



SAMSON

A LIFE WELL WASTED

SAMSON—A LIFE WELL WASTED, PART 1: WHEN STRONG MEN ARE WEAK

Think you're strong? Even our best intentions can falter when we face temptation & distraction. Don't believe me? Just ask Samson. He had every advantage as a boy. His birth was predicted by an angel. He had godly parents who loved him. Samson was dedicated to God, and he experienced the power of God's Spirit as a young man. Despite all these favorable factors? Samson failed to embrace his God-given purpose. Time and time again, he made the wrong decisions, and ultimately wasted his life.

BIG IDEA: A strong man with weak character is a weakling.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What's one of the most impulsive thing, biggest impulse purchase, or impulsive decision you have ever made? What was the result of your actions?
2. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Judges 13:1-8.* This passage describes the birth of Samson.

¹ Again the Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight, so the LORD handed them over to the Philistines, who oppressed them for forty years. ² In those days a man named Manoah from the tribe of Dan lived in the town of Zorah. His wife was unable to become pregnant, and they had no children. ³ The angel of the LORD appeared to Manoah's wife and said, "Even though you have been unable to have children, you will soon become pregnant and give birth to a son. ⁴ So be careful; you must not drink wine or any other alcoholic drink nor eat any forbidden food. ⁵ You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and his hair must never be cut. For he will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. He will begin to rescue Israel from the Philistines." ⁶ The woman ran and told her husband, "A man of God appeared to me! He looked like one of God's angels, terrifying to see. I didn't ask where he was from, and he didn't tell me his name. ⁷ But he told me, "You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You must not drink wine or any other alcoholic drink nor eat any forbidden food. For your son will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from the moment of his birth until the day of his death." ⁸ Then Manoah prayed to the LORD, saying, "Lord, please let the man of God come back to us again and give us more instructions about this son who is to be born."

Judges 13:1-8 (NLT)

3. Why do you think the angel came to Manoah's wife first? What was going on in her life that set up hearing from God?
4. Have you ever been desperate for something in your life? Who or what did you run to in your time of desperation?
5. It seems women can be more attune to spiritual things than the average man is. Why do you think that is?
6. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Judges 13:24-25 & Judges 14:1-10.* In this passage we see Samson demonstrating attitudes that make strong men weak.

²⁴ When her son was born, she named him Samson. And the LORD blessed him as he grew up. ²⁵ And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him while he lived in Mahaneh-dan, which is located between the towns of Zorah and Eshtaol.

Judges 13:24-25 (NLT)

¹ One day when Samson was in Timnah, one of the Philistine women caught his eye. ² When he returned home, he told his father and mother, "A young Philistine woman in Timnah caught my eye. I want to marry her. Get her for me." ³ His father and mother objected. "Isn't there even one woman in our tribe or among all the Israelites you could marry?" they asked. "Why must you go to the pagan Philistines to find a wife?" But Samson told his father, "Get her for me! She looks good to me." ⁴ His father and mother didn't realize the LORD was at work in this, creating an opportunity to work against the Philistines, who ruled over Israel at that time. ⁵ As Samson and his parents were going down to Timnah, a young lion suddenly attacked Samson near the vineyards of Timnah. ⁶ At that moment the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon him, and he ripped the lion's jaws apart with his bare hands. He did it as easily as if it were a young goat. But he didn't tell his father or mother about it. ⁷ When Samson arrived in Timnah, he talked with the woman and was very pleased with her. ⁸ Later, when he returned to Timnah for the wedding, he turned off the path to look at the carcass of the lion. And he found that a swarm of bees had made some honey in the carcass. ⁹ He scooped some of the honey into his hands and ate it along the way. He also gave some to his father and mother, and they ate it. But he didn't tell them he had taken the honey from the carcass of the lion. ¹⁰ As his father was making final arrangements for the marriage, Samson threw a party at Timnah, as was the custom for elite young men.

Judges 14:1-10 (NLT)

7. Samson was incredibly strong, but had a dangerously weak character. Where in life do you feel you are strongest?
8. Share some examples of men you've known or seen that were brought down by their weak will. What can you learn from these examples?
9. What are some of the dangers you've experienced or seen because of having a weak will?

MOVING FORWARD

One of the best ways to strengthen your will, change your attitude, and overcome sin is to have another person become your accountability partner. If you don't have an accountability partner, then strive to find one this week. Find someone of the same sex that you trust. You might consider finding someone in your group to become your accountability partner.

Allow your partner to develop you into a stronger person by holding you accountable as you battle against your weak will and any sins you may be struggling with. If you already have an accountability partner, then confess to them where your will is weakest.