

4. The angel refuses to be manipulated. How do his actions point Samson's parents beyond religion and manipulation?

5. The refrain "And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord," is found in Judges 2:11, 3:12, 4:1, 6:1, 10:6, and 13:1. Starting with Samson there is a shift. Samson wants to marry an Philistine woman. Even though his parents are not paragons of faithfulness to God, they still know this is wrong. Samson responds by saying, "She is right in my eyes." (Shades of the song "If loving you is wrong, I don't want to be right," but actually worse.) Then in 17:6 and 21:25 we're told that "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." How does this new phrase indicate deeper deterioration among God's people.

6. The two key phrases mentioned in question 5 are used to describe God's people, not the surrounding nations. It's a forgone conclusion that the surrounding nations do evil and redefine good and evil. It's easy to misapply these statements by directing them toward the darkness in our world and toward lost people. It's a warning to God's people. Reflect on its application to you and to our community of faith?

7. Looking back over this week's sermon and study, what one thing is most important for you to remember and apply?

SERIES: The Promised Land (Joshua & Judges)

SERMON 7: "The Making of a Selfish Superhero"

TEXT: Judges 13:1-14:3

DATE: November 14/15, 2015

1. The people of God _____ the people of God.
Judges 13:1-5; 15:9-12

When the people of God fail to live _____ lives
for God they fail to be the people of God.

2. Parents choose _____ with God.
Judges 13:6-25

Religion without a relationship with God always becomes about _____.

3. The hero is _____
Judges 14:1-3

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Judges 13:1-14:3

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Who is your favorite superhero and why?
3. Why would God send a judge to deliver a people who neither cry out to him for deliverance nor even desire it (see Judges 13:1-5 and 15:9-12)?

What is evil in the _____ of God becomes what is right in their own _____.

Magic plays a huge role in the world of Samson's day. The whole process of making of an idol was considered to be a magical process in that certain procedures had to be followed and certain words had to be spoken to bring life to the idol. The heart condition of the speakers didn't matter. All that mattered was that they followed the formula. They also believed they could get the gods to do certain things for them through various kinds of leverage. Manipulating the gods was a big part of Canaanite and Philistine religion. All the marks of god manipulation in that culture are present in Manoah's dealings with the angel. By learning the angel's name and getting him to accept a meal Manoah hopes to get leverage. Even Samson's name betrays the parents hearts. In a culture where naming was so important and the surrounding nations worshiped the sun, Samson's mother names him a name that means "son of the Sun." Now read Judges 13:6-25 with this in mind.

- ☀ Our DailyLife devotional will take you on a guided journey through Joshua and Judges over the eight weeks of this series. To receive DailyLife in your inbox, write "please send DailyLife" on your Communication Card. Make sure we have your current email address. If you do not receive it within the next few days, check your email spam or promotions box.