

Samson #4 - Indulging Sin

by Andrew Foster

The sermon examines Samson's tragic indulgence in sin and its consequences, urging believers to remain vigilant against temptation.

Duration: 58:08

Scripture: Matthew 16:23, Galatians 5:19

Topics: "Samson"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the dangers of indulging in sin and following worldly desires. He uses the story of Samson as an example, highlighting how Samson went from experiencing the power and presence of God to indulging in sin very quickly. The preacher emphasizes that sin follows a pattern of seeing, lusting, and taking, and warns that indulging in sin has tragic consequences for the child of God. He also points out that Samson's indulgence of sin was not sudden, but rather a result of his previous actions and choices. The preacher concludes by reminding the audience that they too can easily fall into sin if they are not careful to guard their hearts and minds.

Transcript

Thank you for being here again. We're going to turn please to Judges chapter 16, 16th chapter of the book of Judges. And as usual, we will take the time to read the chapter.

It's a little longer than some of the Bible readings we have had thus far, but I think it's important that we get the words of God in our minds. And so we'll read at the first one, but before we do that, let's take a moment to pray and just solemnly ask God, earnestly seek the Lord. We will hear His voice.

Our Father in heaven, we thank Thee that when we handle this word, we handle the words of God. We pray, Lord, that as these words are communicated now by the sound of the preacher's voice, O Lord, beyond the voice of man, beyond the frailty of the vessel of clay, there would be the sound of the voice of God. We pray that Thy Holy Spirit today would take the written word and take the preached word and make it the living word to our hearts.

O communicate Christ to us. Communicate the fullness of God's revelation. He who is the word, the eternal word.

Lord, may we taste something of that even now as we consider this little passage from my word. Pour out the Holy Ghost. We've already been thinking of that today.

We ask for the power of the Spirit of God to come mightily to defeat the power and working of sin and the flesh within us. Overcome the working of carnality that would resist the teaching of Thy word. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Judges 16 then unto verse 1, Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went unto her, and was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and they laid wait for him all night in the gate of the sitting, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him.

And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the sitting and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of a hill that is before Hebron, and came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Shorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the fullest towns came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him, and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver. And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherein thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.

And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green wits that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. Then the lords of the fullest towns brought up to her seven green wits which had not been dried, and she bound them with them. Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber.

And she said unto him, The fullest towns be upon thee, Samson, and he break the wits as a thread of toe is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known. And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies.

Now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that were never occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man. Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound them therewith, and said unto him, The fullest towns be upon thee, Samson.

And there were liars in wait, abiding in the chamber, and he break them from off his arms like a thread. And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies. Tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound.

And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web, and she fastened it with the pin, and said unto him, The fullest towns be upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his head, out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web. And she said unto him, How canst thou say I love thee, when thine heart is not with me? Thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth.

And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her word, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death, that he told her all his heart. And said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head, for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb. If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man.

And when Delilah saw that, he had told her all his heart. She sent and called for the Lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he has shewed me all his heart. Then the Lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand, and she made him sleep upon her knees.

And she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head, and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, The fullest towns be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and check myself.

And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass, and he did grind in the prison house. Albeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

Then the Lords of the Philistines gathered them together to offer a great sacrifice, and to dig in their God, and to rejoice. For they said, Our God hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand. And when the people saw him, they praised their God.

For they said, Our God hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us. It came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make a sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house, and he made them sport, and they set him between the pillars.

And Samson said unto the lad that led him by the hand, Suffer me, that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women, and all the Lords of the Philistines were there. And there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women that beheld, while Samson made sport.

And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines from my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines.

But he bowed himself with all his might, and the house fell upon the Lords and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew in his death were more than they which he slew in his life. Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtoal in the place of Manoah his father.

And he judged Israel twenty years. Amen. The Lord will add his blessing to our Bible reading.

This is a sad chapter. In many ways we come to the end of Samson. Tomorrow, in the will of God, we are going to look at one more message on the life of Samson dealing with the legacy that he left behind.

