

Judges 16:4-22

4 After this he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. **5** And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Seduce him, and see where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to humble him. And we will each give you 1,100 pieces of silver." **6** So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength lies, and how you might be bound, that one could subdue you."

7 Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, then I shall become weak and be like any other man." **8** Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings that had not been dried, and she bound him with them. **9** Now she had men lying in ambush in an inner chamber. And she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he snapped the bowstrings, as a thread of flax snaps when it touches the fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.

10 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Behold, you have mocked me and told me lies. Please tell me how you might be bound." **11** And he said to her, "If they bind me with new ropes that have not been used, then I shall become weak and be like any other man." **12** So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And the men lying in ambush were in an inner chamber. But he snapped the ropes off his arms like a thread.

13 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me how you might be bound." And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web and fasten it tight with the pin, then I shall become weak and be like any other man." **14** So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web. And she made them tight with the pin and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web.

15 And she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and you have not told me where your great strength lies." **16** And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death. **17** And he told her all his heart, and said to her, "A razor has never come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If my head is shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man."

18 When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up again, for he has told me all his heart." Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands. **19** She made him sleep on her knees. And she called a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. **20** And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And he awoke from his sleep and said, "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free." But he did not know that the Lord had left him. **21** And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison. **22** But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

Discussion/Journal Questions

What are some of your favorite fictional love stories whether movies, television, books, or other media?

What are some of the common elements in movie or television romances?

Have you ever trusted someone who later proved untrustworthy?

Read Judges 16:4-22. How many times does Delilah betray Samson? Why do you think he continued to trust her?

In the sermon, John used this definition of trust: "Trust is the feeling of confidence that comes from what you 'think' of someone." Reflect on this definition. Does it ring true with your experience? Why or why not?

Read 1 Peter 4:8. What does it mean that love covers a multitude of sins?

Ultimately, we want to love as God loves us. How does God treat our flaws, shortcomings, and weaknesses?

Do you agree or disagree with the statement, "Trust is earned, but trust is also given." Why?

What is the difference between forgiveness and trust? What does it look like to forgive someone you do not trust?

Is there a relationship in your life in which trust has been broken? How can your group pray for you in that relationship?

Who are you praying for to accept Jesus, and what specifically did you do this week to interact with them?

Who are you currently discipling, and what specifically did you do this week to help them know, love, and follow Jesus?

Who are you considering for future discipleship relationships, and what specifically did you do this week to interact with them?