

Lessons from a Decaying Culture:

A Study in the Book Of Judges

Intro:

- Wasting our talents on the trivial and the selfish
- Samson ruled for 20 years and accomplished little if nothing
- God used Samson's failures to achieve His purpose of separating the Philistines and Israelites.
- Samson's boldness in sin eventually catches up to him and costs him everything.

I. Enter Delilah (Judges 16:4-5)

- What is the motivation for this relationship?
- Delilah=Fame and Fortune; Samson=Lust
 - "Hesed" vs "Aheb"
 - "I am with you because I love you" vs "I am with you because you are useful to me"
- What was Samson thinking! (Judges 16:6-14)
 - He was so controlled by his lust that he lost all sense of reason
 - He was in a state of denial (Judges 16:15)
 - He simply wasn't worried about it.

II. The Hair is Gone (Judges 16:20-21)

- Why does God remove the strength at this point?
 - There are times when the most loving thing you can do is to not rescue someone stuck in a cycle of bad repetitive behavior.
- He was so desensitized by his sinfulness that he didn't realize that God wasn't there anymore.
- There was consequences for his sinfulness

III. The Hair Returns (Judges 16:22-30)

- Why let the hair grow back? The Philistines knew nothing of a God of grace and forgiveness.
- The strength came not from the hair or the vow but from the One to whom the vow is made.
- this wasn't about how faithful Samson was to God, but rather how faithful God is to Samson (2 Tim 2:13)
- In his weakness, Samson has become strong because he is calling out to the One to whom all things are possible

Conclusion:

- If you walk a path away from God, eventually you will get there.

- If we turn back to God and He will not only forgive us, but He will restore us and strengthen us once more.

Quotes and Notes:

"His decline began when he disagreed with his parents about marrying a Philistine girl. Then he disdained his Nazirite vow and defiled himself. He disregarded the warnings of God, disobeyed the Word of God, and was defeated by the enemies of God. He probably thought that he had the privilege of indulging in sin since he wore the badge of a Nazirite and won so many victories for the Lord, but he was wrong."

-Warren Wiersbe

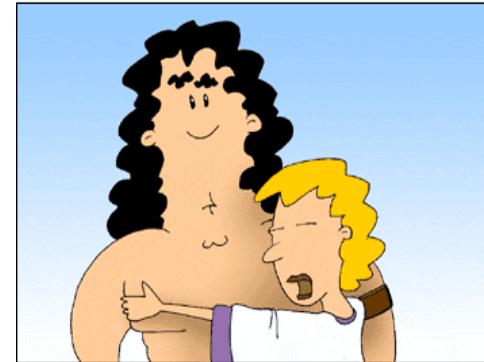
"So the answer to why he told Delilah is this--he did not really believe that his hair or his Nazirite vow was really the source of his strength. He had come to believe that his strength was simply his, that no matter what he did or how he lived he would not lose it. The "web of self-deception", then was not just psychological, but theological. Samson was unable to see how dependent he was on God's grace. He had come to see his strength as an inalienable right, not a gift of God's mercy. He had a view of God that was "magical", and idolatrous."

-- Tim Keller

"You know what impresses me as I read this story? I am impressed with the amazing patience of God. Samson, for years violating his vow, consorting with prostitutes, disregarding God's Word; and God is still empowering him, waiting for him to humble himself and repent. The Bible says, "God is slow to anger." And He uses imperfect people for a long time, because that's the only kind that He has."

-Bob Russell

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Thanks to God's Servant (See Judges 16) 06-25-2003
OH SAMSON DARLING, I LOVE YOU TO DEATH ... WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO KILL YOU?

