

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: The High Cost of Low Living

SERMON REFERENCE: Judges 13:24

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1) INTRODUCTION

a) Judges 13:24

- i) This mother held in her arms the baby for which she had prayed.
- ii) This was a baby that God had promised.
- iii) He was to be a special child.
- iv) He was given a special name.
 - (1) He was called Samson.
 - (a) The name “Samson” means “sunshine”.

b) Samson was to be a Nazarite.

- i) Judges 13:5
- ii) The word “Nazarite” means “different” or “separated”.
- iii) 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.
 - (a) No razor was to ever come upon his head.
 - (b) His long hair was the sign that he was to be different and set aside.

c) Samson was anointed with the Spirit of God and had tremendous strength.

- i) Entire armies would tremble at his presence.
- ii) He slew one thousand of God's enemies, the Philistines, with a bone from the field.
 - (1) Judges 15:15
- iii) 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
- iv) When a lion roared against Samson, he destroyed the lion with his bare hands.
 - (1) Judges 14:5-6
- v) 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.
 - (a) Why did Delilah keep asking for the secret of his strength?
 - (i) If he had been musclebound, then it would have been obvious.

d) There was something supernatural about his strength.

- i) His strength was in the power of God.
- ii) 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
- iii) His strength was not in his hair.
 - (1) His hair was only a symbol of that strength.
- iv) Samson is an illustration and a lesson to those of us who need the spiritual strength of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

e) Not only was Samson spiritually strong and physically strong as a result of it, but he was also mentally strong.

- i) He had a quick mind.
- ii) He was witty; he loved a joke.
- iii) He loved to turn a phrase; he had a way with words.
- iv) He loved riddles, conundrums, and ideas.
- v) He had a keen sense of humor.
- vi) His name “Sunshine” was a good name.
 - (1) He would brighten up any room when he entered it.
- f) The story of Samson is not a happy story; it is a tragedy.
 - i) It is the story of a man who went from hero to zero and from victor to victim.
 - ii) It tells of Samson’s disobedience, defeat, disgrace, and destruction.
- g) Samson was a bundle of contradictions.
 - i) He was bold before men, yet weak before women.
 - ii) The Spirit of God was upon him, yet he gave way to the appetites of the flesh.
 - iii) He was called upon to declare war upon the enemies of God, yet he fraternized and fellowshipped with the enemies of God.
 - iv) He fought the Lord’s battles by day and broke the Lord’s commandments by night.
 - v) His name speaks of light, but he ended his life in darkness, having his eyes put out.
- h) It is amazing how a person could soar so high, yet go so low.
 - i) At the beginning of Samson’s life, we wouldn’t have been able to tell him that he would sink to such depths.
 - ii) 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.
 - (a) 1 Corinthians 10:12
- i) Samson was a man of God.
 - i) We can expect to meet Samson in Heaven.
 - ii) The Bible lists Samson in Hebrews 11:32 as one of the heroes of the faith.
 - (1) God remembers his faith, not his failure.
 - iii) 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.
 - (a) That person can never again be a lost soul.
 - (3) Some people may believe, then, that it makes no difference how they live.
 - (a) 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.

- (a) The book of Judges and the story of Samson are grand illustrations of that fact.
 - j) In today's message, we will look at the cost of Samson's sin.
 - i) Samson paid for his sins and paid dearly.
 - (1) Samson paid in seven installments.
- 2) SAMSON DISHONORED HIS PARENTS (JUDGES 14:1-3)
- a) The Philistines were the pagans, the ungodly.
 - i) They were those who knew not God.
 - ii) They were idol worshippers.
 - iii) This is the first step in his downward journey.
 - b) Samson had godly parents.
 - i) They prayed for Samson.
 - ii) They were filled with the wisdom of Almighty God.
 - c) Samson started with the wrong company.
 - i) He met a girl who didn't know the Lord.
 - ii) He fell in love with her and decided to marry her.
 - (1) His parents pleaded with him not to do this.
 - d) Why did Samson's parents not want him to marry this Philistine girl?
 - i) 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.
 - (a) If you do, then you are headed for trouble.
 - ii) A marriage is not simply between a boy and a girl; it is between two families.
 - iii) If a saved person marries an unsaved person, then they will have the following troubles:
 - (1) In-law problems
 - (a) The saved person will have the devil for a father-in-law.
 - (i) The unsaved are children of the devil.
 - (ii) John 8:44
 - (2) Problems with their mate
 - (a) There will be spiritual disagreement.
 - (i) Amos 3:3
 - (ii) You will want to worship on Sunday.
 - 1. They will want to sleep in.
 - (iii) You will want to give to the work of God.
 - 1. They will say that you cannot afford it.
 - (iv) You will want to make Sunday a holy day.
 - 1. They will want to make it a holiday.
 - (v) You will want to pray when your family comes to a time of crisis.
 - 1. They will discount and ridicule prayer.
 - (vi) You will want to raise your children for God and teach them the things of God.