But for now, we are going to cover the contents of chapter sixteen, especially to consider them from the perspective of the tragedy of indulging the flesh. Samson was a child of God. Samson was more than that.

Samson was a man of God mightily used by the Lord. In every good man there are blemishes, there are flaws, there are sins, there are even great sins. And I would never want any of us to make the mistake as we look into the mirror of scripture and we see there on this page the portrait of Samson, we ought never to forget that that is a reflection of me.

This is what I am. This is what you are. In fact, if we are honest, in many ways Samson was a better man than you or I have ever been.

We have no cause, none of us, for looking down our nose derisively and dismissively at this man of God. To give him his place, we need to give him the place God gave him in Hebrews chapter eleven as a champion of the faith. You find that hard to understand.

It is hard to understand in the light of the blemishes and the awful sins as we would properly describe them that are recorded even in this passage. And yet that is where God puts him. God puts him among the heroes of the field.

Yet the historical record here is one which highlights his sin, his carnality, the defeat that he suffered in his own life as he gave way to the vile passions of his own heart. Why does the Bible record such things? Would it not have been so much easier for us to understand if the Holy Spirit had simply just glossed over all these things and left it that we have a blameless record? Oh, record the truth, record the victories, record the high points, but leave out all the other things. And then when we come to Hebrews eleven, we could understand, at least we think we could understand, why it would be that God should put such a man in Hebrews chapter eleven.

Why was the Holy Ghost right that Samson sinned the way he did? And record those facts to counterbalance those marvelous episodes of Holy Ghost power such as few men ever have known. I think there are two lessons that we can learn and must ever bear in mind. Number one, even the imperfect, those polluted with sin, can be mightily used by God as his Spirit works in them.

Samson's influence for God and his power for God was limited to those times when the Holy Ghost came sovereignly and mightily upon him. If you were to look into the Word of God and discover there that God only ever used a perfect man, a very proper and natural reaction would be for you to close your Bible and never open it again, because how could God use me or you? We look into our own hearts, we see sin there. We recognize the working of the flesh, we recognize the power of sin yet within our unglorified frame.

We recognize the working of the old man that we must fight on a continual basis. We recognize that there is still within our being until that day when we are either resurrected or glorified as Christ comes. There is still within our being that which is a wide open door, a willing helper and accomplice to sin.

If God only used a perfect man, we would have to face up to the despair of never being able to do anything for God. I think the record of Samson and many others like him is there to impress upon us that God uses men that even in their flesh are marked and stained and polluted by sin. On the other side, however, there is another lesson that needs to be learned.

God records a chapter like Judges 16 so that no Christian would ever be under the delusion that they can sin with impunity. The two things go together. Yes, God will in mercy, in his sovereign grace, use sinful men.

He has never used anything else in the history of redemption but men that are sinners. The greatest of prophets, the greatest of the apostles, all sinners. Their heart, like your heart, like my heart, the same sin, the same depravity, the same wickedness, the same worldly mindedness, all manifesting itself to be sure to differing degrees as they enjoyed the victory of grace over the sin that was at work within them, but their

heart, just like yours and mine, God uses sinful men.

But God would never have his people indulge the foolish, wicked fancy, I can sin and God can use me and I can sin with impunity. Samson learned the hard way the price of indulging the flesh. Did God use him? Yes, he did.

But God also taught Samson, you can't sin with impunity. There is a tragic consequence for the child of God indulging the carnal appetites for sin and for the world in its ways. I want us very, very simply to look and we're just going to have to take an overview of the chapter.

We're up against the clock again. The preacher's worst enemy is the clock and we're up against it again. But we're going to quickly go through the contents of this chapter.

Notice Samson's indulgence of sin. Now we've already seen, and if you're familiar with his story, you've already seen indicators of this along the way. This just didn't come as a thunderbolt out of the blue when Samson begins to sin in this way.

No, this is the ripening fruit of lust and sin and carnality that has been there evident even in the very beginning of his ministry. There are several instances of him pandering to his flesh and to the wickedness of his own heart. In the episodes that are recorded in this chapter, the company that he seeks out in this chapter is vile, worldly, wicked, sinful.

