**SERMON OUTLINE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SERMON TITLE:** | The High Cost of Low Living |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Judges 13:24 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #1808 |
|  |  |
| We are grateful for the opportunity to provide this outline produced from a sermon preached by Adrian Rogers while serving as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. This outline is intended for your personal, non-commercial use.  In order to ensure our ability to be good stewards of Adrian Rogers’ messages, Love Worth Finding has reserved all rights to this content.  Except for your personal, non-commercial use and except for brief quotations in printed reviews, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means —electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other— without the prior permission of the publisher.  Copyright ©2024 Love Worth Finding Ministries, Inc. | |

1. INTRODUCTION
   1. Judges 13:24
      1. This mother held in her arms the baby for which she had prayed.
      2. This was a baby that God had promised.
      3. He was to be a special child.
      4. He was given a special name.
         1. He was called Samson.
            1. The name “Samson” means “sunshine”.
   2. Samson was to be a Nazarite.
      1. Judges 13:5
      2. The word “Nazarite” means “different” or “separated”.
      3. He was to be set aside for God.
         1. He wasn’t to drink wine or anything intoxicating.
         2. He wasn’t to touch any dead thing.
         3. He was to let his hair grow.
            1. No razor was to ever come upon his head.
            2. His long hair was the sign that he was to be different and set aside.
   3. Samson was anointed with the Spirit of God and had tremendous strength.
      1. Entire armies would tremble at his presence.
      2. He slew one thousand of God’s enemies, the Philistines, with a bone from the field.
         1. Judges 15:15
      3. He took the city gates of Gaza, put them on his back, carried them up a hill, and left them there.
         1. Judges 16:3
      4. When a lion roared against Samson, he destroyed the lion with his bare hands.
         1. Judges 14:5-6
      5. Had we seen Samson, we wouldn’t have known that he was that strong.
         1. He didn’t have mountains of muscles and bulging biceps.
            1. Why did Delilah keep asking for the secret of his strength?

If he had been musclebound, then it would have been obvious.

* 1. There was something supernatural about his strength.
     1. His strength was in the power of God.
     2. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit of God would come upon him.
        1. Judges 14:6
        2. Judges 14:19
        3. Judges 15:14
     3. His strength was not in his hair.
        1. His hair was only a symbol of that strength.
     4. Samson is an illustration and a lesson to those of us who need the spiritual strength of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
  2. Not only was Samson spiritually strong and physically strong as a result of it, but he was also mentally strong.
     1. He had a quick mind.
     2. He was witty; he loved a joke.
     3. He loved to turn a phrase; he had a way with words.
     4. He loved riddles, conundrums, and ideas.
     5. He had a keen sense of humor.
     6. His name “Sunshine” was a good name.
        1. He would brighten up any room when he entered it.
  3. The story of Samson is not a happy story; it is a tragedy.
     1. It is the story of a man who went from hero to zero and from victor to victim.
     2. It tells of Samson’s disobedience, defeat, disgrace, and destruction.
  4. Samson was a bundle of contradictions.
     1. He was bold before men, yet weak before women.
     2. The Spirit of God was upon him, yet he gave way to the appetites of the flesh.
     3. He was called upon to declare war upon the enemies of God, yet he fraternized and fellowshipped with the enemies of God.
     4. He fought the Lord’s battles by day and broke the Lord’s commandments by night.
     5. His name speaks of light, but he ended his life in darkness, having his eyes put out.
  5. It is amazing how a person could soar so high, yet go so low.
     1. At the beginning of Samson’s life, we wouldn’t have been able to tell him that he would sink to such depths.
     2. There are three people occupying your chair today:
        1. The person you are now.
        2. The person you could be for God.
        3. The person you may be if you take your eyes off of God.
           1. 1 Corinthians 10:12
  6. Samson was a man of God.
     1. We can expect to meet Samson in Heaven.
     2. The Bible lists Samson in Hebrews 11:32 as one of the heroes of the faith.
        1. God remembers his faith, not his failure.
     3. Once someone is a child of God, they are forever a child of God.
        1. This is not talking about someone who is merely a church member, has been baptized, or repeated little phrases.
        2. This is someone who has been twice-born and possessed by the Spirit of God.
           1. That person can never again be a lost soul.
        3. Some people may believe, then, that it makes no difference how they live.
           1. There is no blacker lie that could come out of Hell than that lie.
        4. While a child of God may not lose his salvation, he has much to lose if he sins.
           1. The book of Judges and the story of Samson are grand illustrations of that fact.
  7. In today’s message, we will look at the cost of Samson’s sin.
     1. Samson paid for his sins and paid dearly.
        1. Samson paid in seven installments.