1. They will work against it.
 - (vii) It is harder to get to church on Sunday morning than it is to get to work on Monday morning.
 1. The devil fights against it.
 - (b) There will be spiritual division.
 - (i) Ecclesiastes 4:12
 1. When a couple gets married in the Lord, they are not only one physically and psychologically, but they are also one spiritually.
 - a. They are one in the bond of love.
 - (ii) When there is no spiritual cord, the other two cords quickly unravel.
 1. Those who don't know the Lord Jesus have a greater likelihood of divorce.
 - (c) There will be problems with descendancy.
 - (i) When one parent loves God and the other parent doesn't, the children have a sense of ambivalence.
 1. They are confused; it doesn't make sense to them.
 2. Children of these marriages are the biggest losers.
 - e) Samson fell in love with an unbeliever, and his parents warned him.
 - f) Exodus 20:12
 - g) Samson died young because he would not listen to his parents.
 - i) He died when he should have been at the very zenith of his career.
 - ii) He failed to honor his father and mother.
- 3) SAMSON DESERTED HIS PROMISE (JUDGES 14:5)
- a) What was Samson doing in the vineyard?
 - i) He wasn't to drink anything that came from the grape.
 - (1) He wasn't even to touch it.
 - ii) He had no business there.
 - iii) At this point, he is away from his parents.
 - b) We may say that this was a small thing.
 - i) Sin always starts small.
 - (1) No one goes roaring into sin.
 - c) Samson flirted with sin; he played with sin.
 - i) In the vineyard, he killed the lion.
 - ii) He went to Philistia for the wedding party.
 - iii) 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.
 - d) Samson was slowly being hardened by sin.
 - i) He may not have even realized what was happening to him.
 - ii) Samson seemed to be blind.

- e) Samson’s purpose was to deliver Israel.
 - i) Rather than delivering Israel, he consorted with the Philistines.
- 4) SAMSON DISTORTED HIS PURPOSE (JUDGES 14:10-19)
 - a) Judges 14:10
 - i) They were having a wedding party.
 - (1) The Bible calls it a feast.
 - ii) The word for “feast” here is a word which means a wine banquet.
 - (1) Samson was not to touch wine.
 - b) Samson had a riddle; he had a way with words.
 - i) 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.
 - ii) 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.
 - (a) He ate the honey and gave some to his parents.
 - (i) However, he didn’t tell them where he got it.
 - 1. He knew he wasn’t supposed to be in the vineyard.
 - iii) 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.
 - iv) 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.
 - (a) 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.
 - (a) No man plows with a heifer.
 - (i) A heifer is a milk cow.
 - (ii) He plows with oxen.
 - (b) They didn’t play according to the rules.
 - (5) Samson was so infuriated that he killed thirty Philistines, took their garments, and paid off the debt.
 - c) Samson was supposed to deliver Israel from the Philistines, but who’s battle was he really fighting? His or God’s?

