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## LOVING JESUS, LOVING PEOPLE, PLOWING A COUNTER-CULTURE

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[Spring Season: April 12 – June 14 | Fall Season: September 27 – December 6]

### **LEADER DETAILS**

- **MAIN TEXT:** Judges 2:1-20 (Supporting text: Deuteronomy 6:4-7, 20-21; John 10:10-11)
- **MAIN IDEA:** Spiritual decline happens through compromise, false repentance, and failing to pass on faith.
- **GROWTH FOCUS:** Be comfortable with silence and give people time to process before jumping in.
- **ICEBREAKER:** Are you more of a morning person or night person, and why?

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS (Full details at: [emergence.church/digital-bulletin](https://emergence.church/digital-bulletin))**

- **Totowa Construction Updates** - This was the first week in the new Kid's space, and we will have more changes as we continue to make progress on our facilities in Totowa. **Keep updated on changes here:** <https://emergence.church/totowa-updates>
- **Baptism Weekend - June 4th and 7th - Ringwood and Totowa**
  - **The Why** - Baptism is the way Jesus calls His followers to proclaim their faith in Him. It symbolizes how through faith we die with Christ to our sin, and are raised with Christ to new and eternal life in Him. If you are a follower of Jesus and haven't had the opportunity to declare that through baptism, now is the time to sign up!

### **GETTING STARTED:**

- **Pray:** This helps everyone prepare their heads and hearts as you turn to the discussion.
- **Watch Community Extras Video** (length 2:52 – questions from video are included below)

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### **LAST WEEK'S GROWTH STEP FOLLOW-UP:**

*[Leaders: These follow-ups are meant to offer some accountability while being low-pressure. Keep it casual, "If you were able to try this last week, how did it go?" Sharing is optional; it's always okay to pass.]*

- **Outward Action:** Take one step to invest in someone spiritually this week (encourage them, pray with them, invite them, etc.)
  - **Inward Prayer:** Ask God to help you live with an eternal perspective, rather than a temporary one.
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## SERMON DISCUSSION

*Prioritize meaningful conversation over getting through every question.*

### From Victory to Compromise

#### Read Judges 2:1-3

Pastor Ryan pointed out that Judges is a sharp contrast from the victories of Joshua. God had clearly commanded His people to fully drive out the Canaanites, but they stopped short, choosing partial obedience instead. What seemed like a small compromise became a serious problem over time, as the very things they tolerated became “thorns and snares” (v.3). Ryan also pointed out that compromise in one generation leads to slavery in the next.

- Why is it so tempting to settle for a “good enough” faith, especially after seasons of growth or success?
- Ryan shared 4 reasons for compromise: laziness, entitlement, fear, and distraction. Where are you currently choosing what’s easier over what you know God has clearly asked of you, and which of those reasons are driving that?

### Remorse Without Repentance: A Downward Cycle

#### Read Judges 2:4-5, 11-20

Judges 2 reveals a pattern that repeats throughout the book: Apostasy → Battle → Cry out → Deliverance. The people turn from God, experience consequences, cry out for help, and God delivers them. Pastor Ryan shared that nothing truly changes because they feel remorse, but they don’t truly repent. The cycle doesn’t just repeat, but spirals downward over time. Without real repentance, feeling bad about sin never leads to lasting transformation.

- What stands out to you about this cycle in Judges 2?
- How can you tell when you’re just feeling bad about sin versus actually turning from it? What is an area where this shows up in your life right now?

### Failure to Pass Faith to the Next Generation

#### Read Judges 2:6-10; Deuteronomy 6:4-7, 20-21

One of the most sobering moments in the chapter is that a new generation arises who “did not know the Lord

or the work He had done” (v. 10). The issue wasn’t just personal failure, but a failure to pass on faith. What wasn’t intentionally shared was eventually forgotten.

- Why do you think faith can be so easily lost between generations?
- Looking back at Deuteronomy 6, Whether you have kids or not, how can you actively pass on what God has done in your life? Or, how have you seen this done well?

### Abundant Life

#### Read John 10:10-11

Judges shows how people slowly drift into destruction, while Jesus offers a path marked by life, freedom, and purpose. But that life isn’t found in partial obedience. It’s found in fully following Him.

- Where are you currently chasing something that promises life, but is actually draining you?
- What is one step you can take this week to more fully trust and follow Jesus?

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### GROWTH STEP THIS WEEK

- **Outward Action:** Identify one area of compromise and take a tangible step to address it.
- **Inward Prayer:** Ask God “If someone followed my example of faith, where would it lead them?”

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### PRAYER PROMPTS:

- Thank God for His patience and mercy when we drift
- Pray for real repentance and transformation
- Pray for the next generation to know and love the Lord
- Ask God to help you walk in the abundant life Jesus offers

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**NEXT WEEK’S TEXT:** Judges 3:1-11