

Not Alone: God's Relentless Pursuit

Group Discussion Guide | May 24

### Series overview and leader instructions (5-15 minutes)

"Not Alone" is an 11-week journey through the Old Testament, tracing God's desire to dwell with His people and His faithful work to bring redemption. Through every season—deliverance, provision, rebellion, exile, and restoration—we see one unified story of grace, pointing to Jesus and the promise of God dwelling with His people forever.

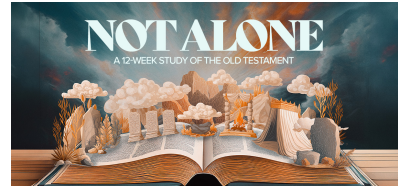
The sermons in this series will take a fly-over, covering multiple chapters—and sometimes multiple *books*—in a single sermon. You may find that some people in your group may be unfamiliar with these stories and benefit from some additional context.

We recommend incorporating videos from The Bible Project books of the Bible overview videos as needed. As the leader, you can decide whether to watch the videos as a group or send them out in your group chat or via email for people to watch on their own, or some combination of the two. Recommended videos will be linked in each week's group guide.

Here is an overview video of the Joshua, the book covered in this week's sermon:

**Judges Overview Video:** <https://bibleproject.com/videos/judges/>

As always, use the group discussion guide below in the way that works best for *your* group. Prayerfully review the material and note the questions you sense the Spirit leading you to focus on. Linger on questions that yield fruitful discussion. Break into pairs or smaller groups for conversation or keep the discussion in the larger group. You know your group! Use this guide as a template but make it your own.



## Opening prayer and reflection questions (10 minutes).

Begin your time together by asking the following question:

- Do either you or your family have any weekly rhythms that you have on a regular basis (e.g. dinner together every Wednesday, church every Sunday, pizza and movie nights every Friday, etc.)? Share one weekly or monthly rhythm you have or have had.

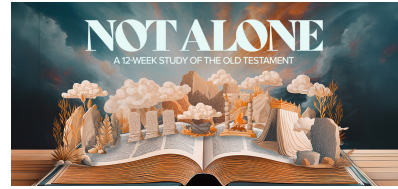
After God had **provided** the Promised Land for the Israelites and after Joshua **partitioned** the land, the reality for God's people is that they very quickly found themselves in cycles of sin. Over and over again through the book of Judges, we read that Israel "did evil in the eyes of the Lord." The book of Judges centers on judge after judge who grow more and more corrupt as time goes on. The theme verse of Judges is the one that says, "In those days Israel had no king, and everyone did what was right in their own eyes" (Judg. 21:25).

As a result, in a time of downward spiraling, disaster after disaster plagued the Israelites. The people would turn from God, sin, and bad things would happen. When they did, they'd cry out to God. And instead of turning his nose up at His people, God would listen and intervene. Time and time again he rescued his people by sending deliverers. What this tells us is that, both then and now, God hear his people in their distress. And He's ready to act.

Read Judges 6-7.

Discuss the sermon and the book of Judges (45 minutes).

- What stood out to you from Gary's sermon?
- What questions or points of confusion do you have about the sermon or Judges? (Note: as the leader, you do not have to answer all the questions. It's OK to acknowledge that we are reading an ancient document given to us by God. We won't understand everything, but we can ask our honest questions.)



- Why do you think God's people were so quick to do evil? And what do you think led to their doing it again and again?

In his sermon, Gary explained that there were five steps in Israel's sin cycle: (1) **Perverse**: They turned away from God, becoming wicked and corrupt; (2) **Pain**: They then suffered under the oppression of enemies for years at a time; (3) **Prayer**: When the pain was great, they cried out to God to save them; (4) **Protector**: God sent them a judge (i.e., leader) to rescue them from the enemy; (5) **Peace**: They experienced peace throughout the land while the judge lived.

- Have you ever had moments in your life where you kept falling back into the same sinful cycle? Explain.
- Have you ever experienced the cycle as described above? How so?
- Which part of that cycle do you feel like most aligns with the season you're in now? Explain.
- What does it tell you about God's character that, even though the Israelites kept sinning, God still **heard** them and acted?
- Do you ever doubt that God hears you? Explain.

In his sermon, Gary also challenged all of us to not just hear that God hears US, but to BELIEVE it and LIVE it. How? Through communication (i.e. prayer)!

- How would you rate your prayer life right now as an individual? As a family?
- Do you ever hold back things from God? Explain.
- What would it look like for you to believe that God hears you and live it out?

**Conclude with prayer (10 minutes).**

If you want to take prayer requests, you may do so here. Take a few moments to sit with the following passage. Then, have someone pray over the requests and over the reality that just as the Angel of the Lord said to Gideon, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior" (Judges 6:12), so too is the Lord with each of us.