

SERMON NOTES - Valentine's Day 2023 - Samson - Jdg 13-16

These notes are designed to be read along with the associated audio / video message

1. A Miraculous birth - Jdg 13:24-25 NKJV — "24 So the woman bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. 25 And the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol."

- Parents are important
- The inherited and time-lapse blessing
- Involve them, learn from them, recognise inherited blessing.

2. He marries a Philistine lady. Jdg 14:1-3 NKJV — "1 Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. 2 So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, "I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife." 3 Then his father and mother said to him, "Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well."

Deu 7:3-4 NKJV — "3 "Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. 4 "For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly."

2Co 6:14 NKJV — "14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?"

- Marry a Christian
- God is kind and overlooks and uses our sin and weaknesses
- God even used this - Jdg 14:4 NKJV — "4 But his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD—that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel."
- Heroic feats

3. He does heroic feats of strength. Ch 14 & 15. "the spirit of the lord came mightily upon him". Judges 14:5-14

- God gives real strength.
- Real is different to and deeper than physical appearance. His strength is from God NOT his muscles. Choose what is really important in a partner.
- God is gracious

4. He meets Delilah and falls for her. Jdg 16:1-6.

- Samson's life is a mess... Prostitutes, and a wife he can't trust.
- She can't be trusted. Try to find someone you can trust
- She hasn't "left and cleaved" as God designed. Marriage God's way is the best way
- God is gracious.

5. Eventually he loses his strength but God is gracious. Jdg 16:21-30.

- A history of grace does not mean it is a rule for always.
- God uses tragedy and can restore and redeem. Second chances. Have you messed up? He can make you brand new.

Conclusions:

- Live for something big and bigger in your life
- Choose wisely and with God's help. Outward appearance is not the best guide.
- Involve parents or advisors.
- There is mercy, forgiveness and a new start / redemption in God

Small group discussion guidelines

Remember that the aim of the small group is to foster discussion and community, rather than for the leader or one individual to preach to everyone.

1 - Often an **Icebreaker question** is a great way to start discussion. You could ask a question like:

- What were the highs or lows of your week?
- What is your earliest memory?
- If you had to describe yourself as one animal, what would it be and why?
- What is your favourite type of holiday destination?

2 - Next, **read the passage**. You can ask various people in the group to help by each reading a portion of the passage.

3 - These are the **main questions** to ask to understand the passage:

- What is the main message of this talk / passage?
Allow discussion and even diverging from the main topic if it is helpful.
- What did you find particularly helpful or challenging?
- What did you not fully understand?
- What can we do PRACTICALLY in response to this teaching?

4 - Close by offering **prayer** for each person.

- Ask, "how can we pray for you / each other now?"
- Ask each person to pray or you, as leader, pray for each person's need

The blessing and opportunity in Small Groups is the possibility for...

- Each person to contribute and/or ask questions,
- People to pray for each other and to ask for prayer,
- People to learn to use and grow in their gifts,
- Community, friendship and intimacy in relationships.

God Bless you in this very important ministry.