

[LIMITLESS]

Week One: Obscurity – Study Guide

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Many of us love those TV shows that find people with hidden talents that are suddenly exposed to the world—*American Idol*, *America's Got Talent* or those viral YouTube videos that make people famous. In each of us, there tends to be a struggle between the willingness to live exactly where God wants us, and the feeling that we're always hiding in the shadows. As we dive into this week's *Limitless study*, we will see how God uses all of our situations, whether in obscurity or in public, to build our character and grow our faith in Him.

Where Am I Today?

- 1) How much do you want to be noticed by others? What would you like to be recognized for? Be honest in your answers.

Into the Bible

- 2) The Bible is full of stories of people who lived in obscurity, only to be unexpectedly chosen by God. Read **1 Samuel 16:5-13** to see one of these examples. What is the difference between the way God looks at a person and man's way of looking at a person? Why did God's choice for king possibly come as a surprise?

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- 3) There was another moment when David stepped up to be an unlikely candidate for a specific mission. Read **1 Samuel 17:31-37** and discuss the following questions: What is Saul's initial reaction to David wanting to fight Goliath? In what way can we see how God shaped David's character while he served in obscurity out in the shepherd fields?

- 4) David remembered that God's power had delivered him in the past. That memory gave him the courage to face the giant that everybody else was afraid to fight. Read **1 Corinthians 2:1-5** to discover where the Apostle Paul found the same courage to preach the Gospel. What indication do these verses give that Paul had to push through to overcome his fear? Where does Paul say his help and power came from, and why was that so important for the church in Corinth to recognize?

How Does This Apply?

- 5) It's easy to do "big things" for God when you get noticed. However, as Jesus followers, our value is not based on our visibility to man, but in the value that God has placed on us. How are we able to overcome the need to be noticed when serving? How have you possibly struggled with serving in humility, no matter your visibility?

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- 6) God was with David, whether it was in an obscure shepherd field or on the public battlefield. David knew it was God who empowered him in ALL circumstances. His courage didn't hinge on the cheering of men, but rather on his faith in God. Do you find yourself relying on God's power in all circumstances? Why, or why not? What changes do you need to make?

- 7) Whether in seasons of obscurity, or publicity, God shapes our character and love for Him. How are you allowing God to shape your character?

- 8) God's power in our lives does not hinge on His shortage of faithfulness, but rather on a lack of our faith in Him. Fear can be a faith killer. It causes us to keep asking "what if" and forget that "God did" and that "He will." Take a moment to identify a deep fear of yours. Why do you think you struggle with this fear? If comfortable, share with your group members.

Prayer Focus

As a church, we are praying together for several things this month:

- Pray for the final pieces of the Statesville Campus building purchase process, and for the safety of the team members who will be working in the building.
- Pray for Christians around the globe who are experiencing persecution.
- Pray for people who need courage to follow God's big vision for their lives.

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Continue Learning on Your Own

- 9) As a Jesus follower, it's easy to get caught up in stories like David's and wonder when God is finally going to bring us out of the shadows. It's okay to look at the story of David and learn biblical truths from his life. However, if we just talk about him from the angle of waiting to come out of obscurity, we can easily become discontent with where God has us. Sometimes, we may even think that God is punishing us when we feel invisible to people. The truth is, living a life of obscurity is what being a Jesus follower is all about. Jesus becomes the One we desire to make the focus instead of ourselves. Read **John 3:25-30**. What was John the Baptist communicating to his followers?