**UNDERSTANDING AND EMBRACING**

**GOD’S “SECOND” CHANCES**

**Judges 16:1-31**

* **Catastrophe is what we experience when we become prideful, we won’t listen to godly counsel, and when we try to live life and deal with temptation in our own strength.**
* *“Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away.**These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.”* (James 1:14-15)
* ***What will it take to overcome temptation and bounce back from failures?***

***WE MUST UNDERSTAND:***

**THE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ PEOPLE GIVE IN TO TEMPTATION**

***People Often Give In To Temptation Because They:***

* **STRUGGLE WITH PRIDE**
  + *“One day Samson went to the Philistine town of Gaza and spent the night with a prostitute.”* (Judges 16:1-2)
  + *God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”* (James 4:6)
  + *“The Lord tears down the house of the proud.”* (Proverbs 15:25)
* **STRUGGLE WITH PASSION**
  + *“One day Samson went to the Philistine town of Gaza and spent the night with a prostitute.”* (Judges 16:1-2)
  + **The Bible teaches that premarital sex, extramarital sex, homosexual sex, and any other type of sex outside of the bounds of biblical marriage is wrong.**
  + *“Don’t fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God.”*  (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)
  + **Samson knew that his actions were wrong, but he was willing to forgo his convictions and common sense because he had given in to passion and lust.**
  + **We can overcome temptation with the help of the Lord**
  + *“The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so that you can endure.”* (1 Corinthians 10:13)

***WE MUST UNDERSTAND:***

**THE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ OF PEOPLE GIVING IN TO TEMPTATION**

* *“Some time later Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah, who lived in the valley of Sorek.**The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, ‘Entice Samson to tell you what makes him so strong and how he can be overpowered and tied up securely. Then each of us will give you 1,100 pieces of silver.’ So Delilah said to Samson, ‘Please tell me what makes you so strong and what it would take to tie you up securely.”* (Judges 16:4-6)

***Giving In To Temptation Will Bring:***

* **“DELILAH’S” INTO OUR LIVES**
  + **A “Delilah” could be male, or female, and is someone who puts their interests before our interests, someone who is committed to an ungodly lifestyle, and/or someone who is a negative spiritual influence in our lives.**
  + *“The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray.”* (Proverbs 12:26)
  + *“A companion of fools will be destroyed.”* (Proverbs 13:20)
* **DECEPTION INTO OUR LIVES**
  + *“Afterward Delilah said to him, ‘You’ve been making fun of me and telling me lies! Now please tell me how you can be tied up securely.’ Samson replied, ‘If I were tied up with brand-new ropes that had never been used, I would become as weak as anyone else.’ So Delilah took new ropes and tied him up with them. The men were hiding in the inner room as before, and again Delilah cried out, ‘Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!’ But again Samson snapped the ropes from his arms as if they were thread. Then Delilah said, ‘You’ve been making fun of me and telling me lies! Now tell me how you can be tied up securely.’ Samson replied, ‘If you were to weave the seven braids of my hair into the fabric on your loom and tighten it with the loom shuttle, I would become as weak as anyone else.’ So while he slept, Delilah wove the seven braids of his hair into the fabric. Then she tightened it with the loom shuttle.  Again she cried out, ‘Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!’ But Samson woke up, pulled back the loom shuttle, and yanked his hair away from the loom and the fabric.” (*Judges 16:10-15)
  + *“There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to Him: . . . a lying tongue . . . a false witness who pours out lies.”* (Proverbs 6:16-19)
  + **Lying is an indication that the Devil is at work in our lives**
  + Jesus – *“The Devil was a murderer from the beginning, and has always hated the truth. There is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character, for he is a liar, and the father of lies (and liars).”* (John 8:44)

***Giving In To Temptation Will Bring:***

* **DESTRUCTION TO OUR LIVES**
  + *“Finally, Samson shared his secret with her. ‘My hair has never been cut,’ he confessed, ‘for I was dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as anyone else.’ Delilah realized he had finally told her the truth, so she sent for the Philistine rulers. . . . Delilah lulled Samson to sleep with his head in her lap, and then she called in a man to shave off the seven locks of his hair. In this way she began to bring him down, and his strength left him. Then she cried out, ‘Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!’ When he woke up, he thought, ‘I will do as before and shake myself free.’ But he didn’t realize the Lord had left him. So the Philistines captured him and gouged out his eyes. They took him to Gaza, where he was bound with bronze chains and forced to grind grain in the prison.”* (Judges 16:17-21)
  + **Playing with temptation and sin is the most dangerous thing we can do in life.**
  + *“An evil man is held captive by his own sins; they are ropes that catch and hold him. He will die for lack of self-control; he will be lost because of his great foolishness.”* (Proverbs 5:22-23)

***WE MUST UNDERSTAND:***

**THE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ OF A BELIEVER’S TESTIMONY**

***There Is Always Hope For Restoration In Our Lives Because:***

* **THE LORD IS IN THE LOVING BUSINESS**
  + *“God says, ‘I have loved you with an everlasting love!”* (Jeremiah 31:3)
  + *“I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. Nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Romans 8:38-39)
* **THE LORD IS IN THE FORGIVING BUSINESS**
  + *“People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess & turn from them, they will receive mercy.”* (Proverbs 28:13)
  + *“If we confess our sins to the Lord, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* (1 John 1:9)
* **THE LORD IS IN THE RESTORING BUSINESS**
  + *Before long, Samson’s hair began to grow back. (vs. 32)*
  + **As long as we’re obedient to the Lord, we will have His power/strength in our lives.**
  + *“The Philistine rulers held a great festival, offering sacrifices and praising their god, Dagon. They said, ‘Our god has given us victory over our enemy Samson!’ . . . Half drunk by now, the people demanded, ‘Bring out Samson so he can amuse us!’ So he was brought from the prison to amuse them, and they had him stand between the pillars supporting the roof. Samson said to the young servant who was leading him by the hand, ‘Place my hands against the pillars that hold up the temple. I want to rest against them.’  Now the temple was completely filled with people. All the Philistine rulers were there, and there were about 3,000 men and women on the roof who were watching as Samson amused them. Then Samson prayed to the Lord, ‘Sovereign Lord, remember me again. O God, please strengthen me just one more time. With one blow let me pay back the Philistines for the loss of my two eyes.’ Then Samson put his hands on the two center pillars that held up the temple. Pushing against them with both hands, he prayed, ‘Let me die with the Philistines.’ And the temple crashed down on the Philistine rulers and all the people. So he killed more people when he died than he had during his entire lifetime.”* (Judges 16:22-30)
  + **When God restores us through our obedience it will not only impact our lives, but others lives will be impacted for the Lord as well!**
  + *“It would take too long to recount the stories of the faith of Gideon, Barak, SAMSON, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and all the prophets. By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them…Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight.”* (Hebrews 11:32-34)
  + **When we are willing to repent of our sins and humbly return to the Lord, the Lord will restore our strength, our joy and our usefulness in His kingdom!**