

SERMON NOTES:

A Journey Through Judges and the Cost of Compromise

Part 2: When Deliverance Was Simple

BIG Idea: God responds to undivided hearts, but only Christ can give us one.

Application: Return to wholehearted devotion—align your life fully with Christ and live in response to the deliverance He has already secured.

Join us as we read the Bible together in 2026.

<https://bit.ly/ReadwithMe26>

1. God looks for undivided hearts.

Judges 3:7-11 (ESV)

⁷And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. They forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth. ⁸Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia. And the people of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. ⁹But when the people of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel, who saved them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. ¹⁰The Spirit of the Lord was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the Lord gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. ¹¹So the land had rest for forty years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

They did not reject God outright – they redistributed their trust.

Psalms 24:3-4 (NLT)

³Who may climb the mountain of the Lord?

Who may stand in his holy place?

⁴Only those whose hands and hearts are pure,

who do not worship idols

and never tell lies.

Matthew 5:8 (NLT)

⁸God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.

James 4:8 (NLT)

⁸Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world.

The issue is not simply sin – it is divided trust.

God does not respond to divided allegiance with decisive clarity.

2. God raises up Spirit-empowered deliverance.

Judges 3:9 (ESV)

“But when the people of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer...”

God raises up the deliverer, empowers the deliverer, and gives the victory.

Romans 8:9-11 (NLT)

⁹ But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) ¹⁰ And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. ¹¹ The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

3. We don't need a better system – we need a better savior.

The people were never strong enough to sustain this in the first place.

Jeremiah 17:9 (NLT)

⁹ “The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?”

Mark 7:21-23 (NLT)

²¹ For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. ²³ All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you.”

The issue is that the human heart, left to itself, cannot sustain faithfulness.

Proverbs 4:23 (NLT)

²³ Guard your heart above all else,
for it determines the course of your life.

This passage doesn't show us how to maintain deliverance – it shows us why we cannot.

Ezekiel 36:26 (NLT)

²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart.

We need a Savior who does not simply step back into the cycle – but breaks it.