



Lesson Two: God Made Me Unique for a Reason (Middle School/High School)

Lesson Theme

Every person is created unique—they are one-of-a-kind—and as such, God has a unique purpose for each and every person. It is vital that we see our uniqueness as that thing that God will use to bring about His purpose and will, because God made us unique for a reason. How will you be used by Him?

Theme Verse

²⁶ Brothers and sisters, look at what you were when God called you. Not many of you were wise in the way the world judges wisdom. Not many of you had great influence. Not many of you came from important families. ²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and he chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. (1 Corinthians 1:26-27 NCV)

Inductive Bible Discussion Guide

Brief Explanation

- This discussion guide is designed for just that... discussion. When I lead discussion group Bible studies, I do not have answers anywhere in the material, nor do I use a leader's guide with all the answers written in.
- This is INTENTIONAL! I believe that the discipleship process should be an encounter with God, not just listening to someone else tell you what words to write down to fill in the blanks.
- Our goal is to help you facilitate discovery learning for your students. As the questions are asked, every participant (including the leader) is required to search God's Word to discover the appropriate morsel of truth. When facilitators are 'armed' with all the answers, they are less likely to allow the time needed for individuals to process the question and formulate an answer.
- Don't be afraid of silence! That discovery process is the key to the success or failure of this process. It is in those moments of silence that we stop teaching and the Holy Spirit takes over!
- We cannot forget what Jesus said in John 16:13: *“when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.”*
- A “Lesson Commentary” has been included with this packet. We encourage you to study the material contained in the commentary, but do not try to teach (aka lecture) your group from that material. Let it serve as a source of information for you to draw upon to help give context and perspective to the group discussion.
- For a deeper look at the issues presented herein, please look at the "Judges – Teacher's Guide" or listen to the corresponding sermons (www.templerogers.org/ministries/obe/judges_resources/)
- For a deeper discussion of how to lead an inductive style, Bible discussion group, please download the “Leading Small Group Bible Studies” resource by clicking [HERE](#).

Ice Breaker Activities

OPTION #1: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE?

- Give each student a copy of Activity Sheet 2.1 – “What Is Your Favorite?” and ask them to answer all ten questions.
- After everyone has finished answering the questions, divide the room into four quadrants. Have everyone who answered “A” on question one go to one quadrant. Everyone who answered “B” to another and so forth. By the end of the first question, everyone should be standing in one of the four quadrants.
- Then ask the second question. Within each quadrant, individuals who have the same answer should form a group. Then say, “If within your quadrant there is no one else that has the same answer that you do for both questions, then you must return to your seat.”
- Continue through all ten questions; each time requiring those students who no longer have at least one person with all the same answers as theirs to return to their seat.
- If by some miracle you still have individuals who have all the same answers through question #10, ask one final question and do not let them communicate in any way before writing down their answer. The final question is: “What is your favorite song?” This is not a multiple choice question.
- Explain to the students how that everyone is unique because God created them as a “One-of-a-kind”!

OPTION #2: I AM UNIQUE BECAUSE

- Give each student a blank piece of paper. Ask them to complete the following sentence with one positive attribute that makes them unique from other people.
- After they have written one positive attribute that makes them unique, allow them to write one more of their unique characteristics only this time allow them to write anything—positive or negative.

- Ask the students if they found it easier to write down their negative characteristic compared to the positive one. Ask them, “Why do you think that it’s easier to be negative about yourself than positive?”

OPTION #3: I’VE DONE SOMETHING YOU’VE NEVER DONE

- Everyone starts with 6 pieces of wrapped candy.
- The first student puts a piece of candy into the middle of the group and call out something he has done that he thinks no one else in the group has done. Example: “I have ridden on a camel.”
- If no one has done what he’s done (no one’s ever ridden a camel), then he takes back his piece of candy and any other pieces of candy that are in the middle.
- If someone else has done this thing he called out (Someone else has ridden a camel), then he leaves his candy piece in the middle and the next person calls out something unique that she’s done.
- Continue around the circle a few times.
- This can also be done with things you’ve never done that you think everyone else has done. (“I’ve never flown in an airplane.”)

OPTION #4: WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?

