

**Life Group Guide Jud 11:1–12:15 “Faith with a Flaw”**  
**For the Sermon Preached on Sun Aug 6 and For Use in Life Groups through Sun Aug 13**

**Icebreaker Question**

When was the last time you promised something that you couldn’t keep? When did “your mouth write a check that your body couldn’t cash?”

**Pastor Richard’s Sermon Outline**

- I. A Faulty Past (vv. 1-3)**
  - a. Jephthah, an outcast and a nobody.
  - b. God’s Nobodies (1 Cor. 1:26-29)
    - i. We learn that God transforms us in obscurity.
    - ii. We learn to be faithful in obscurity.
    - iii. We learn to be humble in obscurity.
- II. A Favorable Future (vv. 4-33)**
  - a. Jephthah, a reluctant leader.
  - b. Encouragement for the reluctant.
    - i. God uses the unlikely to accomplish the impossible!
    - ii. God is able to accomplish His purposes even when the work seems overwhelming or even impossible!
    - iii. God has created you for good works (Eph. 2:10).
- III. A Flawed Faith (11:29-40; 12:1-15)**
  - a. Jephthah, faithful but flawed.
  - b. Will God use the faithful but flawed?
    - i. When you acknowledge that you have the potential to be faithful but flawed you will have a greater dependence upon God (Prov. 3:5-6).
    - ii. When you acknowledge that you have the potential to be faithful but flawed it will help prevent pride (Psalm 10:4; Prov. 11:2).
    - iii. When you acknowledge that you have the potential to be faithful but flawed it causes a greater dependence on other Christians (Gal. 6:1-3).
    - iv. When you acknowledge that you have the potential to be faithful but flawed it expands your capacity to minister to others (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

**Jud 11:1–33**

**Read Jud 11:1–33 Observation**

1. In 11:1–3, what did Jephthah’s half-brothers from Gilead do to him? Why did they do this? Where did Jephthah go? Who joined him there?
2. In 11:4–11, what caused Gilead’s elders to ask for Jephthah to lead them? What does Jephthah say when he agrees to lead them? What did they bound themselves to do with God as witness?
3. In 11:12–13, what did Jephthah ask the king of Ammon? How did he reply to Jephthah?
4. In 11:14–28, what did Jephthah say to Ammon’s king? How did he reply to Jephthah?
5. In 11:29–33, who came upon Jephthah? What did he vow? What were the battle’s results?

**Interpretation**

6. Did Gilead’s “legitimate” sons do what was right with Jephthah? How did Gilead’s prior actions complicate his life? What other biblical examples fit this pattern? How might the gospel challenge people in these situations to act differently, especially after earlier sins?
7. Should believers make promises to God according to this biblical text? What other parts of the Bible might Christians rely upon to understand making promises or vows to God?

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**Application**

8. How might you or your family minister the gospel to the more difficult parts of your extended family? How will you adjust your prayer life? What opportunities will you seize to care for them?

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**Jud 11:34–40**

**Read Jud 11:34–40: Observation**

9. In 11:34–35, who came out to meet victorious Jephthah with tambourines and dancing? What does Jephthah say about his vow to the LORD?
10. In 11:36–38, what does Jephthah’s daughter say in response? Where does she go?
11. In 11:37–39, what term is repeated in verses 37 and 38? What did she not do in verse 39?
12. In 11:39–40, what became a statute in Israel?
13. Read Gen 22:1–14. Who is affirmed in Gen 22:12? Who is affirmed in Jud 11:34–40?

**Interpretation**

14. How does Jephthah’s vow and its aftermath compare to Abraham offering Isaac on Mt. Moriah in Gen 22? What is similar and different between the two moments?
15. What is more revealing of our beliefs? Is it our actions or our words? What role do words play in how we live for good or for ill? How do our words and actions relate to the Great Commission?

**Application**

16. How might you and your family transform the words you speak to each other this week in light of the gospel?
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**Jud 12:1–15**

**Read Jud 12:1–15: Observation**

17. In 12:1, which tribe did Jephthah anger? Why were they upset? What did they threaten?
18. In 12:2–3, what did Jephthah answer them?
19. In 12:4–6, what did Ephraim say about the people of Gilead? How did the Gileadites distinguish their people from Ephraimites at the Jordan river? How many Ephraimites died?
20. In 12:7, how long did Jephthah judge Israel?
21. In 12:8–15, who were the next three judges?

**Interpretation**

22. What important part of life has sin broken the stories of **Gideon with Abimelech** (see Jud 8:30–31), **Jair** (see Jud 10:3–4), **Jephthah** (see Jud 11:1–3), and **Ibzan** (see Jud 12:8–9) and **Abdon** (Jud 12:14)? Why is this part of life so central to people prospering? Why is this part of life so central to the gospel?

**Application**

23. How might you use these parts of Judges to help a family struggling with family and marital problems? What problem and sin pattern might you emphasize? What hope would you give?
  24. How can you improve your prayer life to help hurting families? What else might you do?
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