

## Lessons from a Decaying Culture:

### A Study in the Book Of Judges

Intro:

- Tragedy in Dallas
- Consumed by anger, hatred, and vengeance
- Godly vessel to vessel of evil and ill intent

#### I. Gideon's Story

- Cowardly beginnings to Mighty Warrior
- 32,000 down to 300
- We tend to end the story there. But that is not the end.
- Two things happen that change Gideon:
  - The experiences goes to his head and it causes him to think more of himself than he should.
    - When godly people become consumed by their own greatness, they forget who they are, who got them to where they are, and who they are supposed to be
  - Gideon is so overcome by his hatred and vengeance, that it impacts how he treats others.

#### II. Walking through the Text

- Judges 8:4-9
  - Gideon asks for help from Succoth and Peniel
  - Gideon shows little understanding to where they are and why they react the way they do.
  - No mercy, no grace. Just threats.
- Judges 8:15-21
  - Gideon tortures and murders his own countrymen
  - Embarrassing the Midianites kings, Killing the Midianites kings
- Judges 8:22-35
  - I'm not the king, but treat me like the king
    - Demands rewards from the people
    - Large harem
    - Abimelech = "My Dad is King"
      - Golden Ephod (Jdg 8:27)

#### III. Take Aways

- Never forget who you were and what God has done for you.
- There are devastating consequences of fostering a spirit of bitterness and revenge.

- When grace is not lived out, it is forgotten and self becomes god.
- Others will follow our example of grace or lack thereof

Conclusion: How do we respond to what happened this past week in Dallas?

- Don't reinforce the hateful rhetoric. Be the peacemaker and live out Gospel.
- Seek to understand the plight of others.
- Don't use broad strokes to define people.
- Don't be blind to truth and reality just because you have a preconceived concept of the truth and reality.
- Pray

