

Following God Away from Dysfunction

"Samson's Marriage: Choose Your Spouse Wisely"

Judges 14-15 – June 11, 2017

Overview of Our Study

FOLLOWING GOD AWAY FROM DYSFUNCTION		
An 11-Week Sermon Series on the Book of Judges		
Date	Message Title	Bible Text
Apr 15/16	On the Third Day (Jesus)	Intro to Judges
Apr 23	Learn From the Mistakes of Others (Ehud)	Judges 1-3
Apr 30	Take a Hammer to Your Oppression (Deborah)	Judges 4-5
May 7	See Yourself as God Sees You (Gideon)	Judges 6
May 14	Trust God to Do the Impossible (Gideon)	Judges 7-8
May 21	Deal with Your Anger (Abimelech)	Judges 9
May 28	Avoid Rash Decisions (Jephthah)	Judges 10-12
June 4	Surrender All to the Lord (Samson's Parents)	Judges 13
June 11	Choose Your Spouse Wisely (Samson's Marriage)	Judges 14-15
June 18	Flee Sexual Immorality (Samson & Delilah)	Judges 16
June 25	Keep Yourself from Idols (Micah)	Judges 17-21

All previous Grace Fellowship sermons are available online at whatisgrace.org

Notes As We Read Judges 14-15

- 14:1 – Philistine-controlled Timnah is 4 miles southwest of Samson's home
- 14:8 – To touch this dead lion's carcass was a violation of Samson's Nazirite vow (Numbers 6:6-7; Judges 13:7)
- 14:17 – This is a repeated pattern in Samson's life (16:16-17).
- 15:11 – This shows the complacency of the Jewish people at this time. They did not want Samson to "rock the boat." They would rather remain in dysfunctional slavery than be delivered.

7 Mistakes to Avoid from Samson's Marriage (Judges 14-15)

1. Make _____ character – not physical attraction – the #1 quality that you look for in your spouse

- Samson's mistake: Physical attraction was his first and only criteria for choosing his spouse (14:1-3).
- Samson's mistake: He was unequally yoked. The Bible is very clear in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 that believers are not to marry unbelievers.
- Application #1 for Singles – Commit to only date (and one day marry) a believer who is pursuing their relationship with Jesus.

- Application #1 for Marrieds – Prioritize your spiritual life together as a married couple. Pray together. Go to church together. Read and discuss God's Word together. Minister together.

2. Deal with your _____ before they destroy your marriage

- Samson's mistake: He had an ego problem and a gambling problem that went unchecked and ultimately led to the downfall of his marriage (14:10-20).
- Application #2 – How to deal with your vices:
 - Call them what they are – "sin" – and repent of them to God asking for His forgiveness and for His power to overcome them by His Spirit (1 John 1:9; Ephesians 5:18).
 - Confess them to a trusted same gender friend (James 5:16) and then ask for help and accountability (Proverbs 27:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).
 - If necessary, get professional help. See yellow list of recommended Christian counselors at Care Kiosk.

3. Be completely _____ with your spouse

- Samson's mistake: He kept secrets from his wife, and he valued his secret, his ego, and his gambling victory more than he valued his wife (14:16).
- **Genesis 2:24-25** – *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.*
- God's design for marriage is complete transparency and vulnerability.
- INTIMACY = Into Me You See

Communication Levels	Meaning	Degree of Transparency	Number of People
1. Cliche'	Non-sharing		
2. Fact	Sharing what you know		
3. Opinion	Sharing what you think		
4. Emotion	Sharing what you feel		
5. No Barriers	Sharing your heart as a way of life		

- Application #3 – Am I practicing "no barriers" communication in my marriage? And, if not, what steps do I need to take to live at that level of vulnerability and transparency?

4. Build, value, and nourish _____ in your marriage

- Samson's mistake: He did not show trust to his wife by sharing the riddle with her at first (14:16).
- Samson's wife's mistake: When he did share the secret, she violated his trust by sharing it with others (14:17-18).
- Application #4 – Does my spouse consider me trustworthy? What steps do I need to take to build trust?
 - I trust that you will tell me the truth
 - I trust that you will love me unconditionally
 - I trust that you will be sexually faithful to me
 - I trust that you will not harm, reject, or control me
 - I trust that you will not abandon me in the face of harm, conflicts, or disagreements
 - I trust that you will make me and our marriage a top priority
 - I trust that you will seek God first above all else.

5. Show _____ and _____ to your spouse

- Samson's mistake: He called his wife a "heifer" (14:18).
- Mark Batterson: "My marital counseling boils down to one piece of advice: focus on meeting your spouse's needs, not yours. If you focus on getting your needs met, you will experience perpetual disappointment. If you focus on meeting the needs of your spouse, you will find great fulfillment."
- Application #5 – Five ways to show your spouse love (from Gary Chapman's *The Five Love Languages*):
 - Words of affirmation
 - Physical touch
 - Quality time together
 - Acts of service
 - Gifts
- Highly recommend Grace Fellowship's "Marriage Matters" course: <http://www.whatisgrace.org/careministry/>

6. _____ for your marriage NOW – not later

- Samson's mistake: In anger over the riddle issue, he left his wife rather than doing the difficult relational work necessary to fight for his marriage (14:19-20).
- Howard Markman: "Decide, don't slide."
- Jesus: "Let no one split apart what God has joined together" (Matthew 19:6 – NLT)
- Mark Batterson: "Don't wash your hands like Pilate. Wash feet like Jesus."
- Application #6 – By the power of God's Spirit, I am going to fight for my marriage!
 - I'm going to apologize and say I am sorry.
 - I'm going to forgive as I have been forgiven.

- I'm going to focus on meeting my spouse's needs above my own.
- I'm going to prioritize our marriage relationship.
- I'm going to pray with my spouse.
- I'm going to court my spouse.
- I'm going to get help when necessary.

- Highly recommend Family Life's "Weekend to Remember": <http://www.familylife.com/weekend-to-remember>

7. Stay true to your _____

- Mistake: Neither Samson nor his wife stayed true to their wedding vows (4:19-20).
- The wedding vow

I, Jim, take you, Lisa, to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy Word; and thereto, I pledge you my faith.

- The 5 Purposes of Marriage:
 - (1) To alleviate aloneness and have oneness (Genesis 2:18-25)
 - (2) To enjoy physical intimacy and overcome sexual temptations (Genesis 2:24-24; 1 Corinthians 7:2-5)
 - (3) To procreate (Genesis 1:28)
 - (4) To minister together extending God's Kingdom (Genesis 1:26-28)
 - (5) To paint a picture of the covenant relationship between Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:22-33).
- John Piper: "The ultimate thing we can say about marriage is that it exists for God's glory. That is, it exists to display God. Marriage is patterned after Christ's covenant relationship to His redeemed people, the church. And therefore, the highest meaning and the most ultimate purpose of marriage is to put the covenant relationship of Christ and His church on display. That is why marriage exists. If you are married, that is why you are married. Staying married, therefore, is not mainly about staying in love. It is about keeping covenant. 'Till death do us part' or 'As long as we both shall live' is a sacred promise – the same kind Jesus made with His bride when He died for her. Therefore, what makes divorce and remarriage so horrific in God's eyes is not merely that it involves covenant-breaking to the spouse, but that it involves misrepresenting Christ and His covenant. Christ will never leave His wife. Ever. There may be times of painful distance and tragic backsliding on our part. But Christ keeps His covenant forever. Marriage is a display of that! That is the ultimate thing we can say about marriage. It puts the glory of Christ's covenant-keeping love on display."
- Application #7 – Renew your wedding vows today.