And yet that's where God and by God's man was found. Let me just remind you of those words that are written in Galatians 5.19. Let me encourage you to look at them. Galatians 5.16, Paul is saying to those believers, this I say, walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

This is the tension of the Christian life, to live in the Spirit and to deny and crucify the lusts and desires and appetites of the flesh that is within us. How do we know what is fleshly? How do we, as we look into our own heart, determine what is spiritual and what is fleshly? Well, you'll be familiar with these words in this passage, I'm sure, where Paul gives us two sample lists. They're not exhaustive by any means, but representative lists.

On the one hand, the works of the flesh and on the other, the fruits of the Spirit. Here's how you may determine what is of the flesh and what is to be denied and what is of the Spirit and to be encouraged and nurtured. The works of the flesh, verse 19, are these, are manifest, are obvious, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness.

We don't need to go any further. We've already comforted Samson's sin. They're the works of the flesh.

Without a question, these are not the works of the Spirit. Samson wasn't in Gaza with a harlot at the prompting of his own wicked heart. Now, this is an unexpected place to find a man who has a profession of a Nazarite, consecrated to God, dedicated to God from his birth.

That was the purpose of God for his entire life. Remember how God told, the angel of the Lord told his mother, from the day of his birth to his death, he'd be a Nazarite. Separated, consecrated to God in a special way.

Now, we left off last time, did we not, where Samson was on spiritual high ground. He's just enjoyed one of the greatest victories of his life to this point. He's seen God step in and break the rock and give him a well

of water to drink.

And in that public and private demonstration of God's power and presence, Samson was on what we could call the spiritual mountaintop. Oh, he was in a good place. Verse 1 of chapter 16, then.

How do you connect these two things? Over here, in the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, his soul and his body refreshed as God comes to provide that water that he needs. Then, when Samson went to Gaza, he saw there an harlot. The lesson to learn from that is really a very simple one.

You and I can go from an experience of the immediate presence and power of God to the place of abject sin and carnality quicker than you can imagine, quicker than you ever think possible. He went from the presence of God to the harlot's house in Gaza within the space of three or four lines in Scripture. You say, that's hardly possible.

But it is. Look at Matthew 16, verse 23. You have another illustration of essentially the same thing.

The Lord Jesus is beginning to teach his disciples here of the fact that he is going to go to Jerusalem and be crucified. And you are familiar with the incident. Peter took him and began to rebuke him and said, Be it far from me, Lord, this shall not be unto thee, but he returned and said unto Peter.

Now, I want you to understand he is talking here to Peter. He is not talking to the devil, he is talking to Peter. He said to Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan.

For thou art an offense, a stumbling block, a roadblock, a barrier. Thou art an offense unto me. For thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of man.

Peter, you have said your mind are earthly, carnal, worldly things. You are thinking like a worldly man. More than that, you are thinking like the devil.

You are talking like the devil himself. You will understand that the English name Satan is a translation of the Hebrew word adversary. Now, look at this.

Here is a disciple, one who by the very meaning of that name is a learner from Christ, a follower of his example. And at this moment, he is talking for the devil. He is talking as an adversary, the adversary, getting in the way of Calvary.

Now, understand what Peter is doing here. Do you know that Peter just jeopardized your soul? Do you know that Peter jeopardized the life here of everyone for whom Christ died? He got in the way of the cross. This was momentous.

He is acting as the adversary of Christ, a redeemer. Now, you back up a couple of verses and you will remember those famous words, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Blessed art thou, Simon Marjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

Peter went, if I might put it this way, from God's classroom to the devil's workshop, taught by the Father, Thou art the Christ, speaking for the devil. Don't go to the cross in the blink of an eye. We need to see ourselves here.

Let us be done with the abominable pride that says, I wouldn't do that. Oh yes, when you say that, you've just done it. You've just done it.

