

Part 1- Samson- A man who refused to accept limitations.
Embrace living within God's limits.

Part 2- Identity and Destiny

The story of Manoah teaches us to receive rather than strive for who God wants to make us to become

Part 3- Prayer of a Failure

If we will cry out to God he will remember us, strengthen us and use us.

Judges 14:1-2 *"Samson went down to Timnah and saw there a young Philistine woman. When he returned, he said to his father and mother, "I have seen a Philistine woman in Timnah; now get her for me as my wife."*

Samson Syndrome # 1 -- I want it. Lust

Our culture simultaneously says that sex is everything and that it is nothing.

Not I want it, but I want God

Plan of Action - Get Right

Proverbs 4:23 *"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."*

Get Away

2 Timothy 2:22 *"Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."*

Get Help

James 5:16 *"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."*

Samson Syndrome # 2 -- I deserve it. Entitlement

Judges 14:3-4 *“His father and mother replied, “Isn’t there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?” But Samson said to his father, “Get her for me. She’s the right one for me.” (His parents did not know that this was from the Lord, who was seeking an occasion to confront the Philistines; for at that time they were ruling over Israel.)*

My athletes always follow my advice . . . unless it conflicts with what they want to do.
-Lou Holtz

Proverbs 6:20-23

*“My son, keep your father’s command
and do not forsake your mother’s teaching.
Bind them always on your heart;
fasten them around your neck.
When you walk, they will guide you;
when you sleep, they will watch over you;
when you awake, they will speak to you.
For this command is a lamp,
this teaching is a light,
and correction and instruction
are the way to life,”*

Judges 14:5-9 *“Samson went down to Timnah together with his father and mother. As they approached the vineyards of Timnah, suddenly a young lion came roaring toward him. The Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon him so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat. But he told neither his father nor his mother what he had done. Then he went down and talked with the woman, and he liked her. Some time later, when he went back to marry her, he **turned aside** to look at the lion’s carcass, and in it he saw a swarm of bees and some honey. He scooped out the honey with his hands and ate as he went along. When he rejoined his parents, he gave them some, and they too ate it. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey from the lion’s carcass.”*

The only thing we deserve is death.

Samson Syndrome # 3 -- I can handle it. Pride

Judges 14:10-11 *“Now his father went down to see the woman. And there Samson held a feast, as was customary for young men. When the people saw him, they chose thirty men to be his companions.”*

I can't handle anything without God.

Judges 14:14

*“Out of the eater, something to eat;
out of the strong, something sweet.”*

Judges 14:18-20

*Before sunset on the seventh day the men of the town said to him,
“What is sweeter than honey?
What is stronger than a lion?”*

Samson said to them,

*“If you had not plowed with my heifer,
you would not have solved my riddle.”*

Then the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon him. He went down to Ashkelon, struck down thirty of their men, stripped them of everything and gave their clothes to those who had explained the riddle. Burning with anger, he returned to his father's home. And Samson's wife was given to one of his companions who had attended him at the feast.

Questions for reflection:

- 1) What did the Holy Spirit speak to me through this message?
- 2) How do I need to respond?
- 3) Timnah represents the things of this world that draw us away from God and our community of faith. How does “Timnah” draw us away from God and our community of faith today?
- 4) How are we sometimes like Samson?
- 5) Interact with the idea that the Holy Spirit was and is the true answer to Samson's riddle.