



Overcoming an Imperfect Faith Judges 10-12 (Jephthah)

God will discipline us to grow a more perfect faith in Him. Judges 10:6-16

- Discipline for turning from the Lord into sin. (v.6)
- Discipline with pain. *“afflict and crush.”* (v.8)
- Discipline designed to restore and heal our relationship with God. (v.10, 15-16)

God uses people with an imperfect past. Judges 11:1-3

“Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a valiant warrior, but he was the son of a harlot... Gilead’s wife bore him sons; and when his wife’s sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out...”

Therefore, do not let the imperfections of your past hold you back from God’s plans.

God overcomes imperfect relationships to accomplish His plans. Judges 11:4-11

“Then Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “Did you not hate me and drive me from my father’s house? So why have you come to me now when you are in trouble?” (v.7)

Therefore, seek His power to reconcile broken relationships.

What is needed for imperfect people to overcome issues of life?

- Take these steps: Judges 11:2-29
 - Trust in God’s power to help you. Judges 11:9-10, 29; Hebrews 11:32
 - Know God’s truth to defend it. Judges 11:14-28
- Avoid these problems: Judges 11:29-40
 - A faulty view of God’s grace. Judges 11:30-31
 - A faulty assimilation into the values of the world. Deuteronomy 12:29-32; 18:9-10
 - A faulty view of God’s Word. Leviticus 27:1-8
Romans 12:1-2

Our imperfect faith may result in battles against the wrong enemy. Judges 12:1-6

“Therefore, guard against unnecessary conflict with family and friends”

Digging Deeper & Life Group Discussion:

Jephthah was a rather imperfect leader that still brought victory to the people of Israel. He even made it in the “hall of faith” in Hebrews 11:32, recognizing how God used him. God uses imperfect people to accomplish His will and we are no exception.

Have you ever felt too imperfect for God to use your life? What makes you feel imperfect? How has God worked even with those imperfections?

To bring a more perfect faith, God disciplines us. That is what God did to the Israelites in Judges 10. Read Judges 10:6-16.

- **Why did God discipline them in this chapter?**
- **What did God do to them?**
- **What results came from that discipline?**
- **Therefore, how would you describe the value of being disciplined?**

In Judges 10:8, God disciplined Israel by allowing their enemies to “*afflict and crush*” the Jewish people. The word “*crushed*” can include the following painful actions to help bring about a more mature faith. It is possible that God will use these same actions to discipline His children today. **Do you see any of these in your life?**

- Crush is a struggle in our relationships - Genesis 25:22
- Crush is financial loss - Deuteronomy 28:33
- Crush is physical pain - Judges 9:53; I Samuel 12:4
- Crush is oppression and deprivation by others - Amos 4:1; Isaiah 58:6; Hosea 5:11
- Crush is feeling distressed about life - Judges 10:9

One of the most painful stories from Jephthah’s life was his vow to the Lord regarding his daughter in Judges 11:30-40. Most scholars believe he made a vow to sacrifice his daughter. Some believe it was a vow for her to remain a virgin in the service of the Lord. Either way, it was an unnecessary error on his part that brought great pain. He thought that his vow of sacrifice could make God give him a victory. It was an attempt by Jephthah to manipulate God to show him favor as he tried to defeat the enemy. God is on our side and does not need our “good works” or “sacrifices” to help us in life. When we feel the need to do something to gain God’s favor, such behavior is legalistic.

- **Do you even feel you need to gain God’s favor?**
- **What does Galatians 3:3-6 teach you?**
- **Some try to use works of the “flesh” to gain favor. How is Abraham a better example?**
- **What is God’s will for each of us in Galatians 1:4?**
- **Do you believe He wants that for you?**

Review and discuss the three reasons Jephthah, and each of us, can have an imperfect faith. What do these verses say?

- Imperfect faith comes from a faulty view of God’s grace.
What did Jephthah do to get God on his side? Judges 11:30-31 What things do we try to do to gain God’s favor? What do these verses teach about God’s grace? I Corinthians 15:10; Hebrews 4:16; Galatians 2:19-21; II Corinthians 12:9.
- Imperfect faith comes from a faulty assimilation into the values of the world.
What value did Jephthah use from the world that God warned against in Deuteronomy 12:29-32; 18:9-10? What worldly values do we need to avoid in the world? Consider I John 2:15-17.
- Imperfect faith comes from a faulty view of God’s Word. Leviticus 27:1-8 taught the Jews that they could redeem their sacrifice with money. If Jephthah knew and acted on this passage, he could have saved his daughter.
Why is knowing God’s Word so important based on II Timothy 3:15-17?

How are we to live as we deal with the values of this world according to Romans 12:1, 2? What are some of the areas values of the world you are tempted in and trying to turn from?

Next Steps:

1. **Connect in a LifeGroup to grow in your faith through the support and encouragement of other believers.** LifeGroups are ongoing small group communities that gather together throughout the week to CONNECT in a smaller setting, GROW together in our faith, and REACH out together to our community. There are many LifeGroups available on Calvary’s campus and in homes across Orange County. Learn more at calvarylife.org/lifegroups
2. **Connect with a Discipleship Mentor who can encourage you one-on-one as you grow in your faith.** A Discipleship Mentor can walk with you through the “Following Jesus” course, which journeys through the foundational elements of following Jesus. Come to the Mentor Meetup tonight from 7:00 – 8:30 pm in the Lobby to connect with a mentor over a casual evening of dessert. For info, contact Laura Copeland at LCopeland@calvarylife.org or calvarylife.org/discipleship



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