

Leader Guide — October 11, 2026 • God Meets Us Before We Can See the Way

Word in Rhythm™

Annual Theme: God's Unchanging Hand

Quarterly Theme: The Hand That Establishes

Week 6: Judges — God Meets Us

Focal Scripture: [Judges 13:1–7, 24–25, KJV](#)

Lesson Emphasis: God Provides Leaders Called to Specific Tasks

Memory Verse — Judges 13:5, KJV

“For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.”

Lesson Thesis: God meets us within circumstances we did not choose, calls us to serve His purposes, and invites us to respond with obedient dependence.

The Teaching Assignment

Help participants move from recognizing Samson's unusual beginning to considering their own response to God within present circumstances. Keep the passage's central actor in view: God initiates the encounter, announces the assignment, gives instructions, blesses the child, and begins stirring him through His Spirit.

The lesson should leave participants with greater confidence in God and a concrete willingness to obey. Samson's strength belongs to the unfolding story; this passage concentrates on his preparation.

Aim for Change: Participants will **RECOUNT** the details of Samson's birth and calling, **EMPATHIZE** with the possible difficulty of receiving lifestyle restrictions before having a choice, and **REFLECT** on how unforeseen circumstances can prepare people for leadership.

Prepare Before Teaching

Read [Judges 13 in its entirety](#), including the verses between the announcement and the birth. Notice Manoah's request for guidance and his wife's discernment.

Review [Numbers 6:1–21](#) for the background of Nazirite consecration. Samson’s calling is distinctive because it is announced before birth and described as lifelong.

Keep three distinctions clear:

- Samson is a judge and deliverer; no named human prophet delivers this announcement.
- Israel has no reigning Israelite king in this setting.
- Judges 13 names no concurrent preaching prophet, so precise overlap with Eli or Samuel should not be asserted from this chapter.

Open the Conversation

Ask:

“Have you ever received a responsibility before you felt prepared for it?”

Allow a few brief responses without requiring personal disclosure. Then connect the conversation to the text:

“Today’s passage begins before Samson can make any decisions. God announces his calling within a household and a nation facing circumstances they cannot simply resolve. We will consider both God’s initiative and the faithful response His word requires.”

Read the focal passage aloud before developing the lesson.

Guide the Five Teaching Movements

1. God Meets Us in Circumstances We Cannot Resolve

Scripture: [Judges 13:1–3](#)

Israel’s renewed evil and Philistine oppression establish the national setting. The woman’s barrenness establishes the household’s circumstances. God sends His messenger into this setting and announces a future they cannot produce for themselves.

Ask: What does the opening tell us about Israel’s condition and this family’s situation?

Listen for: The distinction between the two. Israel’s oppression is explicitly connected to its wrongdoing; the text does not attribute the woman’s barrenness to personal sin.

Teaching emphasis: God can meet people within limitations without those limitations being evidence of personal failure.

2. God’s Calling Gives Consecration Its Meaning

Scripture: [Judges 13:4–5](#)

The instructions concern a child who will be consecrated to God and entrusted with a particular task. Explain the restrictions through the relationship: Samson belongs to God.

Ask: How does knowing whom Samson belongs to help us understand the instructions?

Listen for: Consecration involves dedication, responsibility, and choices shaped by belonging.

Teaching emphasis: Christian obedience grows from belonging to Christ. Connect this principle to discipleship without assigning Samson's particular Nazirite requirements to every believer.

3. Faithful Preparation Includes the Obedience of Others

Scripture: [Judges 13:6–7](#)

Samson's mother receives the announcement and communicates it to Manoah. Her participation places ordinary household faithfulness within a larger work of deliverance.

Ask: Who helped prepare you for responsibilities you later received?

Listen for: Parents, caregivers, teachers, mentors, church members, and others whose steady service shaped growth.

Teaching emphasis: Helping another person grow is meaningful service. Encourage participants to recognize those contributions and consider whom they are now helping prepare.

4. God's Promise Unfolds Through Growth and His Spirit's Activity

Scripture: [Judges 13:24–25](#)

The child is born, grows, receives the LORD's blessing, and begins to experience the Spirit's stirring. The passage gives us stages rather than an immediate public demonstration of deliverance.

Ask: What can make us impatient with preparation?

Listen for: Comparison, pressure to prove ourselves, fear of being overlooked, or a desire for immediate results.

Teaching emphasis: Encourage faithfulness in present responsibilities. Preparation may include learning, correction, practice, and receiving help.

5. Our Assignment Is a Portion of God's Larger Work

Scripture: [Judges 13:5](#)

Give attention to the word “**begin.**” Samson’s assignment has a defined scope. He is called to participate in deliverance without being its final answer.

Ask: How might accepting the scope of our responsibility change the way we serve?

Listen for: Greater humility, willingness to collaborate, freedom to let others continue the work, and reduced pressure to control outcomes.

Teaching emphasis: Faithful service includes wholehearted effort and trust in God for what lies beyond our responsibility.

Handle the Lesson’s Emotional Question Carefully

The Aim for Change invites participants to empathize with Samson’s possible feelings about restrictions imposed before birth. The passage does not report those feelings.

Use the question as an invitation to reflection:

“What might be difficult about growing up with responsibilities or boundaries you did not choose?”

Then return to what Scripture establishes: the calling, instructions, birth, blessing, and Spirit’s activity. This allows thoughtful empathy while preserving the difference between the text and our imagination.

If someone shares a painful circumstance, listen with care. Avoid rushing to explain why it happened. You can affirm that seeking healing, protection, wise counsel, or practical help may be part of a faithful response.

Bring the Lesson to Christ

Samson’s later life reveals the gap that can develop between gifting and obedience. Briefly acknowledge that larger story without allowing it to overtake today’s passage.

Then read [Matthew 1:21](#). Samson begins deliverance from Philistine oppression; Jesus saves His people from their sins.

Read [John 15:4–5](#) to connect the lesson to abiding. The Christian response is dependence upon Jesus, whose grace forms both our service and our character.

Ask: Where do I need Christ’s help to become more faithful with what I have already received?

Lead the Reflection Toward Response

Use the lesson's five reflection questions according to the time available. Let participants examine the text before moving into personal application.

For the final response, invite them to complete this sentence privately:

“Within _____, my next faithful step is _____.”

Encourage a specific, practical step: asking for guidance, accepting correction, offering help, fulfilling a responsibility, seeking support, or returning to a neglected practice of prayer and Scripture.

The leader's task is to help participants discern a response grounded in God's Word. Give them room to consider it honestly.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for meeting us within our present circumstances. Help us receive Your Word, honor the responsibilities You have entrusted to us, and depend upon Your Spirit. Through Jesus Christ, grow our character alongside our gifts. Give us courage for the next faithful step and humility to trust You with the results. Amen.

Today's Takeaway: God can meet us within circumstances we did not choose and form us for faithful service as we receive His word and depend upon Him.

Leader's posture: Lord, let my teaching help people hear Your Word and respond faithfully to You.