

I. Intro

A. Text: **Judges 16:15-21**

¹⁵ Then [Delilah] said to [Samson], “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength lies.” ¹⁶ And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, ¹⁷ that he told her all his heart, and said to her, “No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.”

¹⁸ When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart.” So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand. ¹⁹ Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. ²⁰ And she said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” So he awoke from his sleep, and said, “I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!” But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.

²¹ Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison. **(Judges 16:15-21)**

B. Recap On Marriage

1. **TRC Definition:** Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime.
 - a. Represents the only relationship status (besides single) that God endorses.
 - i. Remember that God is a relational God. He actually gave us the marital relationship to mirror man’s relationship with Him.
 - b. Dating is like dancing through a land mine.

- i. One of Dating's Great Disadvantages: The Choice to Walk Away
 - c. My Prayer: Develop a Culture that Supersedes the Dating Culture that protects and honors.
 - i. Where we learn to honor each other in our searching.
- 2. Repeat: No biblical precedent for dating.
 - a. A lot of gray area on the subject.
- 3. This teaching is not a bonafide doctrine, but I want to share a little of my heart on the subject, looking at the lives of Isaac and Samson.

II. The Choosing: Choosing what/ who you want is both accepted and expected in our culture, but not necessarily effective. (**Judges 14:1-3**)

A. The Outdated, Yet Safer Option: Isaac (**Gen. 24:2-51**)

¹Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. ²So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, "Please, put your hand under my thigh, ³and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; ⁴but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac."

(Gen. 24:1-4)

- 1. Isaac allowed others into the process of him settling on a wife.
 - a. Father (Abraham) knew him; studied him, was well-acquainted with his likes.
- 2. Isaac trusted his father so much that he submitted to his father's wisdom in helping him find a wife.

- a. Trusted Abram so much that he went along with his father delegating his oldest servant (Eleazar) to find his wife.
- 3. Isaac displayed incredible humility and submission in his choosing process.
 - a. Not the rule for successfully choosing a covenant partner for a lifetime.
 - i. But Isaac's example is certainly a viable option that we almost always ignore.
- 4. Abraham and his servant didn't do half-bad.
 - a. Rebekah was easy on the eyes. (**Gen. 24:16**)
 - i. She was just what Isaac liked... physically.

*¹⁶ Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. (**Gen. 24:16a**)*

- i. She was just what Isaac liked... physically.
- b. **Prerequisite #1:** In choosing, make a quality decision with your eyes.
 - i. Of all the attractions, one of them has to be physical.
- c. Fine wives just ran in the Abraham, Isaac, Jacob family.
 - i. Sarah was pushing 90 years old and still fine (**Gen. 20**)
 - ii. Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance (**Gen. 29:16-17**).

*¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters. The older daughter was named Leah, and the younger one was Rachel. ¹⁷ There was no sparkle in Leah's eyes, but Rachel had a beautiful figure and a lovely face. (**Gen. 29:16-17**)*

- d. Rebekah was just what Isaac liked. But she was also just what Isaac needed! (**Gen. 24:16-20**)

¹⁶ Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. ¹⁷ And the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please let me drink a little water from your

pitcher.”¹⁸ So she said, “Drink, my lord.” Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink.¹⁹ And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.” (Gen. 24:16-20)

- i. Virtuous woman.
- ii. Kind, hospitable, merciful (even to strangers).

B. The Contemporary, Yet Contentious Option: Samson

¹ Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. ² So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, “I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife.” ³ Then his father and mother said to him, “Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?” (Judges 14:1-3)

- 1. Samson dictated his moves based on his own will and expertise.
 - a. He said to his father, “I’ve seen her and she pleases me.”
- 2. Samson knew what he wanted. And when he saw it, he knew how to go after it.
 - a. The Bible doesn’t mention the name of this “Gotta have it woman”, but Samson married her.
 - i. No sooner than he married her, problems with her kinfolk.
- 3. The common single person nowadays is much like Samson.
 - a. See it. Go after it.
 - i. Even if it’s gonna kill you.

4. Nothing wrong with “seeing, then going for it” if you are 100% certain that you’ll go after what’s best for you... and your future grand-children.