- Have pictures (either printed or on a tablet) of extreme close-up shots of regular, everyday items that have a purpose.
- Examples include: paper clip, coffee cup, water fountain drain, clock, shoe, etc. The key is that the item has a purpose!
- If possible, get some close up pictures of some ‘off-the-wall’ stuff like the inside of someone’s nose or ear.
- During the lesson, show the close up shots to your students and let them guess what the items are.
- Sometimes they will be right; sometimes they will be way off!
- Explain to the students that strange little things serve a purpose.
- If you using this activity early in your lesson, you can refer back to these objects during the lesson by reminding them of the pictures.

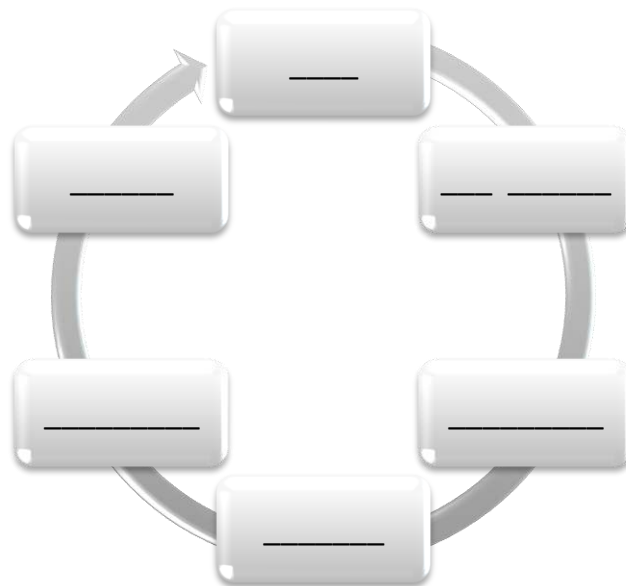
OPTION #5: RE-CREATING ITS PURPOSE

- Break your group up into smaller groups of three to six people.
- Give each group a collection of small objects that have a purpose (paper clips, staples, paper towels, toilet paper, cups, etc.).
- Instruct each group to do something totally creative with their objects — something that has likely never been done before.
- Example: making a paper clip chain is probably not unusual, but making a paper clip butterfly is.
- Give each group an appropriate amount of time to finish. Allow each group to share what they have made.
- If this is done early in the study, you can refer back to this activity by explaining that ordinary objects, like ordinary people, can be used in more ways than just one. God has made us what we are. He has created us in Christ Jesus to live lives filled with good works that he has prepared for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10)

Discussion Guide

Cycle of Sin

In our first lesson, we learned about a ‘Cycle of Sin.’ What were the steps in that cycle? [Use the “Activity Sheet 2.2 - Cycle of Sin” as a visual aid.]



Read Judges 3:12-15. Identify the various steps in the Cycle of Sin that are found here in this passage.

- Sin – Judges 3:12a
- God’s Anger – Judges 3:12b
- Punishment – Judges 3:13b-14
- Repent – Judges 3:15a
- Deliverance – Judges 3:15b
- Peace – This phase does not occur until Judges 3:30

Uniqueness or Weakness

Who did God raise up as a deliverer against the Moabites? What was unique about this second judge?

In today’s world, being left-handed is considered normal, but throughout most of human history, it has been seen as abnormal, bad or weird. Have you ever felt inferior and looked down upon because you were different? How did that make you feel?

An Unexpected Leader

Compare and contrast Othniel (the first judge/deliverer) and Ehud (the second judge/deliverer). Understanding that both of these men were chosen by God, what type of person does God choose as a leader?

| Judge | Othniel | Ehud |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Physically | Great Warrior | Disabled |
| Socially | Famous Family | Outcast for disability |
| Politically | Tribe of Judah – the most prominent tribe | Tribe of Benjamin |

Do you think God would choose to use you as a leader? Why or why not?

Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31. Sometimes God chooses to use the socially or physically elite, such as Othniel; but oftentimes, God chooses to use people who are socially and physically weaker. Why?

In what ways should this encourage us?

An Unexpected Deliverance

How did God use Ehud's 'weakness' (being left-handed) to bring about the deliverance of Israel from Moab? (Judges 3:15-26)

[If time permits, you may explore the following questions to dive further into the story of Ehud and Eglon. If not, continue the discussion in the next section, "Our Weakness—His Strength."]

