

“Do you Change your Surroundings or do your Surroundings Change you?”

Sermon Reflection Questions August 30, 2009

Judges 2:11-19, Unlocking the Old Testament

The book of Judges contains a very interesting pattern. The people become complacent and as a result end up abandoning God and turning to the evil ways of the surrounding culture. This turning to culture gets them into the difficult situations of eventually being enslaved by the culture. God then sends some amazing judges to serve as leaders of the people. The leaders lead the people against amazing odds and defeat the enemies of their culture. However it isn't long until the people become overly content and fall into the same pattern of becoming like their culture.

1. Usually people seek to become comfortable in their lives; they want to be free from worry or various challenges. However, when we become comfortable two things are likely to happen. First, we are more likely to fall into the patterns of the surrounding culture and fall into sin. Second, we are more likely to coast and not be aggressive for the purposes of the Lord. How have you seen this to be true in your life or in the lives of those closely associated with you?

Read Judges 2:11-19

2. In verse 11 it says that “the people did what was evil and served the Baals.” Baal was the name of an actual cult god worshiped by the Canaanites who was thought to be responsible for fertility. In this sentence, however, Baals is a generic name for the multitude of other gods and/or other idols that were present in the surrounding culture.

a. What are the “Baals” that are present in the surrounding culture of our day?

b. Baal in Hebrew literally means “to conquer the people.” The interesting thing is that while the people were trying to use the false gods for their own benefit, those false gods were really conquering them. If you identified the “Baals” of our day, how does serving those things really lead to control over us?

3. The last verse of Judges, Judges 21:25 sums up the way that Israel lived when there was no leadership. It says, “Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

a. How is this attitude prevalent in our surrounding culture?

b. How can this attitude be prevalent even in the midst of the Christian culture?

4. If you read Judges 2:11-19 and look at the rest of the book of Judges, how was God gracious to the people even in the midst of their disobedience? How is God gracious to us even in the midst of our disobedience?

**“Do you Change your
Surroundings or do your Surroundings Change you?”
Sermon Reflection Questions August 30, 2009
Judges 2:11-19, Unlocking the Old Testament**

5. Time and time again in the book of Judges God defeated their enemies in the midst of incredible odds. (Take for example Israel under Deborah’s leadership in chapters 4 and 5, or Gideon’s leadership in chapters 6-8). What should the Israelites have learned or done in response to these victories?

6. I have said that the warning of Judge is that when we are comfortable we can fall into the trap of sin and have an attitude of coasting in life and not being aggressive for the things of God.

a. How can we as a church body protect our church from falling into this trap?

b. How can we as individuals protect ourselves from falling into the trap as well?