We can go from intimacy with God to doing the devil's work quicker than you think possible. How dangerous is that adversary that lies within our own being, our own desires, our own will, that which the Bible calls the flesh, out of which arises all of those promptings to follow the world, to think like the world, to look like the world, to act like the world. Look at what it says in verse 1, he went to Gaza and he saw.

We've already drawn attention to this in a previous study. He saw. He looked.

He lusted with his eyes and with his heart. Just for your own benefit, trace the course of the sin here and you'll see it's the old pattern from Eve down that affects us all. He saw.

He lusted. He took. Same way.

That's how sin works. That's how sin works. And here he is indulging sin.

Look at verse 4 through to 20. Here's a second evidence of his indulgence of sin because he now consorts with the woman Delilah, another Philistine. We're told in the verse 4, it came to pass afterward.

Again, we're not told what the time frame is here. There may have been a lapse of some time. There may not.

We're not told. It's just in the narrative. It follows one after the other.

It came to pass afterward that he loved a woman in the valley of Shorek whose name was Delilah. He loved her. That wasn't love.

That was the lust of the flesh. He should never have felt any affection for her, but he is indulging the passions of his own wicked heart and he loved her. He allowed his heart.

He gave his heart away to this woman, flattered by her appearance perhaps. It certainly was a carnal thing, all based upon fleshly appetite. It wasn't of God.

It wasn't a love that was of God. It wasn't a love that God had planted in his heart, for he loved what was detestable to God. It was the love of the old man, not the love of the spirit that is at work here.

He is following the sinful dictates of his own heart. That's what he's doing. He indulges these carnal desires in both instances, despite many clear warnings from God.

Can I trace quickly the warnings that God gave him, the things that ought to have said, Samson, you're on the wrong course. The roadblocks God put up. God never, ever, ever allows his children to follow the course of sin without warning them, without setting barriers across the path that they have to break their way through.

While he's in Gaza with the harlot there, he's warned by providence that this activity that he's engaging in puts his very life in danger. For the men of Gaza lock him up. They're going to kill him.

He becomes aware of the plot, and by the grace and by the power of God, he is able to escape. Rising at midnight, taking the doors of the gate of the city and the two posts on his shoulders and carrying them away to the top of a hill. He breaks out of the snare.

He breaks out of the trap, but that was a warning from God. Samson, this is where this behavior leads to. You're putting yourself in a place where you are exposing yourself to death.

It's going to be the end of your ministry. It's going to be the end of your work. It's going to be the end of your life.

It's a warning from God. He's warned that he's trifling with that which is fatal. When he's with Delilah, there's so many things about her that ought to have been gone off like fire alarms in his head all over the place.

What does her name mean? Her name means weakness. Every time he spoke her name, every time he looked at her and thought of her identity, he was faced with a word, a name that challenged him. Weakness lies ahead.

You have exactly the same root word, if you care to look at it, in chapter 6 and the verse 6 that gives us the name Delilah. It's translated there by the word impoverished. Israel was greatly impoverished because of the millionaires.

That's the same root word that gives us Delilah. Samson had he the wit to think about even her very name, would have recognized here's a woman spiritually who will plunder my soul, who will spoil me, who will rob me, who will leave me impoverished. Oh God's people, court that continuously which robs them of the blessing and power of God.

Had we only the spiritual acumen to recognize it. It's stamped all over it, this is going to spoil you. Another little thing that's interesting, she's from the valley of Sorek.

The name Sorek means vineyards and you'll know that Samson was a Nazirite and part of the conditions of the Nazirite vows. You don't touch the fruit of the vine. Where do we find him? We found him in a vineyard before, have we not? And a lion attacked him.

Here he's back in the vineyards trifling with a woman whose very identity is weakness and impoverishment. Her very name testifies then to the debilitating effect of the sinful desire that he has for her. But he didn't see it.

God can write warnings for his people and he does and he has in his word that are as plain as it's possible to be. This is where sin and worldliness will take you. And we don't see.

Look at her own statements to him. It's not that she was talking about him, she was talking to him in verse 6, 10, 13, 16. Tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee, to afflict thee.

