

LIFE OF SAMSON
PART 10–FACING FAILURE IN LIFE
JUDGES 16:22-31

Introduction

I read where a number of years ago, the British navy was involved in some peacetime maneuvers at sea involving a column of cruisers. They were steaming along in formation, when a signal was given to execute a 90-degree turn. The maneuver went off flawlessly, except for one cruiser, whose captain missed the signal. The ship almost collided with the one on front, and when it swerved to avoid a collision, the whole convoy was thrown into confusion.

Only some very skillful seamanship by the other captains prevented a serious accident. When some order had been regained, the admiral sent a message to the captain who had caused all the trouble; "*Captain, what are your intentions?*" Immediately the captain replied, "*Sir, I intend to buy a farm!*" He knew without being told that his failure had just cost him his naval career.

Thankfully, the **CHRISTIAN** life is not like serving in the British navy? If it were, then most of us would have been in trouble a long time ago.

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But there are some who would have us believe that we can live as we please without concern for **CONSEQUENCES**. Of course we know that is not the case either.

As we close the book on the life of **SAMSON**, we want to see one more lesson that we can learn from his wasted life– the lesson of “**FACING FAILURE IN LIFE.**”

Last week we left **SAMSON** in the **PHILISTINE** prison house! He had been blinded, bound, and was grinding at the wheel like an animal.

He had been betrayed and sold out by the woman he loved. And he was at the mercy of his life-long enemies who took joy in abusing him.

SAMSON was the one whom was **CHOSEN** by the **LORD** to be a leader for **HIS** people.

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SAMSON had such potential for doing great and mighty things for the **LORD** and **HIS** people! But now he was in the cruel hands of his enemies and had to be led from place to place.

No doubt he felt there would be nothing more to his life than the day to day grinding of his life away. But then we read these incredible words in **Judges 16:22**, "*Howbeit, the hair of his head began to grow again....*"

Before we read the rest of the chapter, I think it would be good for us to clarify a couple of things. When we look at a passage of **SCRIPTURE**, what we get from it is often determined by where we are **SPIRITUALLY**.

That is why we can read a section of the **BIBLE** at one point, and come back to that same passage later and see something that we didn't see the previous time.

Before I prepared this series of messages, I thought I knew this story. But, I found out that I didn't know the story of **SAMSON** as well as I thought I did!

The lesson we need from this passage is **FACING FAILURE IN LIFE**. But let's clarify what we are talking about when we use the word **FAILURE**.

WHAT IS THIS FAILURE THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT?

- A. The **FAILURE** that we are addressing is not:
1. Failing a test or assignment at school...
 2. Being passed over for a promotion on the job or not reaching a sales goal...
 3. Missing the winning basket or goal in some game.
 4. Going off our diet and splurging...

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5. All of these might be a legitimate use of the word **FAILURE**, but they are not what we are talking about.

B. The FAILURE we are addressing in SAMSON’S life is a MORAL FAILURE!

1. We're talking about when **SIN** gains control of our lives.
2. We're talking about when we are at the crossroad of **TEMPTATION** and we **CHOOSE TO GIVE IN!**
3. We're talking about **FAILING** to be all of what the **LORD** would have us to be!
4. With that in mind let's read the rest of this chapter.
Read: Judges 16:22-31

I. WHEN TEMPTED WITH MORAL FAILURE, DON’T GIVE IN!

We See How That **SAMSON’S SIN** Exacted A Heavy **COST!**

A SAMSON Brought Reproach On GOD! (Vs 23-24)

He gave these **unbelievers** reason to **boast in their idols**.

1. These are people who not only didn't know **GOD**, but now they had reason to be confirmed in their unbelief.
2. Every one of us has an **IMPACT** upon the lives of people around us...for **GOOD** or for **BAD**.

2 Corinthians 5:20a–“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ...”

PAUL is saying that **BELIEVERS REPRESENT CHRIST IN THIS WORLD!**

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We need to remember that we bear **CHRIST’S NAME!** Our life is on display for others to view. Whether we like it or not we are a living example that men will measure our **SAVIOUR** by.

e.g. The **PROPHET NATHAN**, speaking to **DAVID** about his sin in *2 Samuel 12:14* said, “...*by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme.*”

May the **LORD** help us keep ourselves from doing things that bring down **HIS GREAT NAME!**

B. SAMSON Brought Ridicule To Himself.

Can you imagine what it must have been like for **SAMSON** to be brought out and, as the text says, “*made sport of for them?*” The word ‘*sport*’ here means “*to laugh and mock.*”

Now the **BIBLE** doesn't tell us all that was involved, but we can imagine what it must have been like? None of us like **ridicule!** None of us like *to be laughed at or mocked!*

These people were cruel, and now we see why they didn't kill him. They wanted to taunt him and make fun of him, while exalting their god!

