



# WHAT HOLDS YOU

# CAPTIVE?

**New Life Bible Fellowship Men's Retreat  
August 5-7, 2016**

# SCHEDULE

## Friday

- 11:00 Lunch (optional)
- 12:00 Golf (optional)
- 17:00 Early check-in at camp (optional)
- 18:00 Dinner (optional)
- 19:00 Opening Ceremonies
- 19:30 Session 1**
- 20:30 Small Group Discussion

## Saturday

- 07:00 Coffee
- 08:00 Breakfast
- 09:00 Session 2**
- 10:15 Small Group Discussion
- 11:00 Free Time
- 12:00 Lunch / Free Time
- 17:15 Dinner
- 18:30 Session 3**
- 19:30 Small Group Discussion
- 20:15 Campfire

## Sunday

- 07:00 Coffee
- 08:00 Breakfast
- 09:00 Session 4**
- 10:00 Small Group Discussion
- 10:45 Depart

## WELCOME LETTER

Men of New Life Bible Fellowship:

Thank you for asking me to speak at your retreat. I'm coming to this retreat to have fun, to laugh, to "get away," and to see old friends and make some new ones. I hope you are, too.

But if these are the only reasons we've come, then we are wasting our time—and not only our time but our families' time, our churches' time, and most especially God's time.

This retreat is strategic. It's for *more* than fun, *more* than laughter. It's a time for us to get away from distractions so that we can listen to God and ask him to make us into the men he calls us to be, that is, men who are not enslaved to sin but set free to serve and love Christ. Across the weekend, as we look at the Old Testament book of Judges, we'll discuss 12 issues that have (and continue to) "imprison men." But we'll also see how the gospel of Jesus Christ sets us free.

And to that end I ask you to fully commit, to not hold anything back, to be transparent, thoughtful, and repentant. I ask that you labor to come back home changed by the gospel. If we do this, our time will not be wasted, our families will thank us, and God will be honored.

Grace and peace,

Benjamin Vrbicek

*Teaching Pastor at Community Evangelical Free Church*

*Home address, 3617 Hillcrest Road, Harrisburg, PA 17109*

*Email, Benjamin@fanandflame.com*

*Website, FANANDFLAME.com*

## SESSION 1, FRIDAY PM

### Upon Further Review

Judges 2:6–3:6

Summary: As men, we are prone to give superficial assessment of our failures: “The sun was in my eyes,” or “I’m too old to change.” But the Bible, specifically this passage in Judges, doesn’t let us do that. *And that’s a good thing!* A superficial understanding of sin only allows for superficial freedom. God, however, wants to give you true freedom (John 8:32).

Key Verse: *“And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel” (Judges 2:10).*

Themes: Superficial assessment and excuses  
No gospel-relationship with God  
Failure to pass on the faith to the next generation

Outline: I. Why the conquest failed.  
II. What God was going to do about it.

**Notes:**

## SESSION 2, SATURDAY AM

### The Purpose of Privilege

Judges 13:24–16:31

Summary: When we think about what it means to be “privileged,” we often think of it as something that belongs to someone else. “Look at that guy; he’s got it all; he’s privileged.” But everyone of us, in our own ways, has been privileged. The question that hangs over Samson’s life, and for that matter our lives, is this: How will we use our privilege? Will we squander our privilege on ourselves or leverage it for the good of others?

Key Verse: *“Samson said to his father, ‘Get her for me, for she is right in my eyes’” (Judges 14:3).*

Themes: Abuse of power  
Sexual sin  
Doing what’s right in your own eyes

Outline: I. Privilege: its abuse.  
II. Privilege: its proper use.

**Notes:**

## SESSION 3, SATURDAY PM

### Feasting in Freedom

Judges 17:1–18:31

Summary: There's nothing wrong with hard work and getting ahead, even being a shrewd entrepreneur. But what happens when we take a "good thing" and make it an "ultimate thing"? What happens when we exalt work—or hobbies, or family, or safety, or money, or sex, or anything—to the place of god? When we do this, idolatry happens; slavery happens. Yet, how are we to overcome this idolatry? The Christian answer is that we must feast on the gospel. As Jesus said, "My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink" (John 6:55).

Key Verse: *"You take my gods that I made and the priest, and go away, and what have I left? How then do you ask me, 'What is the matter with you?'"* (Judges 18:24).

Themes: Worldly ambition  
Making "good things" into "ultimate things"  
Replacing one idol for another idol

Outline: I. Setting the Table.  
II. An Empty Table.



**Notes:**

## SESSION 4, SUNDAY AM

### Finish Strong

Judges 6:1–10:5

Summary: What matters in the Christian life is finishing strong. But not everyone does this. Have you ever wondered why? In Judges 7–10, we see that Gideon didn't finish well. Yes, God used him to lead his people in a great victory, but sadly then came pride and isolation. Men, let's reject pride and remain accountable to each other and to God. Let's finish strong.

Key Verse: *“And Gideon made an ephod of it and put it in his city, in Ophrah. And all Israel whored after it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family” (Judges 8:27).*

Themes: Pride  
Lack of gospel-friendships and gospel-accountability  
Hero worship

Outline: I. Running right.  
II. Finishing wrong.

**Notes:**

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

- Jesus



Celebrating Sixty Years At  
**NEW LIFE**  
BIBLE FELLOWSHIP