C. Samson was anointed. He was rider.

1. Samson had it going on.
 - a. Killed a thousand Philistines with the donkey’s jawbone (**Gen. 15:14-15**).
 - b. Killed a lion with his bare hands (**Judges 14:5-6**)
 - c. He was gifted, powerful and anointed.
2. But Samson’s chooser was broke.
 - a. Not only was Samson’s chooser broke, but he refused to receive input from any of those around him.
 - i. He was a solo artist
 - ii. Samson had it all figured out.
 - b. Why wouldn’t you let sincere, god-fearing mentors into the process?
3. It didn’t take long for Samson’s relationship status with his first wife to change from “*Happily Married*” to “*It’s Complicated*” (**Judges 15:1-2**)

*Later on, during the wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat as a present to his wife. He said, “I’m going into my wife’s room to sleep with her,” but her father wouldn’t let him in.² “I truly thought you must hate her,” her father explained, “so I gave her in marriage to your best man. But look, her younger sister is even more beautiful than she is. Marry her instead.” (**Judges 15:1-2 – NLT**)*

- a. Wife was given to his best man.
 - i. Samson went bezerk!

D. Samson had a knack for choosing “**Trouble**”.

1. But he thought that he’d get it right the next time.
 - a. Samson’s next independent, intelligent choice was an unnamed lady of the night (**Judges 16:1-2**)
2. And then... there was Delilah. (**Judges 16:4-5**)

⁴Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. ⁵And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, “Entice him, and find out where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver.” ⁶So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me where your great strength lies, and with what you may be bound to afflict you.” (Judges 16:4-5)

- a. Instead of Samson's chooser getting more accurate and efficient with time and experience, it got worse.
- 3. As broke as his chooser was, Sampson should have been asking himself some a serious question before even beginning.
 - a. Question #1: Is she passionately running after God?
 - i. Delilah didn't seem to serve Yahweh.
- 4. At some point in the relationship, a bigger question probably should have come up:
 - a. Question #2: Does she really belong to forever?
 - i. No covenant. No commitment.
 - ii. Just checking each other out.
 - b. We're not 100% sure that Sampson had a sexually intimate relationship with Delilah.
 - i. What we do know is that Sampson was content spending quality time and sharing all his dreams, secrets, hurts someone that he had no covenant with.
 - c. Results were catastrophic.
 - i. This “gotta have it” girl set Samson up, cut off his hair, drained him of all his strength (Judges 16:17-19)

¹⁷That he told her all his heart, and said to her, “No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.” ¹⁸When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart.” So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought

the money in their hand. ¹⁹ Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. (Judges 16:17-19)

5. Samson had holes in his game (a broke chooser). But Samson's fatal mistake was laying his head in the lap of a woman that he had no covenant with.
 - a. Samson laid his head in the lap of a woman who did not belong to him and told her all his heart (**Judg. 16:17**)
 - b. And before he knew it, all kinds of folks were in the room with bad intentions.
 - i. Choosing on our own in this culture is downright dangerous.

III. Conclusion: My Pastoral Advice

- A. Recognize who God has placed in your life and include them into the process of choosing a mate.
 1. If you have a pastor, let your pastor cover you.
 - a. All major decisions.
 2. If you have a mentor, a spiritual mother or father... let them into the process.
- B. Sad that so many powerful, gifted, young men and women mortgage everything they have on broke choosers.
 1. How could someone so big and superhero-like, go down so easily?
 - a. Settling for a non-covenant relationship
- C. **Our Perception:** We often see Samson as this huge muscle-bound guy whose power was somehow stored in his muscles and his hair.
 1. **Alternative Appearance:** Samson could have been 5' 8" and 135 lbs.
 - a. I suggest that Samson's power was not in him at all.
 - b. "*And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him...*"

(Judges 14:6, 14:19, 15:14)

- i. The Spirit of the Lord would come upon Samson, and the results were jaw-dropping.
- 2. Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him.
 - a. Note: Every time the Spirit of the Lord came upon someone in the Bible, the results were super-natural.
 - b. We know that Sampson hadn't cut his hair, but what we often miss is that Samson lived in a way that was set apart all his life.
 - i. For years, there were a lot of normal pleasures that he'd abstained from.
 - ii. He lived a life of fasting and consecration.
 - iii. He likely lived a life of prayer and intercession.
 - c. Samson was anointed. The hand of God was upon him
 - d. It wasn't his physical muscles that made him mighty. Samson carried the anointing of God with him.
 - i. The Bible never speaks about Samson's physical muscles.
 - ii. But it hints about his spiritual muscles.
- 3. Sampson lost everything behind a bad chooser (refusing to let anyone else in on his relationships).
 - a. He had it all figured out and it cost him everything.
- 4. But God...
 - a. In Samson's death, more of his enemies were killed than in his life.
 - b. It was hurtful for Samson, but God got the glory

D. **The Good News:** God can use you wherever you are (despite your former bad choices).

- 1. You may have had a broke chooser.
 - a. You may have been a solo artist.
- 2. I simply suggest that the next time, you let some people in on the process.