Samson Brought Reproach On God...Ridicule On Himself...

C. SAMSON Brought Shame And Heartache To His Family.

Note *vs 31* indirectly speaks of this. After his death, his family came and prepared his body for burial near his father's grave.

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This is the first that we learn of **MANOAH’S** death. **MANOAH** had been a godly man, one who honored the **LORD** with his life.

MANOAH died knowing only the shame and dishonor of a son who lived life on the edge and thereby largely wasted what the **LORD** had given him!

WHEN TEMPTED WITH MORAL FAILURE, DON’T GIVE IN!

II. IF WE ARE EXPERIENCING THE CONSEQUENCES OF A PERSONAL MORAL FAILURE, DON’T BECOME BITTER TOWARD THE LORD!

A. Our First Reaction To CHASTISEMENT Is To Try To Escape It.

My parents used to hold on to me when they would spank me. I would hop around trying to avoid the switch or belt or whatever it was they were using.

Why? Because it is natural to want to avoid **DISCIPLINE**. But **GOD’S WORD** tells us that it is for our good!

Hebrews 12:11–“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”

B. Our Second Reaction To CHASTISEMENT Is To Become Bitter At The One Who Metes It Out.

How many times have children gotten bitter at mom or dad over a spanking or maybe or someone else over some other form of **CHASTISEMENT**.

The same is true with **GOD’S CHASTISEMENT!** Sometimes they become bitter against **GOD** because of it!

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C. Our Reaction To CHASTISEMENT Should Be To LEARN From The Experience And Let It Mature Us. To his credit, as far as we can see here in **SCRIPTURE**, **SAMSON** didn’t become bitter toward **GOD**.

I would imagine he had plenty of time to evaluate how he came to be harnessed to the grinding wheel of the Philistines.

We don’t see him whine and complain about how **GOD** surely must not love him anymore.

I believe he came to a point of **CONFESSION....** acknowledging his **SIN** before **GOD** and found **FORGIVENESS!**

I believe he came to the realization that it was his own **SIN** and **CARELESS ACTIONS** that brought him to his present predicament!

*WHEN TEMPTED WITH MORAL FAILURE, DON’T GIVE IN...
IF WE ARE EXPERIENCING THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR
MORAL FAILURE, DON’T BECOME BITTER TOWARD GOD...*

III. IF WE HAVE FAILED, THERE CAN STILL BE HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

A. When we really blow it bad, that may cause us to wonder if GOD can ever use us again?

The answer to that question is, *“Absolutely yes”* No, **SAMSON’S** eyesight was not restored. No, **SAMSON** was never able to serve as a **JUDGE** over **ISRAEL** again the way the **LORD** wanted and called him to do.

Listen, I’m glad that our living for **JESUS CHRIST** is not *“one failure and your out.”*

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Now, will **GOD** use us in the same way? Well, that really depends on the facts and circumstances of what we did!

Samson failed, and failed miserably, but **GOD** was still with him! And **HE** is always there for us...even in our failure.

B. Remember, JONAH cried out to **GOD** from the belly of the whale.

C. And PETER was convinced that his life was worthless following his denial of **CHRIST** but **CHRIST** came to him and said, *“Feed my sheep.” (John 21)*

D. Perhaps SAMSON thought **GOD** was finished with him as well, but, *“...the hair of his head began to grow again...”*

I believe that while down in that prison house, he repented. One of the main reasons for that belief is because of what happens in **vs. 28-29**.

Another is the fact that **SAMSON** is included in the *‘Faith Hall of Fame’* in **Hebrews 11:32**.

E. GOD has a way of dealing with **SIN**.

1 John 1:9–“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

“Confess” means *“to say the same thing”* about our sin that **GOD** says about it.

We can’t undo the **CONSEQUENCES OF SIN**, but we can restore our fellowship with the **LORD!**

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Conclusion

Vs. 30 says that **SAMSON** killed more **PHILISTINES** in death, than he had in life. That is simply a fact, not an endorsement of the choices he had made in his life!

This final chapter in **SAMSON’S** life says so much more to us about the **GRACE OF GOD**, than it does about the strength of **SAMSON**. So, let's learn these lessons:

When Tempted With Moral Failure Don’t Give In!

If We Are Experiencing The Consequences Of Our Moral Failure, Don’t Become Bitter Toward God!

If We Have Failed, There Can Still Be Hope for the Future.