1. samson dishonored his parents (judges 14:1-3)
   1. The Philistines were the pagans, the ungodly.
      1. They were those who knew not God.
      2. They were idol worshippers.
      3. This is the first step in his downward journey.
   2. Samson had godly parents.
      1. They prayed for Samson.
      2. They were filled with the wisdom of Almighty God.
   3. Samson started with the wrong company.
      1. He met a girl who didn’t know the Lord.
      2. He fell in love with her and decided to marry her.
         1. His parents pleaded with him not to do this.
   4. Why did Samson’s parents not want him to marry this Philistine girl?
      1. 2 Corinthians 6:14
         1. The Bible commands that if you are a child of God, then you are not to marry an unsaved person.
            1. If you do, then you are headed for trouble.
      2. A marriage is not simply between a boy and a girl; it is between two families.
      3. If a saved person marries an unsaved person, then they will have the following troubles:
         1. In-law problems
            1. The saved person will have the devil for a father-in-law.

The unsaved are children of the devil.

John 8:44

* + - 1. Problems with their mate
         1. There will be spiritual disagreement.

Amos 3:3

You will want to worship on Sunday.

They will want to sleep in.

You will want to give to the work of God.

They will say that you cannot afford it.

You will want to make Sunday a holy day.

They will want to make it a holiday.

You will want to pray when your family comes to a time of crisis.

They will discount and ridicule prayer.

You will want to raise your children for God and teach them the things of God.

They will work against it.

It is harder to get to church on Sunday morning than it is to get to work on Monday morning.

The devil fights against it.

* + - * 1. There will be spiritual division.

Ecclesiastes 4:12

When a couple gets married in the Lord, they are not only one physically and psychologically, but they are also one spiritually.

They are one in the bond of love.

When there is no spiritual cord, the other two cords quickly unravel.

Those who don’t know the Lord Jesus have a greater likelihood of divorce.

* + - * 1. There will be problems with descendancy.

When one parent loves God and the other parent doesn’t, the children have a sense of ambivalence.

They are confused; it doesn’t make sense to them.

Children of these marriages are the biggest losers.

* 1. Samson fell in love with an unbeliever, and his parents warned him.
  2. Exodus 20:12
  3. Samson died young because he would not listen to his parents.
     1. He died when he should have been at the very zenith of his career.
     2. He failed to honor his father and mother.

1. samson deserted his promise (judges 14:5)
   1. What was Samson doing in the vineyard?
      1. He wasn’t to drink anything that came from the grape.
         1. He wasn’t even to touch it.
      2. He had no business there.
      3. At this point, he is away from his parents.
   2. We may say that this was a small thing.
      1. Sin always starts small.
         1. No one goes roaring into sin.
   3. Samson flirted with sin; he played with sin.
      1. In the vineyard, he killed the lion.
      2. He went to Philistia for the wedding party.
      3. He began to have fun with this girl’s relatives, her brothers, and her brothers’ friends.
         1. Proverbs 13:20
         2. He laughed, joked, gambled, and fought.
   4. Samson was slowly being hardened by sin.
      1. He may not have even realized what was happening to him.
      2. Samson seemed to be blind.
   5. Samson’s purpose was to deliver Israel.
      1. Rather than delivering Israel, he consorted with the Philistines.
2. samson distorted his purpose (judges 14:10-19)
   1. Judges 14:10
      1. They were having a wedding party.
         1. The Bible calls it a feast.
      2. The word for “feast” here is a word which means a wine banquet.
         1. Samson was not to touch wine.
   2. Samson had a riddle; he had a way with words.
      1. Judges 14:12-13
         1. If Samson could tell a riddle that they couldn’t answer, then they would owe him thirty changes of garments and thirty sheets.
         2. If they could answer Samson’s riddle, then Samson would pay them thirty changes of garments and thirty sheets.
      2. Judges 14:5-9
         1. Samson killed a lion with his bare hands in the vineyard.
         2. A swarm of bees had entered the carcass, and there was honey there.
         3. Samson reached into the carcass and got out a handful of honey.
            1. He ate the honey and gave some to his parents.

