

No Regrets: When Strong Men Are Weak (BIBLE STUDY)

[This bible study coincides with the Sunday message from 04/10/16 posted [here](#).]

Everyone reading this post has tremendous potential for greatness. It doesn't matter what family you were born into or your education level. God wants to use you to do extraordinary things on earth, but there are things in your life (choices) that can shift us off course, sabotaging our future. As you read through this study, think about the life of Samson, the lessons that can be learned, and how you can apply those lessons to your life.

Main Story

The Life of Samson: [Judges 13-16](#) (Click here to read his story)

Background of Samson

Samson's father (Manoah) and mother were unable to have children. God sent an angel to Samson's parents and told them that they would have a child who would be dedicated to the Lord, and that child would be a Nazarite.

Go In-Depth

- Nazarite = A person who took a special vow to live according to certain guidelines. As long as they kept these vows, God's power would be upon that person. For more information about Nazarites, see [Numbers 6](#). For a more in-depth study, click [here](#) for a topical index with biblical references.

Main Point

Samson was an incredibly strong man with a dangerously weak will.

- Have you ever felt weak or tempted in any area of your life? Clearly identify the area(s) in which you feel weak. Next, what was the sequence of events (or steps) that led you to the point of making a poor decision? What could you have done differently to avoid making that decision?

Life Application Point# 1

Samson, being from one of the twelve tribes of Israel, would have known the instructions from God of not marrying a pagan (a person who did not believe in the God of Israel). In the scripture below, we see an important point about dating and marriage:

*One day when Samson was in Timnah, one of the Philistine women caught his eye. 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." **Judges 14:1-2 (NLT)***

If you are single or dating, it's important that you understand this point: **DON'T MARRY PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT COMMITTED FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST!** Why? It will cause a lot of stress and frustration for you. Read below:

*Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial (the devil)? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? **2 Corinthians 6:14-15 (NKJV)***

If you've ever been to a developing country, you may have seen farmers using a pair of oxen to plow the land. The oxen will typically have a "yoke" (a piece of wood that connects both animals) around their necks. Here is the key – the oxen must be in alignment while working or the yoke will begin to cause severe pain for the animals as it digs into their neck. When you seek to marry someone who is an unbeliever (symbolic of becoming unequally yoked), you are welcoming stress and frustration into your life because you are beginning out of alignment.

- If you are dating, based on what you just read, are you unequally yoked in your current relationship?
- Has this relationship caused stress and frustration for you?
- What have you now learned about the type of person you should marry?

Life Application Point# 2

You will *always* be tempted by what you like. You will never be tempted by something that you don't like. This may seem like an insignificant point, but let's read the verse below:

*After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass of the lion. He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion. **Judges 14:8-10 (NKJV)***

When the bible says that he "turned aside", it means that something caught his eye. He saw something that was appealing to him. When you are tempted, it's probably because you saw something that was appealing to you. It could be the new receptionist at your job who smiles at you every morning, or the neighbor who gives you the friendly compliments that your husband doesn't give you. There's a sequence to something "catching your eye" and falling into sin. Read below:

*Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. **James 1:13-14 (ESV)***

Let's analyze this verse. Temptation comes from being enticed by our own desires. So, let's reverse engineer the scenario. If you know what you desire (Remember: you will *always* be tempted by what you like) then you can put in place proper safeguards to ensure that you don't fall into the trap.

- What safeguards do you have in place with people of the opposite sex, whether you are single or married?
- If you were enticed in the past, what was the specific sequence of events that got you into trouble? (This is important so that you don't repeat the mistake)
- Have you prayed and asked God to give you Godly desires?

Go In-Depth

- Undoubtedly, there will be someone who will say, "I didn't *do* anything. It's only a little flirting or I was only *looking*." So the question becomes, how close is too close? Jesus makes this point abundantly clear in the book of Matthew:

“You have heard the commandment that says, ‘You must not commit adultery.’ But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. **Matthew 5:27-28 (NLT)**

Here’s the key – don’t flirt with evil. Don’t even get close. There’s no difference between evil thoughts and evil actions. If we could “read” your heart, what story would it tell about how you live?

- Read the verse below:
Abstain from all appearance of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5:22 (KJV)

Notice, this verse does not say “don’t do evil.” It says that we should stay away from even the appearance of evil. Think about your life. Are there any areas where someone could get the wrong impression by observing your behavior? What do you need to change immediately in your life to stay away from the appearance of wrong?

Life Application Point# 3

If you don’t get past your anger, you will always live a life of regret.

...[Samson] went down to Ashkelon, struck down thirty of their men, stripped them of everything and gave their clothes to those who had explained the riddle. Burning with anger, he returned to his father’s home. And Samson’s wife was given to one of his companions who had attended him at the feast.
Judges 14:19-20 (NIV)

Samson was so angry, that he killed thirty men. If that wasn’t enough, in a fit of rage, he goes on to kill a thousand men! When you become uncontrollable, you become unusable (think about this statement quietly for a moment). God gave Samson extraordinary strength. When God gives us great blessings, it’s important that we remember we must have the right attitude and temperament to handle what God has given. Never use what God has given you as a strength, as a weapon against others. Think about your life and temperament. We ask God for more blessings; a bigger house, a newer car, a better job, etc. What is your temperament like with your current house, car, job, etc? Do you come home angry and complaining? Do you snap at your wife and the children? Do you holler at those around you and justify it by saying it’s their fault for making you mad? If you are uncontrollable at your current level, why would God entrust you with more?

- Do you find your anger to be frequently uncontrollable? If so, in what area?
- What are you doing to control your anger? Have you sought help?
- Have you apologized to those you have affected?
- Read these verses daily and reflect on the meaning:

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. James 1:19-20 (NLT)

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. Ephesians 4:31-32 (NLT)

Sensible people control their temper; they earn respect by overlooking wrongs. Proverbs 19:11 (NLT)

Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the Lord. Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads." Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good. Romans 12:17-21 (NLT)

A hot-tempered person starts fights; a cool-tempered person stops them. Proverbs 15:18 (NLT)

Action Steps

- If you don't have an active prayer life, start by praying for 5 minutes each day. Pick a specific time and an exact location for your prayer. It could be in your bedroom, in the car driving to work, etc. Commit to praying for 5 minutes each day for a week.
- During your time of prayer, think about your answers to the questions in this bible study and ask God to strengthen/help you in the areas where needed.