She didn't make any secret about it. How dumb do you have to be not to pick up on the warning here. But brothers and sisters, we are dumb when it comes to this.

When we're living in the flesh, the spiritual discernment of a Christian shuts down. The devil can tell you, I want you to do this so that I can beat you. And you don't even pick up on it.

I want to afflict you. Verse 16, look at the words of verse 16. It came to pass when she pressed him dearly with her words and urged him so that his soul was baxed on to death.

The idea is she was throttling him to death with the pressure that she was putting upon him. You'd think any man in his right mind would run a mile. A man of God would run quicker, you'd think.

A man with the experience of the Holy Ghost, Samson had. What's he doing there to start with? But here he is. And he's allowing himself to be choked to death by this woman's words.

And he still doesn't realise this is a dangerous place to be. What about the warnings that he had repeatedly from the actions of the Philistines? Delilah ties him up in various ways and says, all of you boys now, deal with him. The Philistines be upon thee, Samson.

He knew what this was about. We read it, we can understand it, we can see it, and we shake our head and we say, Samson, Samson, how are you so blind? But then I want you to stop right there and take a step back and say, that's me. That's why that portrait's there.

It's there to show me what I am. That's how I live. Whether I recognise it or not, that's me.

You know sometimes, I'm sure you've found yourself in the same places I have many times. You look in the mirror and you look at a reflection and you wish it didn't quite look like that. But you have to face up to reality, that's the way it is.

You'd like to change it. There are all kinds of ways that are available now to try to change what's looking out of the mirror. At the end of the day, they can't change what's there.

Might have a temporary improvement, but it doesn't change anything really. You look into the mirror of scripture, I want you to recognise, this is me looking at me back out of the page. Whether I like what I see or whether I don't, this is me.

I do not see my sin as I should see it. I do not see the effect of the world in my life as I should see it. I can so easily, as the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 7 indicate, I can so easily see the speck in your eye.

I miss the love in my own. That's you, that's me. Don't dismiss what's written here as just being derogatory of Samson.

No, no, this is me. This is you. We need to learn from this.

One more thing here that should have warned him when he was with Delilah. Verse 10. Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies.

Same in verse 13. Thou hast mocked me, and told me lies. Have you ever been in the position where a sinner has rebuked you for doing what's wrong, calling a narrow to your heart? Here's a non-godly man.

She said, Samson, you have told lies. But he didn't feel it. He didn't feel it.

I tell you, God's people are in a very dull state when the ungodly can see their sin, and they don't see it. You have probably heard, as I have many times, an ungodly man speak about the testimony or the absence of a testimony of another person that you know to be a Christian. And they know he's not living like a Christian.

A Christian shouldn't do those things. The ungodly see. You know, it's the sad reality that oftentimes the ungodly know more about Christian living than many a Christian.

They do. The ungodly man instinctively knows when the Christian sins. You shouldn't do that.

You're claiming to be a Christian. What are you doing here? What are you in our company for? When David was with the Philistines at a much later point, as he was fleeing from Saul in the backslidden condition, what's this fellow here for? He doesn't belong here. He knew.

Delilah, no better than a harlot, saying to God's man, you've told lies. Ought it not to have been an arrow to his soul? Didn't feel it. So insensitive because of the pursuit of his own carnality.

Why is it that we do not feel sin? You ever look at those great passages in God's Word that record, were good men not on their face before God? Brokenheartedly cry to God for forgiveness. To deal with their pollution and their vileness. And they felt sin.

You ever wonder, why don't I feel like that? Why don't I feel my own sin? The way Ezra felt it as he sat down and tore his mantle, plucked the hair of his face and sat down and stoned the whole day before God. Why don't I feel sin that way? Because I'm better? No. Because in my carnality, I have lost the sensitivity to sin that he has.

Why in God's name, why, when the Church of Jesus Christ is in the mess that it's in today? Why? Why there are fewer prayer meetings than ever? And I'm not talking to you, I'm talking about me. Why when we pray, are we not broken? Why are our prayer meetings not filled to overflowing with saints of God, brokenheartedly weeping before God over the sin and the backsliding of the Church today that's there? It's because in our carnality, in our worldly mindedness, we're not sensitive to it. We can dismiss it as just one of those things.