What was Ehud's plan for delivering Israel from the Moabites?

What happened when Ehud went to the king to present the tribute?

What was the secret message that Ehud had for Eglon?

Why was it possible for Ehud to get away so easily?

Our Weakness—His Strength

Read Romans 5:6-10. In our 'weakness,' what did God—through Christ—do for each one of us? Have you come to the place in your spiritual life where you have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sins?

According to 2 Corinthians 5:16-18, how does God see us once we have trusted in Christ as our Savior?

Spend a few moments thinking about how God has made you to be unique. Some of your unique characteristics may seem like weaknesses or flaws. Ask God to help you see yourself as He sees you.

God created you as 'one-of-a-kind.' If you are a believer, you have been re-created in Christ for a unique purpose. What is God's purpose for your life? How might God use your weaknesses and flaws to accomplish His purposes?

Application Activities

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OPTION #2: RE-CREATING ITS PURPOSE

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OPTION #3: OUR PURPOSE IS FOUND IN JESUS

Illustration:

- “Let’s pretend you work for Taco Bell. What is your purpose?” Discuss.
- “Whether you are the manager or working at the register, what does your purpose always relate to?” Discuss.
- “Your purpose will always relate to serving Mexican food to the customer in order to make money. What would happen if you told your boss that you ought to start serving French fries, fried chicken or burgers? What would he say?” Discuss.

- “What would happen if you brought video games to work and played them in the back?” Discuss.
- “Your boss will only want you at Taco bell if you serve the purpose. The purpose is limited to Taco Bell’s goals.”

Explanation:

- Once you become a Christian, you “work for God,” so to speak.
- Your job is all day, every day. God’s goal is to help every person hear about Jesus, accept Jesus, walk with Jesus, and imitate Jesus.
- So, what are you going to spend your time doing?
- Everything you do must somehow fit into God’s plan. That’s why, whenever you make a decision, you should always ask yourself first, “What would Jesus do in this situation?”

Application:

- Every person in Taco Bell does not do the same thing. Some take orders, others make food, some manage the back, others clean. But, everyone works toward the common goal.
- God is not going to make all of us do the same boring thing.
- What He has called you to do will be specific, fun, interesting, and worth your while — but it must fit into His purpose.
- And you have a ministry. Just as the boss at Taco Bell will train you and show you what you are supposed to do, so God will train you and show you just what you are supposed to do.

OPTION #4: MADE FOR GOOD WORKS

Illustration:

- What was special about the pig in the movie “Babe”?
 - He was a pig with some extraordinary intelligence.
 - His master, the farmer, worked with him and trained him to be a sheep pig. Normally, a pig would have done nothing more than eat, get fat, and become bacon.
 - But Babe, because he was special and unique, was chosen by the farmer to do a specific job. Fortunately, Babe obeyed the farmer.

- In spite of the laughter of the crowd at the sheep dog contest at the thought of a pig participating, Babe showed the farmer and the world that he could do the job.

Explanation:

- God wants all of us to be like Babe — to listen to what He says and follow His instructions.
- Our purpose is not just eating, drinking, getting fat, and dying.

Application:

- You are as unique as Babe. You may laugh, and the people around you may laugh, but God has some extraordinary task for you to do.
- You may seem out of place, and your ministry may be a little weird, but God has already got the details worked out, so just listen to what God tells you.

Activity Sheets/Coloring Pages

- Download the **Lesson 2 – Activity Sheets Packet** for coloring sheets and other activities for your students!

Lesson Commentary

Judges 3:12-30

With the death of the first judge, Othniel (3:11), the Israelites once again enter into a cycle of sin. Judges 3:12 says, “And the people of Israel again did what was **evil in the sight of the Lord.**” As a result of their sin, God “strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel.” The Moabite king occupied the ‘City of Palms’ or Jericho. The first great victory as they entered the Promised Land occurred at Jericho. Now God has enabled their oppressor to rule over them from this same location. In Joshua 6:26, Joshua said:

“May the **curse** of the Lord **fall on anyone**
who tries **to rebuild** the town of **Jericho**.
At the cost of his firstborn son,
he will lay its foundation.
At the cost of his youngest son,
he will set up its gates.”

