

Message Series: Secrets Week 4

Message Title: Secret Strength for Living

Date: April 23 & 24, 2016

Message Summary: Listen to Pastor Ken tell the story of Samson. Samson is known for superhuman strength and poor decision making. While Samson squandered much of “what could have been” in his life, his life also illustrates there is hope for everyone who turns to the Lord and cries out to Him.

Leaders: The questions that follow are designed to stir reflection and discussion. Please read through them prior to your meeting, so you can be prepared to prayerfully pace your group well. Feel free to write your answers down and make notes so you are prepared to lead your group. And remember, as leader, your goal is to promote increased *biblical* awareness, as well as individual *self-awareness* – a combination that with the help of the Holy Spirit, results in revelation and...transformation!

Below you will find questions that relate to the primary scripture and additional scripture. There will be other reflective questions intended for group discussion and application.

Read Judges 13 – 16

1. At first glance, cutting off Samson’s hair seems to be the reason he lost his strength and the Lord left him. Actually it was because Samson violated the covenant relationship that began with his parents. Where are those areas of your life which may seem like a little thing (cutting hair) but it actually is a big thing (walking away from a covenant vow)?
2. Life often consists of downstream issues as the result of upstream causes. This truth seems to play out in both a positive and negative way. Where can you see this principle play out positively and negatively in your life?
3. Incredible strength in one area of life does not overcome weakness in another. Samson had supernatural strength and poor decision making. Eventually his inability to control himself led to his capture by his enemy. Do you know the areas of your own life where you are strong and where you are weak? What are some practical ways to work on strengthening our weaknesses?
4. Pastor Ken taught how the Lord gave Samson's parents a promise that their son would be used to begin the deliverance of Israel from the hand of the Philistines. But Samson’s parents had to carry and develop the promise until Samson eventually made it his own. If you are a parent, can you relate to this?

5. Pastor Ken then used the same analogy as related to evangelism. The Lord has clearly spoken (read 2 Peter 3:9 & Ephesians 3:10). The church has been charged with a message for the world. List some people God has placed in your life and you are the one carrying Christ's message of hope and grace until they grow into it and pick up this message for themselves. How could you pray and serve more regularly for those God has placed in your life, who do not know Him yet?

6. The secret to a life of strength is a surrendered obedient life. Two areas of threat to living this type of life are when we don't want to surrender or when we want to play it safe. Where are the areas of your life you find it hardest to surrender? Living a surrendered obedient life requires living by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7). Why is this so difficult?

➤ **Final Reflections**

Has God called you to help “carry” a burden for another? If so, who and how?

Do you have any “downstream issues” where you need to look further into “upstream causes”?

Pray for one another