It's the age we live in. Samson didn't feel even the rebukes of delay. He didn't see any of these warnings from God.

Perhaps the clearest of all of the warnings in these situations were the warnings that God gave him directly. You maybe have thought of this. It's one thing to miss the meaning of the name Delilah or to pick up on the significance of some of the words that she said.

Samson, how do you miss the message of the interventions of God to get you out of Gaza? How do you miss the message of the interventions repeatedly in Delilah's home to get you out of that situation that would have been fatal had God not come and given you the power to break the ropes? Those were messages from God. Samson, you can't do this on your own. You need the power of God.

If you live in such a way as to jeopardize the power of God in your life, you're dead, you're finished. That was the message of those interventions. Do you know the sad thing? I think we can see this even reflected in Samson's experience, but we can certainly see it on our own.

We pervert the message of God's interventions in circumstances like this to encourage us in our sin. Oh God got me out of the harlot's house in Gaza so I can go back there. God got me out of the mess in Delilah's house so I can go back there.

That's not why God got you out of it. That's carnality, perverting the message that God would have you understand. Samson, I got you out of there so that you would not go back, so that you would learn the lessons.

I was in the wrong place and but for the mercy of God I was dead. But it is the working of the flesh to take the merciful interventions of God and to pervert that to encourage sin. The church has done that.

I have done it. You have done it. It's the wickedness of our own heart to abuse the mercy of God.

The kindness that God has shown you perhaps in lifting you up out of the gutter where you have fallen as a Christian, setting you on your feet again and saying, now walk in the right way. And the flesh has whispered within your heart, I'll just go back there. God got me out of it before.

He'll get me out of it again if I get into trouble. That's carnal thinking. It abuses the blessing and the favor and the mercy of God who has stepped in to prevent you reaping the consequences of sin in your life as you ought to do.

You think, I can go on. This is great. I can and get away with it because God and mercy has restrained the full consequence of that sin in your life.

That's what Samson did. That's what Samson did. And all the while God was teaching him, you're jeopardizing the power to escape.

You're jeopardizing the power to be useful for God by going back and trifling again, again, again, and again with that sin. Before I leave the point, I want to turn you to some passages of God's Word that instruct the Christian how we are to deal with the flesh. It's there.

It's reality. We have to deal with it. It's got to be dealt with.

You've got to confront it. There is no such thing this side of our glorification of being delivered from a warfare with our own being. 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 11.

I want you to please make note of these verses. Turn with me to them please. I don't want you to take away merely the Word of a preacher.

I want you to take away the Word of God. 1 Peter 2 and verse 11. See how it starts.

Dearly beloved, in love God addresses us with these words. I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. I think that it has to be said that where God's people have given attention to the concept of pilgrimage and living as a pilgrim, and many of God's people do and we're thankful for that, but very often our definition of what it is to be a pilgrim springs from what is on the outside.

We look at the world and we say that's what I have to separate from in order to be a pilgrim. That's what I have to deal with in order to be a pilgrim and yes that's partly true. It's not what Peter says.

Abstain from fleshly lusts. That's in here. That's where Christian pilgrimage starts.

A withdrawing from any indulgence of our own heart. Right now it's not the world that's in focus. It's not the fashions of the world.

It's not the trends of the world or the sin of the world, though that will play its part. But right now you want to be a pilgrim. You must abstain from the desires of your own heart.

Those desires reach out to the world, yes, but you see you can never be a pilgrim for God simply by cutting off the world. That's only a treatment of the symptom. You can only be a pilgrim for God when you cut off the desire in your heart.

Look at Romans chapter 13 verse 13 and 14. Romans 13. Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness and in chambering.

What does that mean? Well, it's exactly what Samson was at in Gaza with Delilah. You'll see the word chamber there. It's a euphemistic expression just to express that immoral behavior that Samson was engaged in.

