



LOVE

—THIS—

BOOK

SERMON NOTES

LIVING AMONG IDOLS

We all have an inexhaustible drive for god-making.

Problem: **We become what we worship.**

Solution: **Replacement.**

The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord; they forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs. (Judges 3:7)

*Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. **Do not be idolaters, as some of them were...** So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. Therefore, my dear friends, **flee from idolatry.** (1 Corinthians 10:6-7, 12-14)*

For further study on how idolatry is described in the New Testament, see the following verses:

- Matthew 6:24
- Acts 17:29
- Romans 1:23–25
- 1 Corinthians 8:4–6
- Galatians 5:20
- Ephesians 5:5
- Philippians 3:19
- Colossians 2:18–22; 3:5
- 1 John 5:21
- Revelation 14:9.

LOVE THIS BOOK

WEEK THREE: JUDGES 2:6 - 3:6

Description for Series

LOVE THIS BOOK: Shaped by God's Story will take us further into the narrative of God by introducing us to ordinary people as they wrestled with their circumstances and how to respond to the events in their culture. We will meet real people who were less than perfect in their obedience to God but often continued to pursue him even in the midst of their struggle. We will also meet people who seemingly never truly understood what it looked like to follow God's ways.

Engaging the Study:

1. Begin each study with expectant prayer. Ask the Spirit to guide your thoughts as you read the passage and engage the questions. Then, conclude your time with a prayer that seeks how you can apply what you gleaned from the study during your day.
2. For this study, we will use the rhythm of **Read, Reflect, and Respond**. Read the passages several times during the week and then take three days to engage the questions. The **Read** portion of the study will help you gain information about the story, the **Reflect** portion will help you focus on the formational element of your faith journey, and the **Respond** portion will allow you to act on how the Spirit is prompting you from your study.
3. You are encouraged to journal your thoughts as you engage the passages.
4. Use the links on hfcinfo.com to connect you to additional resources that will expand your understanding of the passages.

WEEK 3 | JANUARY 17

Judges 2:6 - 3:6

In Judges 2, Joshua sends the people to take possession of the land. With this responsibility came a great challenge—they would be living among idols. This part of the book actually previews a cycle that recurs multiple times—it's a cycle of idolatry, punishment, repentance, and deliverance. While much of this book strikes us as foreign, we face the same challenge that the ancient Israelites did—we live among idols!

Before starting this week's study, take 2 minutes and watch the video by J. D. Greear about the connection of the book of Judges to our lives. Also, consider watching the Bible Project overview of the book of Judges. Both videos can be found on hfcinfo.com.

DAY ONE

READ Judges 2:6-3:6. The Israelites made a commitment to obey God's commandment and live as God's people in Joshua 24:15-16. (Read the verses to see the context.)

- What role did Joshua and the elders play in their obedience?

REFLECT on the way we influence others.

- Who are you influencing by the way you live your life?

RESPOND by committing to live your life as an example to others by choosing to live in obedience to God's word.

DAY TWO

READ the passage again.

- Why was the Lord angry with the Israelites?
- What motivated the Lord to send Judges to Israel? What does this reveal to you about the character of God?

REFLECT on the character of God revealed in these verses.

- What encourages you and challenges you when you look at God's nature in these verses?

RESPOND by confessing the patterns of disobedience you see in your own life.



DAY THREE

READ the passage again.

- Identify the cycle that describes the behavior of the Israelites.
- List the sins the Israelites committed. (Judges 2:17, 3:5-7)

REFLECT on the impact our actions have on each other.

- What do you learn from the Israelites that can help you evaluate your own choices and priorities?

RESPOND by identifying the idols that you have in your life. Be honest with yourself.

Take-away: The Israelites during the time of the Judges remind us that if we're not diligent, we can turn away from God's word and stop living as his covenant people. The part of God's story helps us see how idols can stand in the way of true heart worship.

SMALL GROUP & FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What questions or thoughts do you have from what Pastor Nik shared today?
 2. How would you define idolatry? What are some idols that you see in today's culture? One way of thinking about idolatry is that it is taking good things and making them ultimate. A good diagnostic clue to identifying an idol is that what happens if you don't get what you want?
 3. Anything that you allow to be equal to or greater than God in your life qualifies as an idol. How do you know if something has become an idol in your life? Why do you think people tend to focus on idols rather than focus on God?
 4. How do you respond when something important, or something you desire, is removed from your life or you don't receive what you desire? Where do you find yourself allowing idols into your life?
 5. What do idols do to your relationship with God? How do idols shape your life? What happens if we allow idols to go unchecked in our own lives?
 6. Spend time silently reflecting on where you may have idols in your life. Acknowledge those things to God and confess to him that you have held these in your life. Seek out someone you trust to keep you accountable.
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