

“The Reluctant Warrior”

Series: “.beyond”

(Part 1 of 5)

Discussion Starter: Describe one life-accomplishment for which you are extremely proud and explain why it means so much to you.

Explore: Read 1 Peter 4:7-11.

Peter’s letter was written to encourage believers suffering extreme persecution. Throughout his writings, Peter challenged his audience to live for God, but he also reminded them they wouldn’t have to do it alone.

1. What did Peter tell his audience to do since the “end of all things is near” (vs. 7)? What does clarity of mind and self-control have to do with prayer?
2. How should being a follower of Christ affect the way I relate to others (vs. 8-10)? In what way have you seen love cover a multitude of sins?
3. What role does God play anytime we serve (vs. 11)? What will happen when we serve in God’s name?
4. What is the difference between serving in your own strength and serving with the strength God provides?

Reflect: Review the LG and discuss the questions below.

1. God called Gideon a “mighty warrior” although he was reluctant to see it in himself. Do you think people tend to “over” or “under” estimate what God can do through them? Explain.
2. Gideon’s fear turned to faith through a series of “signs” with a blanket made of fleece. In what area of your life do you tend to have difficulties trusting God?
3. God likes to take ordinary people and do the extraordinary. What is the hardest part about following God’s plan: a) figuring out God’s will, b) stepping into new territory, c) explaining my actions to others, or d) doing it once I know what it is?
4. When God calls us to a task, He walks with us as well as empowers us to do the work. How have you experienced this truth in your life?
5. God can do for you what He did for Gideon. Is there something you believe God wants you to do, but you have been putting it off? What will you do this week to let God take you to the next step?

Live:

As a group: Put one group member at a time on the “encouragement seat.” Take turns affirming gifts / abilities / talents you see in them. Example: “Sarah, one of your gifts is hospitality – you really make people feel welcome in the group.”

On your own: Read through the story of Gideon (Judges 6-7). Reflect on this story and ask yourself, “How does God want to use me through the .beyond campaign?”

Listening Guide Notes

“Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites.” -**Judges 6:1 (NIV)**

“When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, ‘The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.’” -**Judges 6:12 (NIV)**

1. God takes Gideon beyond.

2. God uses ordinary people.

“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.” -**Acts 4:13 (NIV)**

“And the LORD said to Gideon, ‘The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’” -**Judges 7:2 (NKJV)**

^[5] “So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the LORD told him, ‘Separate those who lap the water with their tongues like a dog from those who kneel down to drink.’ ^[6] Three hundred men lapped with their hands to their mouths. All the rest got down on their knees to drink.” -**Judges 7:5-6 (NIV)**

3. God wants to take you beyond.

^[20] “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ^[21] to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” -**Ephesians 3:20-21 (NIV)**

^[37] “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ^[38] For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ^[39] neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

-**Romans 8:37-39 (NIV)**