

Taking It Home:

Pastor Bob mentioned the pattern evidenced throughout to book; disobedience, bondage, groaning and deliverance. Each step always led to the next and the only way out was through surrender and dependence upon God. Obviously they would have been better off if they had just stayed obedient in the first place. Looking at your own life, can you identify any areas of disobedience or incomplete obedience? What actions can you take to avoid “the pattern” described in this lesson?

How sure are you about possible idols in your life? When making choices do you place God’s desires above your own? This can be difficult for us especially if we tend to not examine ourselves. Take time this week to examine the areas and interests of your life. Ask God to reveal any area to you that would call for an adjustment of priority.



Small Group Lesson - Judges November 3, 2013

Quick Review:

What in Sunday’s message spoke to you, troubled you, helped you, or encouraged you?

My Story:

In this week’s message we learned that though Israel started well, they did not finish well. Is there something in your life that you feel you’ve started well, but did not finish well? How did this make you feel?

Read 2 Timothy 4:6-7. In this passage Paul tells Timothy that he has finished the race and still kept his faith. Because of this he knows there is a reward for him. Is there something in your life that you finished well and received reward from? How was this feeling different from your experience with starting well and not finishing well?

Have you ever had a hero in your life, a person who rescued you in time of great need?

Digging Deeper:

Last week in the book of Joshua we saw Israel as an obedient and confident people who followed a godly leader into the Promised Land. In the book of Judges we see Israel repeatedly lose that confidence and commitment. In several cycles of disobedience and deliverance they constantly turned from God's plan and suffered the consequences of their actions never seeming to learn from their mistakes. God's powerful loving kindness and mercy is demonstrated as He rescues His people from their point of desperation over and over again.

The opening paragraphs of chapter 1 recount numerous victories as the Israelites began to drive out the inhabitants of the land. Review verses 27-33. After many successes, things began to change. Why is incomplete obedience just as bad as outright disobedience? Read chapter 2 verses 1-3 and chapter 1:34. What are the consequences of incomplete obedience?

Why does God expect our complete obedience? Read Numbers 33:55. Did God not warn them before entering the land about the things they should not do? Notice in verses 1:29,30,32 and 33 the words which are repeated; "the Canaanites lived among them". Was this God's plan? Why not? What was He trying to protect them from?

The cultural influence of Canaan led the Israelites to worship false gods. Their idolatry was deeply tied to their rebellion. Read Judges 2:16-19. What cycle is made evident by the text? Why would God continue to deliver them despite their disobedience?

In our modern American culture we are not very familiar with open idolatry. Idolatry has become much more subtle. Most Americans do not go home and pray to a golden calf, or attend pagan temples. However, idolatry is alive and well. What are some modern day idols and temples?

In I Corinthians 10, Paul uses Israel's history as a warning to the church. Read vs. 14-21. What does Paul say we need to do when it comes to idolatry? What reason does he give? What stark claim is made regarding sacrifices made to idols and why is this important?

Throughout Judges we continue to see the cycle we referenced earlier. Israel would rebel, they would fall into oppression, Israel would cry out, God would raise another Judge to deliver them, and then Israel would rebel again. Read I Corinthians 9:24-27. What is the Apostle Paul's prescription that kept him from being caught in a similar cycle and allowed him to "finish well"? How does this answer relate to the need for us to be obedient and to flee idolatry?