

# **HEROIC FAITH**

A Bible Study for  
Jr. and Sr. High Students  
Based on Hebrews 11

LEADER EDITION

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## **A Note to the Leaders:**

Thank you so much for investing your time to teach students in Bible study. There is nothing more important than for students to learn early on how to build their lives on truth and live it out!

In **HEROIC FAITH**, your students will examine the lives of some ordinary people mentioned in Hebrews 11 whom God called to action. With 1 Peter 1:6-7 as the focus passage, students will learn from these heroes of faith that following God isn't always easy, but it's worth it.

Throughout this leader guide, you will notice some words that are in **bold and underlined**. Those words are used as fill-in-the-blanks in the student guide. *Questions in italics* are given to help you generate discussion with your group and get them thinking. Feel free to use some or all of them to enhance the learning experience.

All of the discussion questions and many Scriptures needed for reading are written in the student guide. This will help reduce the amount of time it takes to look up passages and it will also help those students who really need to go back and look at what they learned once this study is over but would not likely look up references on their own. The student guide is not necessary, but since so many students may not take notes otherwise, it will give them a way to stay focused and interact with the study more.

The leader guide is written in such a way that you could teach straight from it - though studying ahead of time and being prepared is highly recommended. Feel free to adapt the lessons to fit your allotted time. The activities included are a way for visual and hands-on learners to connect, and a way for students to burn some energy before digging in. However, all activities are totally optional.

If you have feedback or need more resources, feel free to contact us by visiting [www.kaleidoscope-curriculum.com](http://www.kaleidoscope-curriculum.com).

Time to open up Scripture and see what calls to action are going out and how our heroes respond! We pray your students are blessed as they wrestle with truth and that they will be challenged to take whatever steps of faith God is calling them to take.

## CONTENTS

Introduction .....	6
<b>H</b> allmarks of Faith .....	9
<b>E</b> nduring Faith (Noah) .....	18
<b>R</b> ugged Faith (Gideon) .....	28
<b>O</b> bedient Faith (Elisha) .....	38
<b>E</b> xposed Faith (Rahab) .....	50
<b>S</b> tranger Faith .....	60



## **RUGGED FAITH: GIDEON**

**Optional Activity:** Ahead of time, fill a large, clear bowl with tap water and place it on a table at the front of the room. Place a towel next to the bowl along with a ziplock bag. Conceal the following items in a paper bag: 1 lemon and 1 lime close to the same size, a Three Musketeers candy bar and a Snickers bar - the same size, both unwrapped, a wiffle ball and a golf ball, and a small potato. Give each student 1 white, blank piece of paper and a marker. Instruct students to write “SINK” in big letters on one side of the page and “FLOAT” on the other.

When ready to begin, show students one of the items from the bag and ask them to hold up their signs predicting if that item will sink or float. Select students with different answers and ask them why they believe the item will have the particular result they chose. Place the object on top of the water and release it to discover the result. Continue the activity until all items have been tested. At the end, place the potato in a ziplock bag leaving plenty of air in it when the bag is sealed. Ask the students to vote again before placing it in water (you should have already tested the potato without the ziplock prior to this).

Were there any surprises in the results of the objects? Looking at the object and knowing what we do about water, everyone had a quick opinion on what was going to happen when the object was tested. Some of the items, like the lemon and lime or the candy

bars, look the same but one floats and one sinks. Looking at it with the eye, you would never know there was a difference. The potato of course sank, but with an air bag around it, the result was changed.

Today we are going to study the faith of Gideon. Looking at his life on the outside, you think he would sink when it comes to faith; he will never get it. But when he had the presence and the promise of God wrapped around him like a divine airbag, the results changed. Sometimes we give a quick response to God when He asks us to do something. We look at what we are capable of, measure it against what we are facing and say “no way,” believing we will sink. Let’s learn from Gideon that with God’s help we can accomplish more than we can imagine when we learn to trust and walk by faith.

## **BACKGROUND & CHARACTER PROFILE**

If Noah was the epitome of faith and trusting in things not yet seen, Gideon is on the other end of the spectrum. In order to be recorded in Hebrews 11 he obviously had faith, but that isn’t the picture you get at the beginning.

