

Samson and the Lion

(Judges 14)

Yearly Theme: *“Love Is...”*

Series Title: *Kind of a “BIG” Deal*

July 7th, 2019

Something to think about:

“A young woman asked for an appointment with her pastor to talk with him about a besetting sin about which she was worried. When she saw him, she said, ‘Pastor, I have become aware of a sin in my life which I cannot control. Every time I am at church I begin to look around at the other women, and I realize that I am the prettiest one in the whole congregation. None of the others can compare with my beauty. What can I do about this sin?’ ‘The pastor replied, ‘Mary, that’s not a sin, why that’s just a mistake!’”¹

We come into a new series this month in our ongoing theme of love this year. The new series this month will focus on the life of Samson in the Old Testament book of Judges and will further develop the teaching on the aspect of love in 1 Corinthians 13 that states that *“...love is not boastful or proud.”*

We begin in Judges 14, where Samson has grown into a young man. He is the son of a man named Manoah and his wife. Being unable to have children, the LORD heard the cries of Manoah’s wife and granted her prayer to have a child with the caveat being, she must not drink wine or strong drink during the pregnancy or go near any dead body. The reason: the child was to be a Nazarite (we will talk more about this later).

Samson eventually became one of the Judges over Israel before the time when kings ruled the nation. We pick up Samson’s story today as he catches eyes with a woman he wants to make his wife. However, there are problems surrounding the marriage and the situation leading up to the wedding day. Let’s take a look...

Open your Bibles to: Judges 14:1-20 (The NLT Version will be projected on the screen up front today).

Here's the key point this morning...

Key Point: *“Pride leads to deception.”*

How does this play out in today’s narrative? Let’s take a look:

- Samson killed a lion with his bare hands but didn’t tell his parents.

When we veer off the path, we oftentimes find ourselves being ambushed by the enemy. He waits in the bushes to trap us and devour us with his deceptive tactics. This is something the Apostle Peter (one of Jesus’ disciples) reminds us of in his letter in the New Testament:

- Samson took honey from the carcass of the dead lion and gave some to his parents.

When we get away with something, pride deceives us into gloating over our accomplishment. Without any direct consequence for our actions we begin to think that we’re invincible and that our actions are undetectable.

- Samson’s wife nagged him to the point of despair in order to know the secret to his riddle.

In a twist of irony, Samson’s greatest strength is also his weakness. Samson’s God-given abilities which are supposed to be used for God’s purposes, end up becoming a game and a parlor trick for Samson to boast about his amazing strength and invincibility. However, Samson’s pride will ultimately be his downfall. Eventually, Samson’s pride will catch up with him.

Something to take home:

Samson’s great strength caused him to let down his guard. Samson’s greatest ability caused him to lose sight and focus of what really mattered. This is what happens when we allow pride to take over in our lives. When pride takes over, we lose sight of the most important things in life. When pride takes over, we lose the ability to reason through things with clarity. When pride takes over, we give in to lies and deceit that will ultimately catch up with us. When pride takes over, we tell lies and foster deceit that, for a time, keeps us on top of things; but where there is a false foundation built on deceit, eventually the bottom falls out.

Love is not boastful or proud. If it is, then it’s not love. Where pride exists, love cannot. Like Samson, when pride rules in our hearts there is no place for anything else but our own desires and our own interests. Don’t let pride rule your heart. Don’t allow lies and deception drive your life. In humility, allow God to use the abilities He’s gifted you with to make a difference in the world around you rather than for you.

¹ Source unknown.

NOTES:



North Main Exists to...

"Develop completely committed followers of Christ who:

Know Christ intimately,
Grow in Christ continually, and,
Go for Christ daily;

Through:
Core Families,
Community Partnerships, and
Global Connections."

Love is not...

BOASTFUL or PROUD

"THE STORY OF SAMSON"

LESSON 1:

"SAMSON AND THE LION"
(Judges 14:1-20)

Samson and the Lion

(Judges 14:1-20)

Series Title: *Kind of a "BIG" Deal*

KICK STARTERS:

- ⇒ How would you define the word "boastful?"
- ⇒ Describe a time when you experienced boastfulness or pride on display...

SCRIPTURE: (Before studying this material, consider listening to the corresponding message online at: <http://www.northmaincog.org/media/sermon-media>)

Judges 14:1-20 (NLT)

¹ One day when Samson was in Timnah, one of the Philistine women caught his eye. ² When he returned home, he told his father and mother, "A young Philistine woman in Timnah caught my eye. I want to marry her. Get her for me."

³ His father and mother objected. "Isn't there even one woman in our tribe or among all the Israelites you could marry?" they asked. "Why must you go to the pagan Philistines to find a wife?"

