

Life Group Guide Jud 16:1–32 “The Downward Spiral, Pt 2”
For the Sermon Preached on Sun Sep 3 and For Use in Life Groups through Sun Sep 10

Icebreaker Question

What was the grossest habit you have ever seen from a young child? Was it easy for them to stop that bad habit?

Pastor Richard’s Sermon Outline

- I. Revenge leads to the downward spiral (15:1-20).
- II. **Toying with temptation leads to the downward spiral (16:1-22).**
 - a. The Self-Inflicted Consequences of Toying with Temptation
 - b. The Predictable Process of Toying with Temptation (Jam. 1:14-15)
 - i. Desire is the first step when toying with temptation (v. 14a).
 - ii. Deception allows you to justify toying with temptation (v. 14b).
 - iii. Defiance brings the consequences of toying with temptation (v. 15).
 - iv. Death, spiritual and possibly physical, is the final result of toying with temptation (v. 15b).
- III. **Self-indulgence leads to the downward spiral (16:23-31).**
 - a. The Predictable Consequences of Self-Indulgence
 - b. Five steps to losing your influence.
 - i. You lose influence by representing a life that is not real (Acts 5:1-11).
 - ii. You lose influence by over disclosing your struggles (Eccles. 3:1, 7b).
 - iii. You lose influence when you are speaking (without direct knowledge or facts) emotionally, foolishly, or out of anger (Prov. 25:28).
 - iv. You lose influence when you say something publicly that you don’t have the courage to say privately (Matt. 18:15a).
 - v. You lose influence when your conversations revolve around you, your opinions, your likes, or dislikes (Phil. 2:3).

Jud 16:1–3

Read Jud 16:1–3 Observation

1. In Jud 16:1, in what area did Samson find the prostitute?
2. In Jud 16:2, what did the men of Gaza plan to do?
3. In Jud 16:3, how did Samson evade their plan?

Interpretation

4. What tends to happen to us when the consequences of our sins are delayed? Do sins tend to increase or decrease? What might account for why a person might multiply sin or turn from it when consequences are not immediate?

Application

5. How has God’s patience with your own sin helped you in the past? What caused a change in your life with sins that used to control you? Are there other sins that you still struggle with today? Would you pray for God to help you with changing that part of your life?

Jud 16:4–22

Read Jud 16:4–22: Observation

6. In 16:4, whom did Samson fall “in love” with?
7. In 16:5, what did the Philistine leaders ask her to do?

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8. In 16:6–9, what did Delilah say to Samson? How did he respond? What happened next?
9. In 16:10–12, what did Delilah say to Samson? How did he respond? What happened next?
10. In 16:13–14, what did Delilah say to Samson? How did he respond? What happened next?
11. In 16:15–16, what did Delilah say to Samson that was different from before? What did she do repeatedly to Samson?
12. In 16:17, what did Samson say?
13. In 16:18–19, what did Delilah say to the Philistines? What did Delilah do next to Samson?
14. In 16:20, what did Samson not know as he awoke?
15. In 16:21–22, what did the Philistines do to Samson? What happened to Samson’s hair?

Interpretation

16. What happens to men and women when they reject God’s counsel on sex and marriage? How are they harmed? How are others impacted or harmed? Should we think about marriage’s purpose as being primarily about our desires or holiness?
17. Since it is obvious that both Samson and Delilah knew they were being used by the other, why was Samson unable to stop her plan? Why do people seemingly become so powerless against some temptations? How does the gospel help people with such struggles? How does the gospel call other believers to help those who are struggling in these ways?

Application

18. What aspects of our marriages and families can provide help to our neighbors? What families and marriages in our neighborhood may be open to hearing how the gospel may help them?
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Jud 16:23–31

Read Jud 16:23–31: Observation

19. In 16:23–25, what were the Philistines celebrating? What did they believe about their “god”?
20. In 16:26–27, what did Samson ask of the young man?
21. In 16:28, to whom did Samson call? What did he ask?
22. In 16:29–30, what did Samson do? How did Samson’s death compare to his life?
23. In 16:31, who buried Samson?

Interpretation

24. What does it mean that Samson “called out to the LORD”? What does it mean that he asked God to remember him? How is God’s patience necessary for anyone to call on the name of the LORD? For what reasons does God show mercy on a Christian?

Application

25. Will you ask God in prayer this week to bring into your life one person that you can share the gospel with directly?
 26. Please memorize 16:28.
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