OHBC Six-Day Bible Study

Judges 1

Trusting God and Guarding Against Compromise

Introduction

Judges 1 begins with encouraging signs. Israel seeks the Lord, moves forward in obedience, and experiences victories because God is with His people. But as the chapter continues, a troubling pattern develops. Instead of completely obeying God's command concerning the inhabitants of the land, the tribes repeatedly settle for partial obedience. The words **"did not drive out"** become an important warning throughout the chapter.

This week's study will help us consider the importance of trusting God's Word, depending upon His power, and refusing to become comfortable with spiritual compromise. Israel's failures also remind us of our need for a faithful King. Where God's people repeatedly failed, Jesus Christ perfectly obeyed the Father. Through faith in Him, we are forgiven and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, enabled to pursue lives of growing obedience.

Monday — Seek the Lord Before You Move

Reading: Judges 1:1–3

Focus Verse: Judges 1:1 (ESV)

"*After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the* LORD*, 'Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them*?'"

Study Question:
What does Israel's decision to inquire of the Lord teach us about their dependence upon God's direction after Joshua's death? How does God's answer in verse 2 demonstrate that the Lord remained Israel's true leader even though Joshua was gone?

Personal Application:
God's people should seek His will rather than simply trusting their own wisdom. Today, God has given us His sufficient Word to guide our lives (2 Timothy 3:16–17). Whether you are making decisions about school, work, family, retirement, relationships, or ministry, consider whether Scripture is directing your choices or whether you are deciding what you want and then asking God to bless it.

Scriptural Prayer:

Today, pray through Proverbs 3:5–6

example: Father, teach me to trust you with all my heart rather than lean on my own understanding. Help me acknowledge you in every part of my life and follow the path you direct. Amen.

Tuesday — God Gives the Victory

Reading: Judges 1:4–10

Focus Verse: Judges 1:4 (ESV)

Gather ~ Praise ~ Pray ~ Grow ~ Serve

"*Then Judah went up and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they defeated 10,000 of them at Bezek*."

Study Question:
According to this verse, who ultimately gave Judah victory? Why is this important for understanding Israel's success in possessing the land God had promised them?

Personal Application:
Judah fought, but the Lord gave the victory. Christians are called to serve faithfully while recognizing that every spiritual accomplishment ultimately depends upon God's grace. Paul expressed this truth when he wrote, "*I planted, Apollos watered,* ***but God gave the growth***" (1 Corinthians 3:6). Serve faithfully, pray earnestly, encourage others, and share the gospel—but remember that the results belong to God.

Scriptural Prayer:

Today, pray through James 1:22 and Philippians 4:19

example: Lord, help me be a doer of your Word and not a hearer only. Give me courage to obey what you have commanded and humility to depend on your provision. Amen.

Wednesday — Faith Acts Upon God's Promises

Reading: Judges 1:11–15

Focus Verse: Judges 1:12 (ESV)

"*And Caleb said, 'He who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him Achsah my daughter for a wife*.'"

Study Question:
Read Joshua 14:6–14 alongside Judges 1:11–15. How does Caleb's continuing involvement in taking the land demonstrate his confidence in God's promises even in his later years?

Personal Application:
Caleb's usefulness to God's kingdom did not end as he grew older. His confidence in God's promises continued to influence another generation. Older Christians have a tremendous opportunity to model faithfulness, courage, and trust in God's Word. Younger believers should learn from faithful saints God has placed around them. Whatever your age, consider how your faithfulness today might encourage someone else to trust the Lord tomorrow.

Scriptural Prayer:

Today, pray through Psalm 56:3–4 and 2 Corinthians 5:7.

example: Father, when I am afraid, help me put my trust in you. Strengthen me to walk by faith and remain obedient when circumstances seem overwhelming. Amen.

Thursday — God's Power Is Greater Than Our Obstacles

Reading: Judges 1:16–21

Focus Verse: Judges 1:19 (ESV)

Gather ~ Praise ~ Pray ~ Grow ~ Serve

"*And the LORD was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron*."