However, he didn’t tell them where he got it.

He knew he wasn’t supposed to be in the vineyard.

* + 1. Judges 14:14
       1. “Out of the eater” was the lion.
       2. “Came forth meat” was the honey.
       3. “Out of the strong” was the lion.
       4. “Came forth sweetness” was the honey.
    2. Judges 14:14-19
       1. They couldn’t figure out the riddle, so they went to Samson’s wife and threatened her in order to get the answer.
          1. But Samson hadn’t told his parents, and he didn’t tell her.
       2. When she began to cry, Samson told her all of his heart.
       3. She told her brothers and her brothers’ friends, and they told Samson the answer to the riddle.
       4. “Plowed with my heifer” in verse 18 means that they broke the rules.
          1. No man plows with a heifer.

A heifer is a milk cow.

He plows with oxen.

* + - * 1. They didn’t play according to the rules.
      1. Samson was so infuriated that he killed thirty Philistines, took their garments, and paid off the debt.
  1. Samson was supposed to deliver Israel from the Philistines, but who’s battle was he really fighting? His or God’s?
     1. Sometimes a so-called man of God doesn’t really know whom he is fighting.
        1. He gets into personal battles.
           1. No longer is he fighting the battles of the Lord.
     2. Samson was in service to God for his own reward and for his own vengeance.
        1. He distorted his purpose.
        2. He forgot the thing that God had called him to do.
  2. Judges 15:9-17
     1. Samson was getting his own brothers into trouble.
        1. They asked him to turn himself in to the Philistines because there was a Philistine army against them.
     2. Samson surrendered to the Philistines; but when they came to get him, the Spirit of God came upon Samson.
        1. With the jawbone of a donkey, he slayed a thousand Philistines.
     3. In verse 16, the word for “donkey” and the word for “heap” sound alike in the Hebrew language.
        1. Samson was playing with words.
           1. He was in the middle of a battle, and he was jesting and laughing.

He couldn’t take himself seriously.

He didn’t understand the ramifications of life.