- i) Sometimes a so-called man of God doesn't really know whom he is fighting.
 - (1) He gets into personal battles.
 - (a) No longer is he fighting the battles of the Lord.
 - ii) 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.
 - d) Judges 15:9-17
 - i) 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.
 - ii) 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.
 - iii) In verse 16, the word for "donkey" and the word for "heap" sound alike in the Hebrew language.
 - (1) Samson was playing with words.
 - (a) He was in the middle of a battle, and he was jesting and laughing.
 - (i) He couldn't take himself seriously.
 - (ii) He didn't understand the ramifications of life.
- 5) SAMSON DEFILED HIS PURITY (JUDGES 16:1-4)
- a) The once mighty man of God was now playing with harlots.
 - i) An unnamed harlot and, later, another one named Delilah.
 - b) The sin that starts small doesn't end that way.
 - i) 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.
 - (a) 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.
 - (a) The devil never says that he will make you like that man.
 - (b) He just says that people of distinction drink alcohol, and everyone at a party does this.
 - ii) Sin that starts small doesn't end small.
 - c) Samson's mother had prayed for him, and his father had given him to God.
 - i) Now, Samson was living immorally.
 - ii) 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.
 - d) While Samson was with the harlots, the Philistines set a trap for him.
 - i) Judges 16:2-3
 - (1) Rather than fighting, he was always playing games.

- e) Proverbs 5:3-6
 - f) Proverbs 6:32-33
 - i) Even if someone gets forgiveness, the reproach is still there.
 - (1) This is a sin like no other sin.
- 6) SAMSON DILUTED HIS POWER (JUDGES 16:4-20)
- a) Judges 16:4-5
 - i) Delilah was offered between three thousand and five thousand dollars to get the secret of Samson's strength.
 - b) Delilah asked Samson what made him so strong, and Samson played the game.
 - i) 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.
 - (a) Samson woke up and broke the vines asunder.
 - ii) 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.
 - (a) But he broke the ropes like they were flacks burned in the fire.
 - iii) 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.
 - (a) But he was able to get loose.
 - iv) 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.
 - (a) The hair was the only thing that he had left of his Nazarite vow.
 - (i) This shows the patience of God.
 - v) Judges 16:19-20
 - (1) Delilah had Samson's hair shaved off, and she began to taunt him.
 - (2) Samson's strength was gone.
 - c) Samson's strength wasn't in his hair but in the Holy Spirit of God, and the Spirit was gone.
 - i) Samson was just like other men.
 - ii) He had no strength, but he didn't know it.
 - d) Are you far away from God?
 - i) You were once a mighty power for God.
 - ii) You were once a faithful deacon, a wonderful Sunday school teacher, a soul winner, but you have compromised and played in sin.
 - iii) The power of God is gone from you, and you don't even know it.

- e) Without the anointing power of God when the lion roars against us, we will go to battle, and we will go down.
 - i) Many have begun in the Spirit and ended in the flesh.

- 7) SAMSON DISGRACED HIS PROFESSION (JUDGES 16:21-24)
 - a) They took the mighty man of God down while the Spirit of God was gone from him.
 - i) He was in the depth of sin and depravity.
 - ii) They put him in chains.
 - iii) They burned out his eyes.
 - (1) He was blind.
 - iv) 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.
 - b) The Philistines laughed and ridiculed him.
 - i) They asked, “Where is his God?”
 - c) Many have disgraced the ministry.
 - i) They began in small sin, and down they go.
 - ii) They give the enemy opportunity to blaspheme.
 - iii) They become a shame and a reproach to the people of God.

- 8) SAMSON DIMINSHIED HIS POTENTIAL (JUDGES 16:28-30)
 - a) Judges 16:28-30
 - b) Judges 16:22
 - i) 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.
 - ii) God had brought him so low that finally his eyes began to open spiritually.
 - c) Samson came back to God in remorse and repentance.
 - i) He asked for one more chance.
 - ii) 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.
 - d) Knowing that God will forgive us is not an encouragement to sin.
 - i) Samson died young, and he died needlessly.
 - ii) 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.
 - (a) 1 Corinthians 3:11-13

- 9) CONCLUSION
 - a) We must remember these two things:

- i) The high cost of low living.
 - (1) Don't play lightly with sin.
 - (2) Treat sin like sin would treat you.
 - (a) Sin will have no mercy on you.
 - (b) Don't have mercy on your sin.
- ii) 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.
- b) If you need a fresh start, there is mercy with God.
- c) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- d) 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.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16