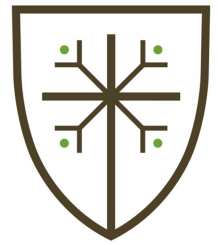


RIGHT IN THEIR OWN EYES

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Sermons for Lent

SERMON NOTES



April 2, 2023

SERMON INFO

TITLE

Right in their Own Eyes: A King in
Israel

PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

TEXTS

Judges 10, 11, 12

Romans 12:1-3

Matthew 19:27-30

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What spiritual servitude have you become accustomed to? Perhaps even so accustomed that it begins to seem good? Where do we see this kind of contentment happening in the world?
2. Several themes have been repeated throughout our Judges series. Any that stick out for you? In what ways has the Lord formed you throughout the series and the season of Lent?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

Tim concluded our lent sermon series on Judges this week with a look at the story of Samson, but not the Samson we all remember from Sunday School, strong enough to kill a lion with his bare hands. No, the story of Samson starts, like all the judges we've seen in this series, with human weakness.

Contentment

The familiar refrain is yet again repeated, "They did what was evil in the sight of the Lord." But this time, it isn't followed by the people crying out to the Lord. The crying out of the people was never a cry of repentance, but rather a cry of anguish. They didn't want to change; they just didn't want to hurt anymore. And time and time again once they were rescued and the judge was gone, they went back to their former ways. And they did this so often that enslavement to foreign nations, serving foreign gods, became normal. They became content with their situation and stopped crying out to the Lord for rescue.

Obscurity

Obscurity is a mark of all the stories of our judges thus far. And Samson's story too begins in obscurity and is pervaded by it to the end. A barren woman, who is not even named, gives birth to him. A woman who had no power in herself to do what was most uniquely representative of being a woman. God begins his redemption in utter human inability. He begins in a place where is no human ability, energy, or effort to do what God alone can do.

Sight

In Judges, we've seen God's people over and over again lose sight of who He is, "doing what is right in their own eyes." And in the Gospel reading today, we see that same near-sightedness in the crowd gathered, waving palm branches; a crowd that only a few days later will be shouting to crucify him. But God's redemption is greater than the ambivalence of the crowd. It begins by showing his people who he truly is, by revealing their true king, a king that, just like the judges, begins in obscurity. Verse 5 in our Gospel readings says, "Behold, your king is coming to you. Humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden." This is our king. This is why he has come, to bear the burdens of this world. All the kings of the world prey on the weak and the innocent. But Jesus is a King who saves the ambivalent and the guilty. He is a burden-bearing King. He is a King for whom no depth is too low to stoop, even unto death. And he is a King who has defeated death in order that we too - the weak, the frail, the ambivalent, the guilty - might know life.