


The Flawed Life of Samson

Part 3

The Perils of an Isolated Life

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- God said "*It is **not good** to be alone.*" (Genesis 2:18) Tell about someone you know who is "alone".

Tell us about a time when **you were the one** who was "alone". What, if anything, did you do about it? (You may not have **felt** "lonely"—but you were without the help and accountability that you needed.)

How long did it take you to realize that you were isolated? **How** did you come to realize it?

What should a Christian do who **doesn't feel any need or desire** for community? **Why?**

- Pastor Doug observed four **reasons** to move from isolation to community (see Sermon Summary). Which one is **most** compelling to you personally—and **why?** Which one is **least**—and **why?**

What **should be** more compelling: **what I get from** relationships, or **what I give to** them? **Why?** Support your answer biblically.

- Pastor Doug observed four **obstacles** to developing biblical community (see Sermon Summary). Which one is **most** convicting to you personally—and **why?** Which one is **least**—and **why?**

- Pastor Doug noted that "success in life is a by-product of individual struggle aided by the help and encouragement of other." How have you seen that to be true in your own life?

Of course, much depends on how we define "success"! How do you define success for the Christian? Support your answer biblically.

Are struggling toward that? What evidence can you give?

In your struggles, are you aiding—and being aided by—others?

**You can move from isolation to community.
Join a Community Group!**

Application-Challenge

Here at TCC, the best way to experience community is to join a small group. "Community Groups" that discuss and apply the Sunday sermon are open to everyone. Some topical Bible studies also exist for men and women.

Go to: tcc.org/community-groups/

or.....



Sermon Summary

When we think of Samson we tend to think of him as a great Biblical hero. He had great abilities, but he wasted those gifts. He was supposed to carry out his job description for the glory of God, but Samson was all about his own glory. His was a wasted life, a life of unfulfilled potential. In this series we have been looking at the flaws in Samson's life because we are all susceptible to those same flaws. Samson was isolated. He never grasped the importance of living in community—loving one another, serving one another, exhorting one another, teaching one another. Living in community is fundamental to how God designed the world. God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." (Genesis 2:18). God designed us to live in community. The Bible says that we were created in the very image of the God who exists as a Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There is community there! There is relationship there. It's not good for man to be alone—it is contrary to our design as divine image bearers.

The word "helper" comes from the Hebrew word "ezer". It means to assist, to rescue, to help, to save. This term is often used of God (Psalm 70:5). Eve is called Adam's ezer. She is the one who rescues him. She is the one who gives him strength. She is the one who provides for Adam what he cannot provide for himself. She completes him. Adam and Eve complement one another. Apart, they are incomplete, together they are whole. We are not designed to go at it alone in life. We need companions. Isolation is bad. Community is good. The word translated as "suitable for him" comes from the Hebrew word "negd", which literally means "according to his opposite". The idea is that God created Eve to correspond to Adam. There is a match, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Together they reflect the image of God in a way that a man or woman alone, never could. God created for Adam, both a helper and a completer. Someone to assist, and someone to redirect and even to confront when necessary.

We should all seek to play both the "ezer" role and the "negd" role; the helper role and the confronter role. Otherwise we end up like Samson. Now, you ezers need to do more negd stuff. And you negds, you need to do more ezer stuff. Without both, we will not be the people that God created us to be. At times we need to get under the load with them; at other times we need to urge them to buckle down and focus and struggle. Think about it: success in life is usually a by product of individual struggle aided by the help and encouragement of others. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 gives us **four reasons to move from isolation to community**.

[1] "Two are better than one because they have a **good return for their labor**." (v. 9) The New Testament uses the imagery of the human body to convey this truth (1 Corinthians 12:21-22, 26). There is no single body part that is as efficient or effective as the whole together. And so when we move into community, we have a better return on our labor.

[2] "If either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up." (v. 10). If you fall physically, morally or spiritually, **who would be there to pick you up?**

[3] "If two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone?" (v. 11) How can you **be comforted** when all alone? You can't hug yourself! Sometimes we get down. Sometimes we get discouraged. Life can be tough out there, can't it?

[4] "If one can overpower him who is alone, **two can resist** him." (v. 12). When danger lurks, or when trouble comes, when an attack comes your way, whether physical or verbal, who will stand beside you?

If it is so important that we have someone in our life who can do all these things, **why is it that we often isolate ourselves?**

[a] Sometimes we just get **too busy**; we move toward accomplishing tasks rather than towards building relationships. It costs time to invest in relationships. Proverbs 18:24 teaches that the best use of our relational capital is to invest in a few really devoted friends, rather than into a bunch of acquaintances.

[b] Our **mobility** can keep us from experiencing community. Every year, one in six American's move! So we think: "I'm not going to put down roots, because I'm not going to be here very long." The opposite is actually true. If you are going to move again soon, you need to hurry up, so that we don't miss out on all those benefits we saw there in Ecclesiastes 4!

[c] Sometimes we don't get into community because of **fear**. It's difficult for some of you to try to strike up a friendship—but it's worth the pain. It really is. There is a price tag on it, but it's worth it. Some of us aren't living in community because we are afraid of intimacy. We think, "If they really knew me, they wouldn't like me." But we have to risk rejection, if we are ever going to be loved.

[d] And then, like Samson, **pride** keeps a lot of us isolated from others. Acts 2:41-42, 46-47 gives us a beautiful picture of a devoted church. Triangle Community Church is not a perfect church, but like the early church in Jerusalem, we strive to be a learning, loving, worshiping, witnessing community. And we do do this much better together, than we ever could alone. And even if you're well connected, remember: new people are moving into our community and they don't have any Christian friends here. Reach out to them. Invite them into your home or into your community group.

Samson's was such a sad life; he did everything alone. Samson even died alone. No friends, no family in sight. But it didn't have to be that way. God designed us for community. Samson chose isolation, but we can do better.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

**"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage.
Let's use it to learn about the value of biblical community...**

Monday— Mark 3:20-22, 31-35

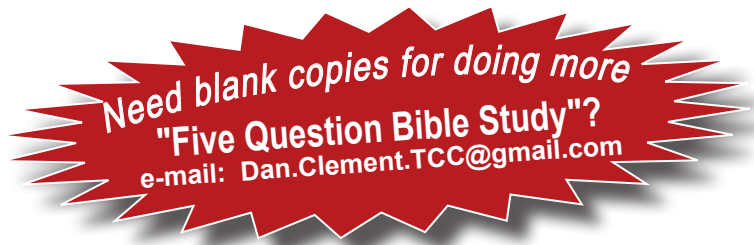
Tuesday— Mark 5:1-19

Wednesday— Ephesians 2:11-22

Thursday— Psalm 133

Friday— Philippians 4:1-9

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** study Judges 15:1-8.



Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) is it found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text?