Understanding that the Moabite people are distant relatives of the Israelites (they are descendants of Abraham’s nephew, Lot), it is most like that Eglon was aware of the curse but chose to defy the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Eglon, the king of Moab, is characterized in the text as a joke. Not only does it describe him as an extremely obese man, it also seems that he is not very smart which will become apparent as the story unfolds. It is somewhat ironic that God strengthened this man to overthrow the Israelites only to destroy him in almost a comical way.

Who did God send to rescue them? What is significant about him being left-handed?

God sent Ehud—a left-handed man—to deliver the Israelites from Moab. o Throughout the history of ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece and Rome, the right hand was almost always associated with good and the left hand with evil. “The 18th and 19th Century were particularly hard on left-handers, and discrimination against them became engrained and institutionalized... deliberate and sometimes brutal attempts to suppress left-handedness and impose conformity in the education system were endemic during this time... [the] 19th Century physician Cesare Lambroso... identified left-handedness as a mark of pathological behavior, savagery and criminality.” (Accessed on January 13, 2017. http://www.rightleftwrong.com/history_recent.html)

According to Timothy Keller, “If you look up the references in the Bible to ‘right hand,’ you will find that they are all quite positive. God swears by his right hand, he has pleasures by his right hand, and his chosen One sits at his right hand (Isaiah 62:8-9; Psalm 16:11; 110:1)... Since most people were right-handed, the right hand was a symbol of power and ability. You fought with your sword in your right hand.” (*Judges for You*, p 47)

What kind of man does God choose to use?

Othniel was your typical leader type. He was a warrior from a family of faithful men—the younger brother of Caleb. He was from the tribe of Judah, the most prominent tribe. But most importantly, he was chosen by God.

In Judges 3:15, the Bible says that Ehud was “left-handed,” or in the most literal sense he was ‘unable to use his right hand.’ Some scholars believe that he was disabled in some way. He was a social outcast. Keller notes that “in a society which was even more cruel than our own to people who were physically handicapped, he would have been considered ineffective” (*Judges for You*, pp 47-48). He was from the tribe of Benjamin. Ironically, the name Benjamin means “son of the right hand.” In a general sense, Ehud was not a natural leader, but he was chosen by God!

Why would God choose to use such a flawed individual? God is showing the world that His deliverance would not come in a perfect ‘wrapper.’ In fact, His ultimate deliverance was born as a baby in a feeding trough for animals!

Paul reminds us of who we were before Christ in 1 Corinthians 1:26-27 (New Century Version):

²⁶ Brothers and sisters, look at what you were when God called you. **Not many of you were wise** in the way the world judges wisdom. Not many of you **had great influence**. Not many of you **came from important families**.²⁷ But **God chose the foolish** things of the world to shame the wise, and **he chose the weak** things of the world to shame the strong.

God chooses to use men such as this “so that no human being might boast in the presence of God” (1 Corinthians 1:29).

How did Ehud plan to go about delivering the Israelites from the Moabite oppression?

The plan is for Ehud to go to the king of Moab on behalf of Israel who sent tribute to Eglon. This tribute was most likely a payment made to Eglon similar to taxes. Ehud fashioned a short, double-edged sword or long dagger and he bound it to his right leg underneath his clothing. He planned to

use this dagger to kill King Eglon. Right-handed men carried their swords on their left leg. The idea was that Ehud's sword would not be detected because it was 'hidden' on his right side.

When Ehud and his entourage went to present the tribute, the Bible says that nothing else happened immediately. He either did not get close enough to be able to use his dagger, or He had another plan all along. After giving the tribute and leaving, Ehud returned to the king and proclaimed, "I have a secret to tell you." So the king sent everyone away so that Ehud could share his secret—after all, Eglon does not expect a disabled man would be any threat to him.

The secret that Ehud had for Eglon was that his reign was over. Ehud killed the king with the short sword he had made. When he struck him and thrust it into his belly, verse 22 says that "the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade... and the dung came out." Then he walked out the doors and locked them as he left. The smell coming from inside made the servants think that the king was "relieving himself" (remember verse 22c). The servants waited an embarrassing amount of time until they found the key, opened the door and found Eglon dead on the floor. By that time, Ehud had already escaped.