

Title: Living too close to the World
Judges 13: 2-24

Introduction

Christians today have a unique challenge. Jesus tells us that we are the “light of the world” (Matt 5:14). But in order to be the light of the world we must live in the world. We must walk the streets, work, and play and have relationships with human beings just like others. However the danger comes to play when we LIVE TOO CLOSE TO THE WORLD.

Jesus tells us “...you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world” (JN 15:19). In 1 John (2:15-16) John the beloved warns us to love not the world neither the things that are in the world. He goes on to say all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life.

My friend you are living on the edge if you try to maintain the same type of relationship and connections with your old associates. Tell somebody, “It’s dangerous living close to the world.”

Today we will look at the man named Samson. He was a judge in the days before Israel had a King. Samson had the distinction of being known as the strongest man that ever lived. Yet with all his strength, his life served as a commentary on the weakness of man – for Samson was unable to lift himself from the grasp of a sensuous woman.

- I) A Man of Godly beginnings
 - o Samson was the child of an unnamed woman and her husband Manoah, a member of the tribe of Dan.

- a. An unusual birth (3a, 24) – Like the birth of Isaac (Gen 17) and John the Baptist (LK 1) were announced by angels, so was the birth of Samson the judge announced by an angel. He was given the name Samson, which in the Hebrew means Sun. (Preincarnation? – also Gen 16:7, 32)
- b. A peculiar vow – the mother was not to drink any wine or any type of fermented drink, nor to eat anything unclean. Neither was the child to have a razor placed on his head.
 - The Nazarite vow is discussed in Num 6: 2-21. Basically this child was to be completely dedicated to the Lord.
- c. A divine assignment – He was to begin to deliver the Israelites from the hand of the Philistines (5b)
 - **Observations/lessons**
 - Sensuous children can be born of spiritual parents
 - A godly home is no guarantee against sensuality

II) A Man of incredible strength

- a. He killed a lion with his bare hands (14:6)
- b. He killed 30 men and took their clothes (14:19)
- c. He killed 1000 men with the jawbone of a jackass (15:16)
 - **Observations/lessons**
 - You can have all the muscles in the world, but if you're lacking self-restraint, you'll be spiritually weak and inept.
 - A man strength is measured from his neck up

III) A Man who lived too close to the world

- He went down to Timnah and was taken aback by an uncircumcised woman that he would later marry.
- He slept with a prostitute in Gaza (16:1), apparently unconcerned about the dangerous situation of being surrounded by his enemies
- He later fell in love with Delilah, a woman from the valley of Sorek, which was wine country.
 - a. The name Delilah originates from a Hebrew verb meaning, “to be weak...to be longing.” Apparently she was morally loose or weak.
 - b. He would later be so intoxicated with this woman that he would compromise his commitment to God.
 - c. Samson was quickly and helplessly drawn to Delilah. He was filled with Eros and forsook Agape. Three times she tried to get him to divulge the secret of his strength. The 4th time was a charm.
 - **Observations/lessons**
 - A sign of maturity in our Christian life is awareness of our weaknesses as well as our strengths
 - A sensuous person focuses on the external (flesh) and underestimates the internal (eternal)
 - A sensuous life is a vicious cycle of broken relationships and shattered romances – you can never get enough!

- IV) A Man who redeemed himself in the end – but had to pay dearly
- In the depths of the prison, Samson understood the ere of his ways and came to grips with his weakness
 - His hair slowly returned, as did his strength

- More importantly, his heart turned back to God
 - **Observations/lessons**
 - Above anything else in your life, guard, preserve, keep and protect those things communicated to you in the intimate realm of your spiritual life.
 - Trust no one above God Himself
 - God can use a person in spite of his or her mistakes
- This is where Mercy and Grace steps in. Samson deserved death for compromising his commitment to God – but he found mercy.
- Hebrews 11:32 is where we see Gods Grace – for Samson is now a member of the Hall of Faith.