

“God in the Details”

Made For More Sermon Series | Week Nine | Newbreak Church

March 6th, 2022

Newbreak’s Sermon Study Guide is an in-house resource that serves sermon-based Life Groups and/or individuals who want to reflect further on how the message contributes to our spiritual formation.

In this week’s study, we talk about the importance of including God in the details of our life, leading us to gather guidance from Him, even in situations we may not think we need it.

Icebreakers for Life Groups

- Do you like the time change? Why or why not?
- Let’s assume (rightly) that God does care about the details of life. What is an example of something you struggle to believe God cares about?

Going Deeper Into the Message

Read Joshua 9:1–4

How can I learn to seek God in every detail of my life?

Point 1 – Be prepared for others to begin noticing when God is working in my life.

“Now all the kings west of the Jordan River heard about what had happened” (Joshua 9:1a, NLT).

The surrounding nations of the promised land had heard about Joshua’s success and began to scheme how they might stop his momentum.

When you are walking in God’s will, people will notice. How they will respond might vary. Positive responses certainly come, but negative responses do as well. And sometimes those who are against us—for whatever reason—might try to deceive us.

“These kings combined their armies to **fight as one against** Joshua and the Israelites... But when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, they **resorted to deception** to save themselves” (Joshua 9:2–4, NLT).

How will the Israelites respond? Better yet, how will we respond? It’s hard to know *what we don’t know*. This will be an important part of the discussion in point 2.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Has anyone told you that they notice God working in your life? How did that impact your walk with God when you heard that?
- What is something that you have been working on that you would like people to notice? Why would this be important to you?
- Who is someone you admire because of what God is doing in their life? Have you mentioned this to them?

Read Joshua 9:5–16

Point 2 – Ask God to show me if there’s more going on behind the scenes.

“So the Israelites examined their food, but they **did not consult the Lord**” (Joshua 9:14, NLT).

Have you ever had a situation where you felt like the situation made enough sense and so there wasn’t a need to consult God? Well, that was the Israelites in this situation. The Gibeonites made sure their story checked out: their clothes were raggedy and their bread was crumbly, they appeared to have journeyed far to come and seek a treaty with Israel when in reality they were just a few towns away—and were one of the nations that were on Israel’s itinerary to conquer.

But as verse 14 says, the Israelites assumed they had enough information to make a decision.

What prevents us from seeking God’s guidance?

→ **We feel pressured and think quick decisions are necessary.** But sometimes our decision made in haste can prove to be a decision made to waste! We sometimes like

moving quickly in life and we can outpace the wisdom or guidance that God has given us. Often seeking God's wisdom is challenging because it forces us to slow down.

→ **We think that this situation is not significant enough.** But God is intricately involved with the details of our lives! If you care about it, the chances are God does too.

→ **We think we have enough information to make the right decision.** *The keyword here is "think."* Part of this involves falling into the trap of "I've got this covered!"

→ **We forget that God is on our side and wants to help us.** Remember Joshua 1:9: "This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

So what do we do? We ask God for wisdom, who is generous in giving it (James 1:5). But a helpful caveat: while God gives wisdom generously, He does so in His time and in His way. We may have to be persistent in prayer as God (purposely) gives guidance in a fashion slower than what we want. Also, He might give us wisdom in a form we weren't expecting, like through a friend or mentor. The point is that God will deliver wisdom, but we might have to be patient and not rush His divine guidance.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- When was a time you didn't seek the Lord's guidance when making a big decision? What was the situation and what was the result?
- Out of the reasons given above why we sometimes don't seek God's guidance, which one best describes you? Why?
- As for a positive example, when was a time you sought God's guidance and were glad you did? Was it something "small" but important? Or a life-changing situation?

Point 3 – Lean into God's mercy when we get it wrong

Our natural tendency when we realize we've done something wrong is to run from God, to hide from God. That way of thinking, however, just prolongs the inevitable. We are His children and He loves us, even when we mess up. He wants to have the relationship with us restored. That means we have to be willing to come to Him with humble hearts and repent. We will still need to experience the consequences of what we have done. But going through the consequences in right standing with God is much better than experiencing the consequences feeling shame and still trying to hide from

Him. Acknowledge sin and ask for forgiveness, that way God's mercy can be experienced.

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Hebrews 4:15–16, NIV). God knows us. He knows our weaknesses and He does not hold those against us. He knows there will be moments of failure. In those moments, His mercy is most precious.

God loves to pour His mercy out on us, so that we have an example of how to treat others when we have been wronged. Joshua did not annihilate the Gibeonites when they deceived him. He took responsibility for his part, not seeking God's wisdom in the decision, and then had mercy on them and let them live. The Gibeonites still had to deal with the consequences of their lies, but they were grateful for Joshua's mercy.

Receive God's mercy for your mistakes as His dearly loved children and share that mercy with people who wrong you.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- What stops you from going to God when you mess up?
- How do you feel when you finally go to God to receive His mercy and forgiveness?
- Having experienced the mercy of God, what keeps you from being merciful to others? What can you do to get better at this?

—FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—

How are you going to think or live differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?

How does this week's message shape or nurture your relationship with God?

BONUS: For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids in a way that they would relate to or understand?