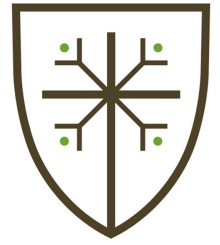


SERMON NOTES



SUMMER SERMON SERIES

THE TWELFTH JUDGE

A Return to Judges



June 18, 2023

SERMON INFO

TITLE

The Twelfth Judge -
Disruptive Salvation

PREACHER

Rev. Josh Keller

TEXTS

from Judges 14 and 15
James 3:17-4:4
John 3:13-19

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Josh used the illustration of a vine growing up a tree, that appears harmless and even beautiful but, in the end, can kill the tree. What are the vines in your own life that are dragging you down and robbing you of the abundant life you're meant to have in God?
2. What are ways in which we, as Christians, as the Church, can be disruptive witnesses to God's grace?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Josh continued our sermon series on Samson looking at some of Samson's most reckless behavior and the disruption it caused in Israel – the same kind of disruption that God's grace causes in the life of the Christian. There were two main points to this "examination of disruption" – disruptive salvation and disruptive witness.

Disruptive Salvation

As we've seen previously with Samson, he runs hot. He has a violent temper and reacts with aggression when he does not have or get what he wants. He is the epitome of the person described in James 4. Samson takes all his queues from the Philistines. He does not care about being set apart by his Nazarite vow. He gives them back equally everything that they throw at him. And, unlike other places in Judges, the Israelites don't join him in his disruption, or cry out for deliverance from their oppressors. They want to be ruled by the Philistines, to maintain the status quo. And they don't like the disruption Sampson causes. But God uses the disruption to wake up his people. Although Samson's rule is disruptive, it is still characterized by the Philistines. We need a salvation that is more disruptive than the one Sampson brought to Israel. One that is not entwined with the powers that oppress us.

Our gospel reading from John 3 shows us that you cannot grab hold of the thing that will save you on your own. God must come down to you. Like the serpent lifted up in the wilderness, Israel had to look upon the thing that was killing them and accept that their deliverance came from outside of them.

Disruptive Witness

The gospel is good news. But it is disruptive news. It requires the understanding, to some level, that you belong on the cross instead of Jesus. And If you truly understand that, there is no room for self-righteousness. There is no room for thinking salvation comes from within.

There is a noticeable tension between our Epistle reading from James and our gospel reading from John – if friendship with the world is enmity with God, how can God love the world? And how can we in turn love the world without becoming friends with the world? What separates you from the world is nothing inherent in you. It is disruptive grace, grace that loves the world without becoming enmeshed with the world.

We are often so much like Samson and Israel – ungrateful and grumbling. But when we come to the Altar Table each week we are reminded of God's faithfulness, of the overwhelming gratitude that should flood our lives. So, as Josh encouraged us, disrupt this world with the good news of Christ, saturated with gratitude.