Gideon & the God of the Underdog
Judges 6-8

We looked over the story of Gideon from Judges 7:19-8:21, and grappled with a distressing and challenging chapter.

It's hard to work out how to react when we see biblical heroes acting in ways that are utterly unacceptable to us now, especially as Judges 8 doesn't overtly comment on whether Gideon is doing right or wrong.

The crucial key is to remember that every part of the Old Testament finds its fulfilment in Jesus- this is particularly pronounced in Judges where each "hero" might model some positive reflections of the way that Jesus would finally work a greater salvation, but more often their failings show us what is lacking in human saviours (and what will **never** be lacking in Christ).

Questions for discussion:

Read over Judges 7:19-8:21 (you may want to read on to the end of chapter 8, although we'll be covering the rest next week).

- What are your initial reactions to this passage? What questions does it leave you with? Does it put you in mind of other sections of scripture that are similarly difficult reads?

- There's no overt praise or criticism of Gideon in this passage… what do you think he does well, and where do you think he fails? (There's no overt critique of him, but if you skim ahead to what happens next for his

line in Judges 8:21-9:6 we get an indication of how successful his redemption of Israel has been)

- Thinking over the whole story of Gideon so far, in what ways does he show us:
  - What to expect when God works salvation
  - What not to expect (i.e. what we see when Gideon is working without real reference to the Lord)

- When do you find yourself trusting too much in human strength or human leaders? How have you reacted when their failings have been made clear?

- Reflect as a group on the guarantee in scripture that the Lord's strength will never fail, that we can depend utterly on Christ- who will **never** fail us in these ways. Some of these passages may be useful:
  - Psalm 44
  - Psalm 118
  - Isaiah 40
  - Philippians 2:1-11
  - Ephesians 3:14-21
  - Hebrews 12:1-3
  - And many more!