Study Question:
Why is the reference to the Canaanites' "*chariots of iron*" troubling when the verse has just declared that "*the LORD was with Judah*"? Compare this verse with Deuteronomy 20:1. What does this teach us about God's power compared with Israel's perception of their circumstances?

Personal Application:
We can easily look at an obstacle and decide what is possible before remembering who God is. Difficult circumstances, cultural opposition, declining strength, family struggles, or fear of sharing the gospel may appear overwhelming. Yet God's people are called to "*walk by faith, not by sight*" (2 Corinthians 5:7). Do not measure God's ability by the size of the obstacle. Measure the obstacle in light of the greatness of God.

Scriptural Prayer:

Today, pray through John 15:5 and 1 Corinthians 10:31.

example: Lord, keep me from taking credit for what your grace has supplied. Help me work faithfully while remembering that apart from Christ I can do nothing. Let my life bring glory to you. Amen.

Friday — God Remains Faithful

Reading: Judges 1:22–26

Focus Verse: Judges 1:22 (ESV)

"*The house of Joseph also went up against Bethel, and the LORD was with them*."

Study Question:
Bethel had an important history in God's covenant dealings with His people (Genesis 28:10–22; 35:9–15). What significance might there be in Israel now taking possession of this place? How does the statement "*the LORD was with them*" emphasize God's continuing faithfulness to His covenant promises?

Personal Application:
Generations pass, circumstances change, and people fail, but God remains faithful. The God who made promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob continued accomplishing His purposes generations later. Christians have even greater reason for confidence because "*all the promises of God find their Yes in him*" (2 Corinthians 1:20). When circumstances tempt you to question God's faithfulness, remember what He has already accomplished for you in Christ.

Scriptural Prayer:

Toda, pray through Psalm 139:23–24 and Romans 8:13.

example: Father, search my heart and expose the sins I am willing to tolerate. By your Spirit, help me put sinful deeds to death and walk in the way that pleases you. Amen.

Saturday — Beware of Incomplete Obedience

Reading: Judges 1:27–34

Focus Verse: Judges 1:28 (ESV)

"*When Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not drive them out completely*."

Study Question:
Notice the repeated pattern in Judges 1:27–33: Israel "*did not drive out*" the inhabitants of the land. According to Deuteronomy 7:1–6, why had God commanded Israel to remove these nations? What spiritual dangers would Israel's compromise eventually create?

Personal Application:
Israel became strong enough to control the Canaanites but chose accommodation rather than complete obedience. Their compromise would eventually contribute to idolatry and spiritual disaster. Christians must likewise refuse to become comfortable with sin. Scripture commands us, "*Put to death therefore what is earthly in you*" (Colossians 3:5). We do not fight sin to earn God's favor. Because we belong to Jesus, the Holy Spirit works within us to put sin to death and increasingly conform us to the image of our Savior (Romans 8:13, 29).

Scriptural Prayer:

Today, pray through Romans 6:6–14

example: Lord Jesus, thank you for freeing your people from slavery to sin. Help me resist temptation and offer my life to God as an instrument for righteousness. Amen.

Weekly Theme

Judges 1 reminds us to trust God, obey his Word, and guard against compromise. Israel began by seeking the Lord's direction, but the chapter ends with repeated examples of unfinished obedience. Past victories did not remove their need for present faithfulness, and they do not remove ours.

As you finish this week's study, consider where you need to trust God more fully and obey him more faithfully. Through Jesus Christ, we receive forgiveness for our failures and grace to pursue obedience. Depend on his strength as you resist sin, encourage fellow believers, and proclaim his gospel. May we continue seeking the Lord's direction and faithfully carrying out what he has commanded.

Judges 1 shows us that **partial obedience eventually becomes dangerous compromise**. Israel's failure prepares us for one of the great messages of Judges: God's people desperately need a righteous and faithful King. Where Israel repeatedly failed, Jesus perfectly obeyed. He is the greater Deliverer who saves His people not merely from earthly enemies, but from sin and death. Therefore, our obedience flows from faith in Christ and from the transforming work of His Spirit within us.