

I. Intro

A. Recap On Marriage

1. **Our Definition:** Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime.
 - a. Lifetime covenant represents the only relationship status (besides single) that God endorses.
 - b. Remember that God gave us the marital relationship to mirror mankind's relationship with Him.
2. The Bible never mentions the "dating game", seeing each other, going steady, kicking it, messing around, courting, etc.
 - a. The Bible only mentions a covenant, exclusive, passionate relationship with God for a lifetime.

II. Samson: The Option Immersed in Independence

A. The Nazarite's Background

1. The common misconception is that Samson's story was centered around physical muscles and brute strength.
 - a. I suggest that Samson's power was not in him at all.
 - i. *"And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him..." (Judges 14:6, 14:19, 15:14)*
 - ii. The Spirit of the Lord would come upon Samson, and the results were jaw-dropping.
2. Samson actually lived in a set apart life.

B. Samson's Romantic Choices

¹Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. ²So 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." ³Then 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? And Samson said to his father, “Get her for me, for she pleases me well.” (Judges 14:1-3)

1. Samson’s moves were dictated by his own will and expertise.
 - a. He said to his father, *“I’ve seen her and she pleases me.”*
2. The common single person nowadays is much like Samson.
 - a. See it → Go after it.
3. Samson was anointed. He was rider.
 - a. Killed a lion with his bare hands (**Judges 14:5-6**)
 - b. Killed a thousand Philistines with the donkey’s jawbone (**Gen. 15:14-15**).
4. 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.
5. It didn’t take long for Samson’s relationship status 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.

C. Samson’s Romantic Repetitions

1. 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” (Judges 16:4-5)

- a. Instead of Samson's chooser getting more accurate and efficient with time and experience, it got worse.
3. Suggested Questions before sharing all of your heart, dreams, hurts, secrets.
 - a. Question #1: Is he/she passionately running after God?
 - i. Delilah didn't seem to serve Yahweh.
 - b. Question #2: Does she really belong to me (and me to her) forever?
 - i. No covenant. No commitment.
 - c. We're not 100% sure that Sampson had a sexually intimate relationship with Delilah.
 - i. What we do know is that Sampson was content to spend quality time and share all his dreams, secrets, hurts someone that he had no covenant with.
4. This woman cut off his hair, drained him of all his strength (Judges 16:17-19)

¹⁶And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, 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. ¹⁹Then 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)

- a. Samson's fatal mistake was laying his head in the lap of a woman that he had no covenant with.
 - i. He 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.

²⁰ 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.
(Judges 16:20)

- i. Choosing on our own in this culture is downright dangerous.

III. Isaac: The Option Immersed in Community

¹ Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. ² So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, "Please, put your hand under my thigh, ³ and 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; ⁴ but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac."
(Gen. 24:1-4)

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

3. Abraham and his servant didn't do half-bad.

- a. Rebekah was easy on the eyes. (**Gen. 24:16**)

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

4. **Prerequisite #1:** In choosing, make a quality decision with your eyes.

- a. Of all the attractions, one of them has to be physical.
- b. 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**).
 - iii. *Rachel had a beautiful figure and a lovely face.* (**Gen. 29:16-17**)

5. **Prerequisite #2:** Does he/she love Jesus more than they love you?

- a. 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.

IV. Conclusion: Pastoral Advice

A. Recognize who God has placed in your life and include them into the process.

- 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.
 - a. Two clear choices in the pursuing of a covenant commitment partner for a lifetime: Samson and Isaac.
- B. Sad fact that powerful, gifted, young men and women lose everything because of bad choosers.
 - 1. Having a bad chooser is one thing, but having a bad chooser AND refusing to let anyone else in to help is crazy.