

Doing What Seems Right

Judges 1&2

Introduction:

We are going to begin a series today entitled "You Can Make A Difference." This will be from the book of Judges.

My goal in studying this book is three fold...

1. I want to introduce you to some Bible material that perhaps you haven't studied for a while or maybe you have never studied at all.
2. I hope to present these messages in a way that you will not lose heart with the conditions of today. You will realize that humanity has seen the same conditions before and survived by the grace of God.
3. Most importantly... I hope that you come to believe that one person can make a difference and that one person might be you.

Judges 21:25

"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

I would like to begin this series by taking an overview of the book of Judges, a look at the problems that plagued this young nation of Israel, and the lessons that we can learn.

It is essential that the church of the 21st century not repeat the mistakes that were made in the young nation of Israel in the land of promise.

So jump in your time machine... and let's transport back some 3400 years and see what lessons we can learn

1. Guard Yourself Against Unhealthy Compromises

Listen to how this downward cycle for Israel all began...

Judges 2:11-13

¹¹ And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals. ¹² And they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the LORD to anger. ¹³ They abandoned the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaro.

Ashtaro and Baal were the male and female counterparts for the same god.

Context: After years of preparation and work, after decades of hearing God's promises about what He was going to do in this new land, after witnessing time and time again God's power and work among them, after years of following Moses, then Joshua and ultimately the Lord God himself, after years of conquest in the land of Canaan, the Israelites promptly forgot about God.

- They abandoned His standards.
- They dismissed the lessons of their past.
- They began to live by the rules that they made among themselves.

In a word... **compromise**.

- They compromised who they were.
- They compromised what they believed.
- They compromised who they followed.

Question: What were the factors contributing to the compromising spirit in this young Hebrew nation? Why did they disobey?

Answer: Joshua 2:8, 10, 11

⁸ And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110 years.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals.

→ There are **three** things that contributed to their downfall.

1. There was a lack of good leadership.
2. There was lack of good education.
3. There was a lack of experience.

Application: What are the lessons here for us today? (3400 years later)

1. Recognize how important strong leadership is to every succeeding generation.
2. We have to deliberately teach Biblical Principles to the kids that are coming up.
3. Help them to see and understand the experiences of the past.

Compromise is a dangerous thing.

Abraham Lincoln said it this way, "The wolf and the lamb are not agreed on the definition of liberty." Be careful with whom or what you compromise.

Solomon writes (Proverbs 22:28)... *"Do not move an ancient boundary stone set up by your ancestors."*

1. Guard Yourself Against Compromise
2. **Compromise Brings Disaster** (Both Spiritually and Physically)

Judges 2:14-15

*¹⁴ So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. ¹⁵ Whenever they marched out, the hand of the LORD was against them for harm, as the LORD had warned, and as the LORD had sworn to them. **And they were in terrible distress.**" (emphasis is mine)*

A. There are consequences for the actions.

Illustration: My good friend and pastor in the Philippines, David Salingay posted this piece on Facebook... it reads in part.

In three short months, just like He did with the plagues of Egypt, God has taken everything we worship.

God said, "You want to worship athletes, I will shut down stadiums. You want to worship musicians, I will shut down the Civic Centers and Arenas. You want to worship actors, I will shut

down theaters. You want to worship money, I will shut down the economy and collapse the stock market. You don't want to go to church and worship Me, I will make it where you can't go to church." ... Maybe we don't need a vaccine... Maybe we need to take this time of isolation from the distractions of the world and have a personal revival where we focus on the Only thing in the

Application: God reminds us that there are always consequences to the choices that we make and some are painful and lasting... Choose wisely!

1. Guard Yourself Against Compromise
2. Compromise Brings Disaster (Both Spiritually and Physically)

3. God Promises Unfailing Deliverance

Judges 2:16... *"Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them."*

Verse 18... *"Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them."*

Judges 2:17-20a

¹⁸ *Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them.*

Conclusion:

If history seems destined to repeat itself and there is nothing new under the sun... 3400 years ago... a writer set down... hammer and chisel in hand... or his trusty laptop... and issued a warning to all future generations of people.

God's Word is still absolute truth... Compromise brings consequences... But Jesus can deliver us if we commit our life to Him.