

The Weakness of Samson and the Strength of God

Judges 16

Intro: Samson is remarkable: Compelling. Tragic. Perplexing. This makes sense of it.

Samson's faith in himself leads to catastrophe (v1-20)

Irony: Samson thought he was strong, but was weak.

Operates from total confidence in himself. Sees people as playthings.

Relying on God seems an irrelevance.

Samson is antihero, Jesus is hero (total reliance).

Ill: Kite-surfer trying to do tricks without kite

App: Gifts are from God, for God, while relying on God. Abilities, resources, roles, responsibilities, relationships. Not for our ego, selfish ambition, boredom (cf our culture of self-promotion).

Reliance=seeing it as from God, for God. Not passivity. 'Tethered' to him.

Teacher or doctor. Church leader/teacher. Parenting, marriage, singleness. HTG.

The Philistines treat Samson as a trophy to be tamed and humiliated (but are blind to God's power) (v21-25)

Irony: Player has become plaything

Irony: Spiritual blindness has led to physical blindness

Why didn't they kill him? Irony: Samson's blind, but so are they-to God's power

Irony: the Philistines are rejoicing, but are about to be destroyed

Ill: Thinking we've tamed fire or the weather

False worldviews universally aim to tame and humiliate Jesus, but they're blind to God's power: the Resurrection.

These worldviews might rejoice, but are really impotent before God.

Samson's death is God's spectacular victory (v26-31)

Samson finally a Godly fighter. (Not flamboyant/arrogant/selfish, but prayerful..)

Irony: Samson was strongest when he was weakest.

Irony: God humiliated dagon when they thought they were humiliating Samson.

A profound picture of the Cross: Jesus' death was God's spectacular victory.

Ill: 2 businessmen with laptops

Encouragement: No matter how bleak your circumstances (failure, humiliation, weakness). Christians are strongest when they're weakest.

Final irony: we find all the things we (and Samson) long for-significance, forgiveness, unflinching strength for living, a loving community, purpose in life-at the Cross.