

Do I have the Sampson (Sin-drome)

I'm sure many of us have heard of people who possessed amazing ability and talent, but because sin, they lost the potential to achieve the incredible. That's what I see in the story of Sampson. His name means "Sunny" which is a well-chosen name. Sampson's parents knew he was going to be the bright ray of hope for his people.

The Angel said in Judges 13:5, "He will begin to save Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."

However, the name "Cloudy" would have been a better name for Sampson because he never lived up to his full potential. Despite Sampson's personality flaws, God was able to begin delivering the Israelites from the Philistines.

The title of our lesson today is "Do I have the Sampson (Sin-drome)."

I. Do I listen to Good advice? Ch 14:3

In Ch 14:3, Sampson wanted to marry a Philistine. His parents try to inform him, "Why don't you pick an Israelite girl to marry?" Sampson's replies, I like the way she looks."

Make up your mind ahead of time who you should and shouldn't listen to. Listen to people who may disagree with you, they will get you to think.

Listen to people who love you, they have your best interest at heart. Listen to people who have achieved success in what you long for, like marriage. Listen to people who demonstrate wisdom (Prov 15:7).

II. Do I think about the consequences of my actions? Ch 14:5

Every time Sampson gets the urge to do something, he does it.

Verse 5, Sampson and his family are traveling to Timnah to make wedding plans. On the way there, Sampson decides to do some exploring, when he encounters a Lion.

Verse 6 says, "And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done."

On their way back, verse 8 says some time has passed. Sampson decides to go back to the area where he killed the lion. Upon his arrival he finds honey inside the carcass, eats it and brings some of it back to his parents who do not know the honey came from the body of the dead lion.

Sin has consequences. Not only does it affect individuals/affects others.

Ask yourself, “Is this something that goes against what God wants? In what way is this a good decision?”

III. Do I keep repeating the same Mistakes?

You would think that after this brief and disastrous marriage attempt to a Philistine girl, Sampson would see the light. Instead he tries to patch things up in Chapter 15:1.

Sampson continues the mistake of pursuing Philistine women. Eventually he will allow Delilah to nag him into revealing the secret of his strength, just like this little beauty nagged him into revealing the answer to his riddle.

Does this part of Sampson’s story have a familiar ring to it? Are there mistakes and weakness in our lives that we keep repeating over and over? The problem for Sampson is how he never took the time to examine his weaknesses.

What can we do to avoid this part of the Sampson sin-drome? Get a friend who will hold you accountable. Notice how we never see Sampson with a friend. Find a friend who will tell you the truth even if it hurts. Find a friend who can point out your blind spots. Prov 27:6, 17.

4. Do I give God the glory for my success?

With Sampson under wraps, the Philistines were dancing in the streets, but the Spirit of the Lord took hold of Sampson. He was like a wild animal freed from its cage. Sampson had no weapon, but he did find a donkey’s jawbone and killed 1,000 Philistines.

Notice how there is not a single word about God. No word of acknowledgement or gratitude. Sampson celebrates himself.

In Luke 18:14, Jesus said, “The humble will be honored.”

Close: Do you have the Sampson Sin-drome?

Am I able to listen when good advice is given? Do I care about the consequences of my actions? Do I keep repeating the same mistakes? Do I give God the glory for my success?

Usually, problems arise when we think, “I’m strong, I don’t need anybody.” Instead of becoming independent, Sampson teaches us to be dependent upon God. It is only when we trust in God that we receive true strength, which was absent in most of Sampson’s life.