pain while discipline is always meant for growth. How does that distinction change the way you think about difficult seasons in your life?
3. Israel cried out to God for seven years while continuing to worship idols. They wanted the provision of God without following the ways of God. Where do you see that same tension showing up in your own life or in the culture around you?
4. The pastor mentioned that sometimes we rule out God's voice because He is answering questions we have not thought to ask. Have you ever experienced that? What question was God answering that you were not asking?
5. Gideon asked God, "If you are with us, why has all of this happened to us?" Have you ever asked a version of that question? What did that season feel like, and what did you learn from it?
6. When God calls Gideon a mighty man of valor, Gideon is hiding in a winepress. The pastor connected this to Colossians 1, where God declares us holy, blameless, and without a single fault through Christ. How does it affect you to know that God speaks over you an identity you have not yet fully grown into?
7. God's response to Gideon's list of weaknesses was simply, "I will be with you." Why do you think God did not try to convince Gideon of his own strengths? What does that tell us about where our confidence is supposed to come from?
8. The pastor said, "The Lord is not unaware of our weakness. He delightfully uses us anyway." Does that feel true in your own life right now? What makes it hard to believe?

Practical Applications

This week, try one or more of the following:

- **Identify the rope you are not holding.** The pastor used the image of wake surfing without holding the rope. Think about one area of your life where you have been trying to get the result without following God's instruction. Take one concrete step toward doing it His way this week.
- **Read the rest of the story.** Read Judges 7 and 8 on your own. Watch how God continues to strip away Gideon's self-reliance until the victory can only be credited to God. Come back ready to share what stood out to you.
- **Speak identity into someone.** Think of a person in your life who does not yet see what God is making them become. Find a specific, honest way to speak that over them this week.
- **Examine your echo chamber.** The pastor noted that we often surround ourselves with people who think and live exactly like we do. Identify one person in your life who follows God differently than you do and intentionally seek out a conversation with them.

Closing Prayer

Close your time by praying together. Ask God to give your group the courage to ask the hard questions, the humility to receive His discipline, and the faith to trust that His presence is enough for whatever He is calling you into.