Not in rioting and drunkenness and chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. That's what being a Christian is. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ continually.

Put on Christ in your justification. Glory to God legally, irreversibly and eternally. God put you into Christ.

But in terms of your sanctification, you have that responsibility to put on Christ continually. Put him on every day. Put him on every moment.

Wrap yourself in him and make no provision for the lusts of the flesh. Colossians chapter 3, verse 5. Mortify therefore, because you are in union with Jesus Christ, death on the cross and in union with his resurrection life, so that in Christ you are dead to sin and alive unto righteousness that your justified status, because you're justified, is what he's saying. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.

Put them to death. What does the Lord Jesus say? Pluck your eye out, cut off your right hand, cut off your foot. Not in any literal physical sense, but in a metaphorical sense, cut off the actions of those members.

He's talking here about the members of the body. Mortify them. Put them to death.

Put to death the sins that your hand does. Withdraw your hand from sin. If there's an action that your hand is engaged in that's sinful, you'd better cut it off.

Mortify your members which are upon the earth. Fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence. There you have it.

Covered Samson's sins already. Mortify it. Got to cut it off.

These are deadly enemies. Cut it off. If you're in Christ, cut it off.

That's how we're to deal with the flesh. Mortify it. Crucify it.

What does that mean? It means that we take the doctrines of Calvary, the doctrines of the gospel, and we apply them to our life in such a way that will cut off sin. I can't do that no matter how it hurts. I can't go there no matter how it costs me because Christ died on the cross.

The doctrine of Calvary prohibits me from contemplating doing that act of disobedience against God. I take up the cross. I die to myself and I follow Christ.

But that's what we're to do with the flesh. But you see, that's the kind of Christianity today that's foreign to most of the Christian church. The concept of self-denial to follow Jesus is anathema for many Christians.

I have liberty to do what I like. No you don't. Your liberty is to take up the cross, deny yourself, follow Jesus.

That's liberty. The tragedy of indulging sin. We've looked at the sin that Samson indulged.

Contrary to the will of God for his life to deny the flesh, to cut it off, he indulged it. Dear Christian, you don't do that. If I'm going to finish on time, I haven't a hope of finishing on time, but I've got to finish.

So that means I might leave some of this until tomorrow. You wanted to finish it for Alan, right? I'm not going to go any further. I'm going to finish this tomorrow.

We'll roll the rest of this into tomorrow rather than rush over it. The tragedy of indulging sin. It finished him.

It finished his ministry. Remember, if the Christian individually and the church corporately does not learn again the truth that is revealed in God's word, to deny rather than to indulge the lusts of the flesh, there is no hope. There's not.

I want you to be clear about that. There's no hope. Any talk about revival is just a foolish pipe dream.

Meaningless, empty nonsense. What is revival? Boil it right down. It's to be where Jesus is.

How do you get where Jesus is? You leave the camp behind. You go forth without the camp onto him. You deny yourself.

You take up the cross. You follow him. There's no other way.

We've been thinking of Samson's life as teaching us some lessons, I hope, about the pursuit of revival and restoration, shaking off the defeat and the shackles of enemy oppression. Sadly, at this point, as we look at Samson, we have to learn a lesson by way of contrast. This is not the way to do it.

This will lead to the very opposite. It will lead to death, to ruin, to destruction, to mayhem. But for the intervention of God would have led to the triumphant conquering of Israel by the Philistines without intermission.

The celebration of the Lords of the Philistines. You can see the party. It didn't end there.

We'll come back to that next time. But for the intervention of God and the turning of Samson from his ways of carnality, that's where it would have ended. We're going to look at the tragedy tomorrow.

Can I ask you to do something for me? If you're going to be here tomorrow, will you take the time between now and then to read chapter 17 and chapter 18 of this book? We will not have time to read those two chapters tomorrow. They're lengthy chapters. But I'm going to look at the content very quickly.

Will you read those two chapters? They're awful chapters to read, but I want you to read them. Because one of the things I'm going to look at tomorrow is the legacy that Samson left behind. And I believe that those chapters contain it.

Amen.

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