But Samson told his father, "Get her for me! She looks good to me."⁴ His father and mother didn't realize the LORD was at work in this, creating an opportunity to work against the Philistines, who ruled over Israel at that time.

⁵ As Samson and his parents were going down to Timnah, a young lion suddenly attacked Samson near the vineyards of Timnah. ⁶ At that moment the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon him, and he ripped the lion's jaws apart with his bare hands. He did it as easily as if it were a young goat. But he didn't tell his father or mother about it. ⁷ When Samson arrived in Timnah, he talked with the woman and was very pleased with her.

⁸ Later, when he returned to Timnah for the wedding, he turned off the path to look at the carcass of the lion. And he found that a swarm of bees had made some honey in the carcass. ⁹ He scooped some of the honey into his hands and ate it along the way. He also gave some to his father and mother, and they ate it. But he didn't tell them he had taken the honey from the carcass of the lion.

¹⁰ As his father was making final arrangements for the marriage, Samson threw a party at Timnah, as was the custom for elite young men. ¹¹ When the bride's parents saw him, they selected thirty young men from the town to be his companions.

¹² Samson said to them, "Let me tell you a riddle. If you solve my riddle during these seven days of the celebration, I will give you thirty fine linen robes and thirty sets of festive clothing. ¹³ But if you can't solve it, then you must give me thirty fine linen robes and thirty sets of festive clothing."

"All right," they agreed, "let's hear your riddle."

¹⁴ So he said:

"Out of the one who eats came something to eat;
out of the strong came something sweet."

Three days later they were still trying to figure it out. ¹⁵ On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband to explain the riddle for us, or we will burn down your father's house with you in it. Did you invite us to this party just to make us poor?"

¹⁶ So Samson's wife came to him in tears and said, "You don't love me; you hate me! You have given my people a riddle, but you haven't told me the answer."

"I haven't even given the answer to my father or mother," he replied. "Why should I tell you?" ¹⁷ So she cried whenever she was with him and kept it up for the rest of the celebration. At last, on the seventh day he told her the answer because she was tormenting him with her nagging. Then she explained the riddle to the young men.

¹⁸ So before sunset of the seventh day, the men of the town came to Samson with their answer:

"What is sweeter than honey?
What is stronger than a lion?"

Samson replied, "If you hadn't plowed with my heifer, you wouldn't have solved my riddle!"

¹⁹ Then the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon him. He went down to the town of Ashkelon, killed thirty men, took their belongings, and gave their clothing to the men who had solved his riddle. But Samson was furious about what had happened, and he went back home to live with his father and mother. ²⁰ So his wife was given in marriage to the man who had been Samson's best man at the wedding.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. Give a brief synopsis of what is going on in the text for today's study. (For more background you will want to read Judges 13)...

2. As a Nazarite, Samson was not to touch or go near any dead body, drink wine or any strong drink, or cut his hair. In what ways did Samson violate his vows in this narrative?

3. After killing the lion near the vineyards of Timnah, why didn't he tell his parents?

4. Read 1 Peter 5:8-9. When we wander off the path of faith, we often times fall prey to the enemy who prowls around like a lion looking for someone to devour. In the real life situation of Samson, how does this passage describe Samson was able to overcome the lion that attacked him (v. 6)?

5. Almost a year later, Samson and his parents return to Timnah to finalize the marriage proceedings with the Philistine woman that Samson had taken a liking to. On their way, Samson breaks away from his parents again to go and see if the lion is still there. Arriving at the place where he slew the lion were the skeletal remains of the lion with honeycomb inside of it. Somewhat gloating over his accomplishment, he takes some honey and gives it to his parents. Why doesn't he tell them where he got it?

6. Pride and arrogance makes a person haughty and unwilling to admit wrongs done. How does pride deceive us into thinking that we're invincible and our actions undetectable?

7. Finally, Samson's new wife (whose life is under threat), begs Samson to tell her the secret of a riddle that he spoke to the bridal party. After much nagging and crying, she wears Samson down and tells her the secret he has been hiding. What happens next? How is Samson's greatest strength his greatest weakness?

SELF-EVALUATION/APPLICATION:

- ⇒ **IT'S INTERESTING THAT** Samson's great strength caused him to let down his guard. Samson's greatest ability caused him to lose sight and focus of what really mattered.
- ⇒ **WHEN PRIDE TAKES OVER**, we lose sight of the most important things in life. When pride takes over, we lose the ability to reason through things with clarity. When pride takes over, we give in to lies and deceit that will ultimately catch up with us. When pride takes over, we tell lies and foster deceit that, for a time, keeps us on top of things; but where there is a false foundation built on deceit, eventually the bottom falls out. Is there pride or boastfulness ruling your life?
- ⇒ **MEMORY VERSES:** Judges 14:5-6; 1 Peter 5:8-9.