

I. Intro

A. Our study is revealing a common theme: *small compromises lead to big trouble*

1. Compromise can turn a good thing into an idol
2. Compromise lets culture shape your theology rather than the Bible
3. Compromise turns God's family into the enemy

B. This is where Israel was in Judges 12, and this is where we are in 2019

1. Let's pick up the story in Judges 13 and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to us
 - a) We want to see how compromise has weakened our resolve
 - b) We want to see how compromise has formed idols in our life
 - c) We want to see how compromise encourages the anger we have toward others
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to shine a light on your heart so that you can be truly free

II. Text

A. Judges 13:1

1. "Israel did what was evil in the eyes of the Lord"
 - a) This implies that what Israel was doing was NOT evil in their own eyes
 - b) They weren't saying "I know this is evil, but I'll do it anyway"
 - c) They thought they were fine because it didn't violate their conscience
2. That is a wake-up call for us!
 - a) There are things in your life, right now, that seems *right in your own eyes*
 - (1) These things don't violate your conscience
 - (2) These things don't seem like a big deal
 - b) Judges is reminding us that we are weighing things against your eyes
 - (1) Sin is defined by God, not your personal or national standards
 - (2) Your conscience isn't the litmus test for right and wrong
 - c) There is a standard that surpasses all other standards
 - (1) At the end of the age, Jesus will weigh all things on His scales, not yours
 - (2) Therefore, let your convictions be informed by Jesus and not your own eyes
 - (3) That way there will be no surprises when you stand before Jesus

B. Judges 13:2-7

1. An angel appeared to a woman and said "you will have a child"
 - a) Having a child in this culture was a big deal
 - (1) Israel new that a savior was coming, and Hebrew women wanted in on that
 - (2) Also, God commanded women to "be fruitful," and it was seen as shameful if they couldn't have kids
 - b) This news from the angel was a really big deal
2. In the announcement, the mother was told to raise the child as a Nazarite
 - a) The Nazarite vow comes from Numbers 6:1-21
 - b) It was a sign that you were looking to God with a unique focus and dedication
 - c) These signs of a Nazarite were:
 - (1) You stopped cutting your hair
 - (2) You abstained from all drinks from the vines (wine, etc)
 - (3) You could not touch anything dead
3. What is important to us is when the angel told the woman to start the vow
 - a) The woman was to start the vow on behalf of her son immediately
 - b) This is important because it informs us of God's perspective on pregnancy
 - (1) Our culture's view of pregnancy says that life begins after birth
 - (2) God's view of pregnancy is that life begins immediately, at conception
 - (a) This mother must act as a Nazarite because a Nazarite is in her
 - c) I'm not sure what you believe about abortion, but I can tell you what God says
 - (1) Abortion is sin in God's eyes
 - (a) It doesn't matter if it's not sin *in your own eyes*
 - (b) It doesn't matter if it's not sin *in the eyes of our world*
 - (2) Abortion is not an option for a Christian, and if you have had an abortion you should repent and ask God to wrap his forgiving arms around you

C. Judges 13:8-24

1. The angel appeared a second time and Manoah wanted details
 - a) The dad started quizzing the angel on the kids mission and guidelines for life
 - b) The angel responded "do what I told your wife to do"

2. Beyond the comic relief of this couple, Manoah's questions point us to something
 - a) In leadership, it's normal to think your team needs detailed instructions
 - (1) Step 1, Step 2, do Step 3 if this happens, if not jump to Step 4
 - (2) However, that isn't the only way to lead...it's not even the best way to lead
 - b) Rather than teaching rules, teach culture...encourage relationships over rules
 - (1) That way, your team makes decisions from your values instead of your rules
 - c) We see this principle all throughout the Bible
 - (1) Moses had the Law, but Jesus had disciples
 - (2) After Jesus ascended to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to all believers
 - (3) We are better disciples when we know God intimately and not just His laws
3. Think about that principle in parenting, which is what the angel was saying
 - a) Rather than keeping a list of 400 ways to raise a Nazarite, teach him God's character
 - b) Rather than giving your kids 10,000 rules, show them the character of God
 - c) Encourage them to seek Jesus over morality, and they will get both
4. Spoiler alert, Samson's parents failed miserably
 - a) For one, they named him Samson
 - (1) Hebrew for "little Sun," and the Sun was a Canaanite false god
 - b) Also, they raised him without self-control and a large sexual appetite

D. Judges 14:1-4

1. Samson was set apart from birth, but he had no self-control
2. This is why Samson's story was recorded
 - a) For Israel to see and for you to see, this will be your life too if you chase what is "right in your own eyes"
3. God used his immaturity to drive a wedge between Israel and the Philistines
 - a) Samson made the Philistines hate Israel and Israel hate the Philistines
 - b) Without this separation, many historians believe Israel had become so secular they would have assimilated into the culture and lost their identity

E. Judges 14:5-20

1. Samson planned a wedding with lots of alcohol
2. Samson killed a lion while heading into town, and later ate honey from its belly
 - a) Both things a Nazarite was not allowed to do
 - b) While eating the honey, he got an idea for a riddle
3. He made a bet with the Philistines at the party that they couldn't guess his riddle
 - a) *vs 14 - And he said to them, "Out of the eater came something to eat. Out of the strong came something sweet."*
4. The men told his bride to find the answer to the riddle or they would kill her
5. She cried for a while week until Samson gave up the riddle
6. Samson killed 30 Philistine men and took their clothes to pay off his debt
7. When he returned, his wife was given to another man

III. Conclusion

- A. Why is the Spirit of God on Samson to perform these petty acts?
 1. Because God has plans to punish the Philistines and preserve Israel
 2. God is using Samson as a tool to accomplish His plans
- B. I mentioned this last week, and it is important to revisit in this story
 1. Just because you are gifted, just because the Spirit of God is using you, doesn't mean your heart is pleasing to Him
 2. I've watched men who were unbelievably gifted and used by God crumble when it was time to show true discipleship and maturity
- C. Samson is a reminder to parents
 1. You can't just teach your kids God's rules, you must introduce them to God Himself
- D. Samson is a reminder to all of us
 1. Your character must match your gifting or your desires will be your god