In Judges 6, the story of Gideon begins. Once again, there is a recurring theme of God’s people doing evil. The Israelites who had experienced God’s faithfulness through slavery in Egypt for 400 years were freed and led to the Promised Land. Those witnesses to what the Lord had done had all died and a new generation had grown up. This generation turned from Him and began worshipping other gods. Because of this, the Lord’s anger burned against Israel and He gave them over to their enemies. But even then, God was compassionate and so He raised up Judges to lead the Israelites - to help them have victory over their enemies so they would return to Him. You can see in Judges 2:16-19 God’s help was not well received. There was a continuous cycle of sin, crying out to God, and God’s deliverance of Israel. When would they ever learn?

Gideon was one of the Judges God used to try to break this nasty cycle. When you think of a Judge, think of a **deliverer**. A warrior. A chosen leader. Read Judges 6:1-6 and listen for the oppression the people of Israel were facing:

- All their crops **ruined**
- Sheep, cattle, and donkeys **killed**
- Massive forces repeatedly raiding the Israelites for 7 years causing them to live in **fear**

Don't feel too sorry for them. They didn't have to deal with this! This 7 years of being routed, intimidated and oppressed by an opposing nation, the Midianites, was their own doing - they didn't follow the Lord so this was the consequence. The Lord reminds them of this in Judges 6:10 by saying, "I told you what to do but you did not listen to me."

Nonetheless, their cry is answered and this is where Gideon enters the picture. Read Judges 6:11-12 and look for clues that reveal Gideon's character. The angel of the Lord (which appears as a man) finds the would-be hero threshing wheat in a winepress. Doesn't that sound odd? *Why would he be down in a winepress instead of up on a hilltop where the wind could blow the chaff out of the wheat?* Gideon was a wimp. He was afraid. If he stood on the top of a hill, the Midianites would see him, kill him, and steal his wheat. He was hiding! The angel looks beyond what is obvious and calls him "mighty warrior." By addressing Gideon this way, the Lord was revealing the **potential** He sees in him, what he will become, not the fearful man he currently is.

## **CALL TO ACTION**

Read Judges 6:14 and identify the call to action. Gideon is asked to save Israel by delivering them from the enemy who has brought oppression for the last 7 years! He is also told to accomplish this in the strength he has. For a farmer who was hiding from the enemy in order to take care of the wheat, this is a pretty far-

fetches request! Why wouldn't God ask someone who has some bravery in their bones to begin with? Why not ask someone with experience in battle?

*Why do you think God would call on someone seemingly doomed to fail at this particular task rather than someone more fit for victory? God doesn't qualify people for a task based on **experience**. He sees the potential. If He called on someone with lots of medals in previous battles, that person would not rely on God for victory. But if He calls on someone like Gideon whose faith is incredibly rugged, then Gideon will no doubt rely on God to help him accomplish the mission because it is so far beyond his capabilities. God will then get the glory in the end, which is exactly how it needs to be.*

Read 1 Corinthians 1:25. *How do you think this verse correlates to what Gideon may have been thinking about his assignment? He surely thinks what he is hearing is foolishness. Just because he thinks it's foolish doesn't mean he shouldn't listen - because it's coming from God! Whenever God speaks, you listen. He doesn't mince words or make mistakes. So maybe it does sound foolish, but he better obey. Faith is required. If Gideon was the right fit for the job, it wouldn't take faith. Gideon didn't need to go to school or get more training, he just needed to trust.*

## **HERO IN THE MAKING**

### **Are You kidding me?**

Read verse 15 for Gideon's immediate response to the call to action. Basically, he says, "No way! I can't. I'm afraid and weak! I'm on the bottom of the ladder and I'm really not qualified."

- Doesn't that sound familiar? Have you ever said "no" to God thinking what He was asking was foolish? Have you said "no" because you didn't feel you were capable so you focused on the reasons why you couldn't? Do you think God ever makes mistakes on who He chooses for a task? ...