Remembering and recognising

*WordLive for small groups*

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**Get started**

This is an icebreaker I’ve experienced in a group in which people know each other fairly well, but it should work – using more general encouragements – with those who are less familiar with one another.

Each member of the group takes a sheet of paper and writes their name at the bottom. They then hand it to the person on their left, who anonymously writes a sentence of encouragement about a personal quality they’ve recognised in the named person. They then fold the paper over to cover their comment and hand it to the person on their left to add their encouragement, and so on.

When each member of the group has written a comment on every other person’s sheet of paper and everyone has their own sheet again, unfold them and read what others have written.

**Get God’s Word**

Read Judges 6:1–24 together.

**Get stuck in**

- The book of Judges starkly depicts the flip-flopping of the Israelites in their commitment to God, who in his mercy keeps on providing them with forgiveness and new beginnings. Having finally made inroads into the Promised Land, why do you think it was so hard for God’s people to be faithful to God?

- Why was God so angry with the Israelites for forgetting him after his mercy to them (vs 1,7–10)? From your own experience, consider if it’s possible to turn away from God without turning to something else which becomes an idol in place of him in our lives?

- In what ways is it necessary for us to recognise our need of God, as the Israelites did (vs 6, 7), in order for his mercy to be applied to our lives? What role can prophesy and conviction of sin play in bringing us to understand our need (vs 8–10)?

- When in your life can you recall God having provided for you in a tangible way? How does reflecting on his provision then encourage you to remain faithful to him now?

- Why did God choose someone so seemingly timid as Gideon to defeat the Midianites (v 15), and how can he call him ‘mighty warrior’ (v 12) without irony? What qualities did he possess that God regarded more highly than strength and prestige (vs 17,24; see 25–27)? What qualities in yourself do you tend to overlook as being of little use to God?

**Get real**

Using the lists of qualities from the start, pray for each other to be able to use these qualities in your service of God. Also pray for spiritual gifts to be developed and fanned into flame for the ‘common good’ of the church (see 1 Corinthians 12:7–11; Romans 12:3–8).

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