1. Samson defiled his purity (judges 16:1-4)
   1. The once mighty man of God was now playing with harlots.
      1. An unnamed harlot and, later, another one named Delilah.
   2. The sin that starts small doesn’t end that way.
      1. The devil is a liar.
         1. He never tells a pure, young girl who wants to sacrifice her purity on the altar of some man’s lust that he will make her like the woman who is destitute and broken with a child out of wedlock.
            1. He just says that everyone is doing that today.
         2. The devil never tells a young boy about the alcoholic in the gutter who cannot hold his hands steady and keep a job.
            1. The devil never says that he will make you like that man.
            2. He just says that people of distinction drink alcohol, and everyone at a party does this.
      2. Sin that starts small doesn’t end small.
   3. Samson’s mother had prayed for him, and his father had given him to God.
      1. Now, Samson was living immorally.
      2. Samson was blind a long time before they put out his eyes.
         1. The deeper people go into sin, the less they know about it.
   4. While Samson was with the harlots, the Philistines set a trap for him.
      1. Judges 16:2-3
         1. Rather than fighting, he was always playing games.
   5. Proverbs 5:3-6
   6. Proverbs 6:32-33
      1. Even if someone gets forgiveness, the reproach is still there.
         1. This is a sin like no other sin.
2. samson diluted his power (judges 16:4-20)
   1. Judges 16:4-5
      1. Delilah was offered between three thousand and five thousand dollars to get the secret of Samson’s strength.
   2. Delilah asked Samson what made him so strong, and Samson played the game.
      1. Judges 16:6-9
         1. He said that if he were bound with seven green vines, then he wouldn’t be able to get loose.
         2. While he was asleep, Delilah bound him with seven vines and said that the Philistines were coming.
            1. Samson woke up and broke the vines asunder.
      2. Judges 16:10-12
         1. He told Delilah that if he were bound with new ropes, then he would be bound.
         2. Again, while he was asleep, Delilah bound him with new ropes.
            1. But he broke the ropes like they were flacks burned in the fire.
      3. Judges 16:13-14
         1. He said that if seven locks of his hair were weaved in the weaver’s loom, then he couldn’t get loose.
            1. But he was able to get loose.
      4. Judges 16:15-17
         1. Samson told Delilah that if she were to cut off his hair, then he would be weak like other men.
            1. The hair was the only thing that he had left of his Nazarite vow.

This shows the patience of God.

* + 1. Judges 16:19-20
       1. Delilah had Samson’s hair shaved off, and she began to taunt him.
       2. Samson’s strength was gone.
  1. Samson’s strength wasn’t in his hair but in the Holy Spirit of God, and the Spirit was gone.
     1. Samson was just like other men.
     2. He had no strength, but he didn’t know it.
  2. Are you far away from God?
     1. You were once a mighty power for God.
     2. You were once a faithful deacon, a wonderful Sunday school teacher, a soul winner, but you have compromised and played in sin.
     3. The power of God is gone from you, and you don’t even know it.
  3. Without the anointing power of God when the lion roars against us, we will go to battle, and we will go down.
     1. Many have begun in the Spirit and ended in the flesh.

1. samson disgraced his profession (judges 16:21-24)
   1. They took the mighty man of God down while the Spirit of God was gone from him.
      1. He was in the depth of sin and depravity.
      2. They put him in chains.
      3. They burned out his eyes.
         1. He was blind.
      4. They took him like they would an animal and tied him to a post at the mill.
         1. Samson was grinding grain for the Philistines to eat to give them strength.
   2. The Philistines laughed and ridiculed him.
      1. They asked, “Where is his God?”
   3. Many have disgraced the ministry.
      1. They began in small sin, and down they go.
      2. They give the enemy opportunity to blaspheme.
      3. They become a shame and a reproach to the people of God.
2. samson diminshied his potential (judges 16:28-30)
   1. Judges 16:28-30
   2. Judges 16:22
      1. The phrase “his hair began to grow again” is an artistic device.
         1. Samson began to think.
         2. He began to pray to God.
         3. He began to repent.
      2. God had brought him so low that finally his eyes began to open spiritually.
   3. Samson came back to God in remorse and repentance.
      1. He asked for one more chance.
      2. No matter how low we have gone or what we might have done, God is a God of mercy and forgiveness.
         1. God is a God of the second chance.
   4. Knowing that God will forgive us is not an encouragement to sin.
      1. Samson died young, and he died needlessly.
      2. He is in Heaven, but think of what he should have been.
         1. When he gets to the judgment seat of Christ, rather than having gold, silver, and precious stones, there will be a pile of wood, hay, and stubble.
            1. 1 Corinthians 3:11-13
3. CONCLUSION
   1. We must remember these two things:
      1. The high cost of low living.
         1. Don’t play lightly with sin.
         2. Treat sin like sin would treat you.
            1. Sin will have no mercy on you.
            2. Don’t have mercy on your sin.
      2. If you have begun to move away from God, then move back now.
         1. Sin that starts small goes big.
         2. You will get into a downward spiral where it may be almost impossible to get out.
   2. If you need a fresh start, there is mercy with God.
   3. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   4. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16