

Dig Deeper @Home – “Religious Anarchy”

Complement to sermon on 3/18/18 – “The Destruction of Doing Right in our own Eyes”

MEMORIZE – 1 Samuel 8:6-7

But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to the Lord. And the Lord said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.

READ Judges 20-21

Questions to ponder/discuss:

1. What does this passage from Judges reveal about God? About humanity?
2. If the above is true, what needs to change in your life?
3. In Judges 20:1-11, what does it mean that Israel “came out”, “rose” and “united as one man.”(see 1 Samuel 11:7-8). What’s the point of such phrases? What is initially motivating Israel to fight the Benjamites? Whose counsel are they seeking? (vs. 7) What is missing? How sincere is their inquiry of God? (vs. 18)
4. Why didn’t the Benjamites simply turn over the guilty and thus avoid all the killing? What does the Benjamite response tell us about them? What does it say about our responses to others who oppose us?(verses 12-16)
5. Read verses 19-25. What point is God trying to make in allowing the Israelites to fail in their first two attacks? How is their approach to God different the second time around? (verses 26-28). Are they learning their lesson or storing up more vengeance?
6. After the battle is finished and there are only 600 men left of the tribe of Benjamin, what has triggered second thoughts for Israel? (Read 21:1-6.) Who do they blame? Is Israel to be commended or criticized for making this vow? What does this say about our sinful human nature?

Summarize the Judges 20-21 in two sentences or less:

Experiential

Sharing our testimony, what God is doing/has done in our lives, is a great way of growing in our understanding of who God is and why we need him daily. Share vulnerably, knowing that as we do, God is greatly glorified for his grace and mercy and it allows others to be led into His presence and grow in their own relationship as well. Share these testimonies with a friend, your spouse, your children, or whoever the Lord brings into your week.

Testimony Time

With 20-20 hindsight, how do you view some of the reckless things you have said or done in the past? Share a time in your own life when you made a promise that you realized later was not wise to make? How has God helped you to reconcile with someone who was estranged from you? How did God's grace and forgiveness become more real to you through this experience?

SING (suggested songs to sing. Use these or any song you might want to sing)

Your Grace is Enough, Matt Maher - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wN-fspKg1Q>

Sing this song of praise to the God of Jacob who wrestles with our restless, sinful hearts and you lead us by still waters into mercy. Thank God for His steadfast love and mercy.

There's a wideness in God's mercy - #78 in Mennonite Hymnal

Sing this hymn as a reminder of God's great mercy and kindness towards us which enables us to forgive others and to let go of the bitterness we can so easily embrace. Thank God for the unlimited favor he shows as we choose to trust him and follow his commands.

PRAY

This is a time to gather around for prayer requests and to share how you have seen God at work. A time to hear where God is showing up in our lives and where we need Him to help us in our lives.

Sending prayer based on the lesson:

O God how we need Your mercy. As we seek to live for you, help us to see our own stubbornness and pride that can keep us from reconciling with those who have sinned against us. Instead, fill us with an extra measure of your grace and love to go and to forgive even as we have been forgiven. In Jesus name, Amen.