The Story: Chapter Eight

A Few Good Men and Women

***“****I appeal to you therefore, brothers,[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+12&version=ESV#fen-ESV-28231a)*] by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.[*[*b*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+12&version=ESV#fen-ESV-28231b)*]****2****Do not be conformed to this world,[*[*c*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+12&version=ESV#fen-ESV-28232c)*] but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect”*  Romans 12:1-2

**A General’s Farewell**

**A look back** *(The Story* pages 100-101, Joshua 24)

* This is God’s story:
  + “I chose \_\_\_\_\_Abraham\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”
  + “I deposited \_\_Jacob & Sons\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”
  + “I sent \_\_\_\_\_\_Moses & Aaron\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”
  + “I defeated the \_\_gods of Egypt\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”
  + “I saved the people from \_\_slavery\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”
  + “I defeated the \_\_\_\_\_\_Egyptian army\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”
  + “I brought you through the \_\_wilderness\_\_\_\_”
  + “I gave you the \_\_\_\_promised land\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”

**A look ahead** (*The Story* page 101, Joshua 24)

* This is Your story:
  + Serve the Lord with sincerity and faithfulness
  + Turn your back on false gods.
  + Follow my example.
* In light of God’s mercy and grace, we choose
  + You cannot! (Joshua 24:19-20)
  + You must! (Joshua 24:21-24)

**3 Chairs**

**The First Chair:**

* Joshua & the elders
  + Knows God and saw His works
  + Fears, loves, and trusts God
  + Submits to the authority of Scripture
  + Actions reveal personal faith/relationship

**The Second Chair:**

* The next generation
  + Knows about God and heard about His works
  + Believes there is a God
  + Respects the Bible as a good book
  + Actions reveal religious adherence

**The Third Chair:** *(The Story* pages 103-104)

* The third generation
  + Does not know God or His works
  + No faith in God
  + The Bible is an enigma/conundrum
  + Actions reveal godless faith

**The Judges: “*Everyone did that which was right in their own eyes.”***

**Deborah** (*The Story* pages 105-106)

* There were people who wanted to do the will of God.
* They did not know how to do the will of God.
* God is victorious, will you partner with Him?
* Partnership with God requires faith and courage.

**Gideon** (*The Story*, pages 108-112)

* Gideon was a fearful farmer.
* God called him a mighty warrior.
* The odds were horrible, so God corrected them:
  + Midianites = 135,000, Israelites = 32,000 (that is 4 to 1)
  + God sends home all the fearful. (now it is 13 to 1)
  + God sends home those who know how to drink. (450 to 1)
* It is not great men who change the world, but weak men in the hands of a great God.
* God does not ask us to do the hard things for Him, He fights the battle on our behalf.
* “Watch me”, “Follow my lead”, “Do exactly as I do”

**Samson** *(The Story*, pages 112-119)

* Samson was: arrogant, a deceiver, self-pleasing, vengeful, maverick, lover of conflict.
* Samson was the embodiment of the people.
* Samson exposes the great depression.

**Take Away Messages**

1. God is gracious and giving
2. God’s gifts can be taken for granted and even misused
3. God remembers His promises and He cares about people
4. God treasures repentance and faith