

# Samson and His Women: The Folly of Passion



## Teacher's Guide

### Surveying the Source

Judges 14–16.

### Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Daily renew their commitment to follow God's will for them.
- ▶ Daily ask God to keep them focused

on what is right.

- ▶ Choose associates that share their spiritual beliefs and values.

### Preparing to Lead

Philosophically, a humanist says, "Be tough. Have self determination, and you can stand up to temptation. Your personal strength will provide you the ability to resist."

However, the Christian says, "I can't do it on my own. I admit I'm weak, so I'll turn everything over to God and depend on His strength."

### Getting Started

**A. Discuss:** •Do we keep putting ourselves in a position that we know will cause us to fail? •Would we ever be like Samson?

**Say:** If my problem is motivation (hold up remote control), do I say, "I think I'll overcome my desire to be lazy," then pick up the television remote control and stretch out on the couch? Have I put myself in a position to give in to temptation?

Take time to discuss this matter.

Then hold up a bag of cookies. **Say:** Does a person who has problems with overeating sit next to an open bag of cookies, and on their own, refrain from eating them?

Take time to discuss their thoughts.

**B.** Display the footwear you've selected. Then adapt the following statement according to the footwear you have:

I want the right footwear for certain activities. I wouldn't think of wearing cleats when I go snorkeling. I don't want to wear ski boots while hiking in the backcountry. And flippers on the golf course are just silly. If the right shoes are important to me, what about the right people for God?

**Discuss:** •Why would God select someone like Samson as a leader? •What qualities for leadership was God looking for? •What type of shoes do you think God is looking for you to fill?

### Materials

TV remote control; bag of cookies; at least two types of special activity shoes, such as hiking boots, ski boots, tennis shoes, flippers, cleats, etc.

### Delving Into the Word

**A. Say:** God has something in mind for each one of us. He has set boundaries for us that really are there to set us free from wrong life choices.

Samson believed he could do no wrong. Why shouldn't we depend on being right when we just do what we feel like doing? (Have students discuss possi-

ble answers.) The Bible has given us a way to keep from getting caught in the traps the devil sets for us. (Have someone read James 4:7.)

God doesn't leave us to depend on our own wisdom. He has good things in mind for us. (Have someone read Psalm 128:1, 2.) If Samson had followed God's command to resist the devil, not only would his story have ended differently, but Israel's story as a nation would have been different.

Here are some questions we need to think about: ●Are we listening for the voice of the Holy Spirit to let us know what God has called us to do? ●Have you been or are you being prepared for something special? ●How will you answer the call? ●How do you want your life's story to end?

**B. Say:** Even though Samson was raised with tremendous potential, he did

not learn to make wise choices.

Then pass out the reproducible activity on page 36, and divide the class into three or four groups. Have them fill out the sheet. After they reconvene, ask: What do these examples of spiritual weakness and physical strength teach us about the motives behind the choices Samson made?

Then discuss how we can make wise choices. Use the following verses as a backdrop to your discussion: ●Ps. 119:5 ●Mic. 6:8 ●Gal. 6:9 ●Eph. 6:1, 2.

At the end of your discussion say: Samson kept putting himself in situations that he didn't have the strength to resist. He didn't usually choose to follow God's will for his life.

*Discuss:* When we make choices that feel good for the moment, do we have the right to expect different results in our lives than Samson had in his?

## Discussing the Ideas

1. What types of commitments or vows have you made, and why?
2. How do you know what type of commitment or vow you should make?
3. Is it ever a good idea to break a vow or commitment? If so, when? If not, why not?
4. What influences do your friends and those you associate with have over your decisions and actions?
5. What types of places should you

“hang out” in to find friends who have the same values you do?

6. What should you do if you find yourself in a friendship and discover that your friend does not value a relationship with God as highly as you do?

7. When is it all right to continue an association with the intent of “being a sermon in shoes”?

8. How does what we spend our time watching and talking about affect us?

## Closing the Activity

Although dedicated to God, Samson wanted to live for himself. C. S. Lewis describes such a conflict this way: “The Christian way is different: harder, and easier. Christ says, ‘Give me All. I don't want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your

work: I want You. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half-measures are any good” (*Mere Christianity*, p. 196).

God wants all of each of us. *All*. Not just the part we are willing to give. What will you choose to give Him?

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## SAMSON

### Compare and Contrast

*In the chart below, list examples of Samson's physical strength and spiritual weakness. What do these examples tell us about the choices Samson made?*

<b>Examples of Samson's Physical Strength</b>	<b>Examples of Samson's Spiritual Weakness</b>