

Life Group Guide Jud 8:1–35 “Finish Strong or Stumble at the Finish Line”
For the Sermon Preached on Sun Jul 9 and For Use in Life Groups through Sun Jul 16

Icebreaker Question

What is your favorite sport, contest, or news topic to critique as an “armchair quarterback”?

Pastor Richard’s Sermon Outline

- I. Criticism can cause us to stumble (vv. 1-3).**
 - a. Criticism is typically based on unsupported assumptions.
 - b. How should we deal with criticism?
 - i. Humble Yourself (James 4:10)
 - ii. Listen (James 1:19-20)
 - iii. Consider the Source (Prov. 22:24-25; 27:17)
- II. Uncertainty causes us to stumble (vv. 4-21).**
 - a. Uncertainty most often results in fear and mistrust.
 - b. Seven Ways to Eliminate Spiritual Uncertainty
 - i. Let what God says about you trump what other people say about you (Phil. 3:13-14).
 - ii. Make the decision to build your life on God’s Word—even when it’s hard (Matt. 7:24-27).
 - iii. Take everything that has you stressed out and imagine placing it in the hands of Jesus (Matt. 11:28-30; 1 Pet. 5:7).
 - iv. Ask for help (from the right people—not the people who think they are right) when going through a difficult situation (Gal. 6:1-2; Phil. 2:4).
 - v. Memorize and apply 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 to every difficult time you will face in this life.
 - vi. Understand that nothing can ever separate you from the love of God (Rom. 8:38-39).
 - vii. Understand that God made you on purpose, with a purpose and for a purpose ... and that an abundant life comes from living IN that purpose (Eph. 2:8-10).
- III. Compromise causes us to stumble (vv. 22-35).**
 - a. Compromise occurs when we take credit for the work of God in our life.
 - b. Four Reasons Christians Compromise with the Culture.
 - i. Indulge our own desires (1 Cor. 10:13; Jam. 1:14-15)
 - ii. Ignorance of God’s Word (1 Pet. 1:13-15; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16-17)
 - iii. Fear of being “labeled” (Gal. 5:16)
 - iv. Misguided attempt to be relevant (Rom. 12:1-2)

Jud 8:1–3

Read Jud 7:24–8:3 Observation

1. In 7:24–25, who put to death the two Midianite princes?
2. In 8:1, who was upset for being left out of the earlier battle in 7:15–23?
3. In 8:2–3, how did Gideon persuade these men that their victory was important?

Interpretation

4. Why do we often desire like these men to be included in the great things? What fear or fears may drive us to live in this way? How should we answer such a fear? What risk do we have if we set our identity on what we have done rather than on who we are in Christ?

Application

5. What parts of your life stir up your own fears of this world? How can you fear and love God instead? Do you need new habits to draw closer to God in these moments? What should change?

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Jud 8:4–21

Read Jud 8:4–21: Observation

6. In 8:4–5, what was the status of Gideon and his 300 men? Who were they pursuing?
7. In 8:5–9, what did Gideon ask of the men of Succoth and Penuel? What were their replies? What did Gideon promise to them?
8. In 8:10–12, whom did Gideon and his 300 men capture? Compare this feat to 8:3.
9. In 8:13–17, what did Gibeon do to the leaders of Succoth and to the tower of Penuel?
10. In 8:18–21, why did Gideon himself execute the Midianite kings?

Interpretation

11. How is risk a necessary part of doing God’s will? Does God want us to do risky things? How does God’s word guide us through properly taking risks? How might human weakness get in the way of doing God’s will in these situations?
12. Why is it important and ultimately good that God provides and allows consequences for our actions and the actions of others? What does this teach us about His presence and our calling?

Application

13. What conflicts in your life govern most of your time? What risks appear because of these conflicts? How should you apply God’s will to your strength and weaknesses in those conflicts? How should you pray for God to help you find strength in Him?
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Jud 8:22–35

Read Jud 8:22–35: Observation

14. In 8:22–23, what did the Israelites ask of Gideon? What was Gideon’s very good response?
15. In 8:24, what did Gideon ask of them next? Compare this request to 8:21.
16. In 8:25–27, what happened because of Gideon’s request, their response, and Gideon’s subsequent actions?
17. In 8:28–29, how long was Midian subdued?
18. In 8:30–31, how many sons did Gideon have? Who was his son from the concubine?

Interpretation

19. Why does the Old Testament show us so many men who do well and then fail miserably towards the end? What lessons emerge from their failures? How might these parts of the Bible point to Jesus? How can we avoid such failures? How can we return to God if we fail ourselves?
20. Why are healthy marriages important for what we pass on to our children? What are the generational consequences of marriage? Why does Christian marriage depict salvation? What kind of life must Christian marriages pass on to the next generation?

Application

21. Please memorize 8:23.
 23. If married, how have you connected your marriage to serving God? If single, how have you dedicated your singleness to serving God? In all situations, how are you discipling the next generation to make a difference for Christ? How might you pray for God to help you in this?
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