

## God's Grace to Undeserving People

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Judges 12:8-13:25

Oakbrook Community Church (PCA)

Minor Judges even show the decline of Israel 12:8-15

- Shamgar 3:11 was ideal minor judge
- Ibzan used position for power & marriage alliances 9
- Abdon lived like a decadent king 14
- 2:11; 3:7,12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1 - did what was evil in the sight of the Lord
- 17:6; 21:25 - did what was right in his own eyes
- Shift from God's standard to self
- WSCQ14: What is sin? Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God. 1 Jn 3:4; James 4:17
- Spirit of their age & ours: do what is right in own eyes
- Beware heart is deceitful Jer 17:9;
- We must look to God and His Word Psa 139:23-24
- God will always deal with unrighteous hearts Rom 1:18-19 that seek after other things (idols)
- We are prone to replace God with idols in our life

4 G's Help us check our hearts

God is Great, so I don't have to be in control

idols: control; wealth as security; worry

God knows what we need and can provide

God is Glorious, so I don't have to fear others

idols: approval; fear of rejection; acceptance; fear of man

We need a BIG view of God (fear of God)

God is Good, so I don't have to look elsewhere

idols: sex, intimacy, money, food, pleasure

God is good, trust Him alone to satisfy

God is Gracious, so I don't have to prove myself

idols: self-sufficiency; seeking to prove self

God is gracious - just look to parable of Luke 15

God's Faithful Promise & Mercy

- Samson, only judge chosen by God before birth
- Born to Manoah's wife though she was barren
- Even mom had to follow Nazirite vow Num 6:1-21

Our God of Impossible Things

- Samson's birth points us forward to the Messiah's birth
- Isaac<sup>Gen12:2-3</sup> child of promise also to 'barren' mom
- Samuel<sup>1 Sam 1:5-20</sup> gifted to Hannah who was 'barren'
- John the Baptist given to Elizabeth<sup>Lk 1:7</sup> who was 'barren'
- Mary, mother of Messiah, not barren, but virgin<sup>Lk 1:25-27</sup>

God alone provides Salvation

- these miraculous births were different than Jesus' birth
- previous Mothers were brought to honor, while Mary was brought disgrace (unwed mother)
- previous saviors gained honor & glory in their work, while Jesus lost all his honor & glory to do His work of salvation

Faith and Obedience

- Manoah's wife believed the messenger; other special births were full of unbelief: Sarah<sup>Gen18:9-15</sup>; Zechariah<sup>Lk1:13-20</sup>
- Manoah's wife, like Mary<sup>Lk 1:38</sup> trusted God & was obedient

Knowing God is Better than Rules

- Manoah believes & prays for more knowledge 13:8,12
- God's messenger graciously returns but doesn't give answer
- God gives Manoah a revelation of who He is, not rules
  - Declares his name Wonderful<sup>Isa 9:6</sup>
  - Manoah is to see God's glory & character
- Manoah (we) didn't need more rules, we need to know God!
- God has sent Jesus, Himself, to redeem us!
  - Love 1 John 3:16
  - Get to know God & His character Rom 12:1-2
  - God also gives Spirit to guide us 1 Cor 2:16