

SERMON NOTES:

A Journey Through Judges and the Cost of Compromise

Part 1: A Promising Start, A Cracked Foundation

BIG Idea: A cracked spiritual foundation begins with small compromises that eventually reshape our lives and future generations.

Application: Identify and remove areas of partial obedience before they become patterns of compromise that shape your life and influence others.

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1. A strong start can hide a subtle compromise.

Joshua 24:14-15 (NLT)

¹⁴ “So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. ¹⁵ But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.”

Joshua 23:13 (NLT)

¹³ then know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive them out of your land. Instead, they will be a snare and a trap to you, a whip for your backs and thorny brambles in your eyes, and you will vanish from this good land the Lord your God has given you.

Joshua 24:21 (NLT)

²¹ But the people answered Joshua, “No, we will serve the Lord!”

Judges 1:1-2 (NLT)

¹ After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the Lord, “Which tribe should go first to attack the Canaanites?”

² The Lord answered, “Judah, for I have given them victory over the land.”

Judges 1:19, 21 (NLT) *Israel Fails to Conquer the Land*

¹⁹ The Lord was with the people of Judah, and they took possession of the hill country. But they failed to drive out the people living in the plains, who had iron chariots.

²¹ The tribe of Benjamin, however, failed to drive out the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem. So to this day the Jebusites live in Jerusalem among the people of Benjamin.

It is partial obedience.

Judges 1:21b (NLT)

²¹The tribe of Benjamin, however, failed to drive out the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem. So to this day the Jebusites live in Jerusalem among the people of Benjamin.

This is not defeat – it’s a decision.

2. What you fail to remove will eventually remain.

Judges 1:27-30 (NLT)

²⁷The tribe of Manasseh failed to drive out the people living in Beth-shan, Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, Megiddo, and all their surrounding settlements, because the Canaanites were determined to stay in that region. ²⁸When the Israelites grew stronger, they forced the Canaanites to work as slaves, but they never did drive them completely out of the land.

²⁹The tribe of Ephraim failed to drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, so the Canaanites continued to live there among them.

³⁰The tribe of Zebulun failed to drive out the residents of Kitron and Nahalol, so the Canaanites continued to live among them. But the Canaanites were forced to work as slaves for the people of Zebulun.

What you tolerate today will dominate you tomorrow.

3. Compromise reforms the next generation.

Judges 2:1-3 (NLT) *The Lord’s Messenger Comes to Bokim*

¹The angel of the Lord went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said to the Israelites, “I brought you out of Egypt into this land that I swore to give your ancestors, and I said I would never break my covenant with you. ²For your part, you were not to make any covenants with the people living in this land; instead, you were to destroy their altars. But you disobeyed my command. Why did you do this? ³So now I declare that I will no longer drive out the people living in your land. They will be thorns in your sides, and their gods will be a constant temptation to you.”

Judges 2:10 (NLT)

¹⁰After that generation died, another generation grew up who did not acknowledge the Lord or remember the mighty things he had done for Israel.

Compromise doesn’t just affect your life – it shapes what the next generation believes is normal.

Judges 2:11-13 (NLT)

¹¹The Israelites did evil in the Lord’s sight and served the images of Baal. ¹²They abandoned the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They went after other gods, worshipping the gods of the people around them. And they angered the Lord. ¹³They abandoned the Lord to serve Baal and the images of Ashtoreth.

Judges 2:16-17 (NLT)

¹⁶Then the Lord raised up judges to rescue the Israelites from their attackers. ¹⁷Yet Israel did not listen to the judges but prostituted themselves by worshiping other gods. How quickly they turned away from the path of their ancestors, who had walked in obedience to the Lord's commands.

Judges 2:18-19 (NLT)

¹⁸Whenever the Lord raised up a judge over Israel, he was with that judge and rescued the people from their enemies throughout the judge's lifetime. For the Lord took pity on his people, who were burdened by oppression and suffering. ¹⁹But when the judge died, the people returned to their corrupt ways, behaving worse than those who had lived before them. They went after other gods, serving and worshiping them. And they refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways.

Judges 3:5-6 (NLT)

⁵So the people of Israel lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, ⁶and they intermarried with them. Israelite sons married their daughters, and Israelite daughters were given in marriage to their sons. And the Israelites served their gods.