

A silhouette of Samson on a cross, set against a background of large, dark, rectangular blocks that resemble the pillars of a temple. The scene is dimly lit, with a light source behind the cross creating a silhouette effect.

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## **The Week of November 7, 2021**

### **Destroying Your Life One Step At A Time**

### **Conversation Guide**

#### **Last Week**

- What are some concrete spiritual disciplines that you could put in place (or reinforce) to help you live by God's will and not your own?
- Are there practices or people that you need to distance yourself from?

#### **This Week's Take-Aways**

- I place God's priorities above my own: (Matthew 6:33) I will place God's priorities as described in the Bible ahead of my own.
- I study God's Word: (2 Timothy 2:15) I consistently study the Bible to know God, the truth and find direction for my daily life.

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## Intro Questions

- What's the most number of braids you've ever had in your hair at once?
- Have you ever been nagged into doing something you didn't want to or you knew was wrong?
- Can you share an example of someone destroying themselves out of anger or a desire for revenge? (Respect others and don't share names!)
- Share a time you knew what was right and what you should do, but you became trapped by your emotions and didn't do the right thing.
- The book of Judges ends with '...everyone did whatever seemed right to him.' (Judges 21:25b) How do we see this in today's culture?

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## Samson's Story Continues

Today's passages get intense. Be careful when reading aloud if you have children nearby during your group meeting.

Judges 15:1-20 (Have the group read this passage on their own).

*Later on, during the wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat as a gift and visited his wife. "I want to go to my wife in her room," he said. But her father would not let him enter.*

*"I was sure you hated her," her father said, "so I gave her to one of the men who accompanied you. Isn't her younger sister more beautiful than she is? Why not take her instead?"*

*Samson said to them, "This time I will be blameless when I harm the Philistines." So he went out and caught three hundred foxes. He took torches, turned the foxes tail-to-tail, and*

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*put a torch between each pair of tails. Then he ignited the torches and released the foxes into the standing grain of the Philistines. He burned the piles of grain and the standing grain as well as the vineyards and olive groves.*

*Then the Philistines asked, “Who did this?”*

*They were told, “It was Samson, the Timnite’s son-in-law, because he took Samson’s wife and gave her to his companion.” So the Philistines went to her and her father and burned them to death.*

*Then Samson told them, “Because you did this, I swear that I won’t rest until I have taken vengeance on you.” He tore them limb from limb and then went down and stayed in the cave at the rock of Etam.*

*The Philistines went up, camped in Judah, and raided Lehi. So the men of Judah said, “Why have you attacked us?”*

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*They replied, “We have come to tie Samson up and pay him back for what he did to us.”*

*Then three thousand men of Judah went to the cave at the rock of Etam, and they asked Samson, “Don’t you realize that the Philistines rule us? What have you done to us?”*

*“I have done to them what they did to me,” he answered.*

*They said to him, “We’ve come to tie you up and hand you over to the Philistines.”*

*Then Samson told them, “Swear to me that you yourselves won’t kill me.”*

*“No,” they said, “we won’t kill you, but we will tie you up securely and hand you over to them.” So they tied him up with two new ropes and led him away from the rock.*

*When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came to meet him shouting. The Spirit of the Lord came*

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*powerfully on him, and the ropes that were on his arms and wrists became like burnt flax and fell off. He found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached out his hand, took it, and killed a thousand men with it. Then Samson said:*

*With the jawbone of a donkey  
I have piled them in heaps.  
With the jawbone of a donkey  
I have killed a thousand men.*

*When he finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone and named that place Jawbone Hill. He became very thirsty and called out to the Lord , “You have accomplished this great victory through your servant. Must I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?” So God split a hollow place in the ground at Lehi, and water came out of it. After Samson drank, his strength returned, and he revived. That is why he named it Hakkore Spring, which*

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*is still in Lehi today. And he judged Israel  
twenty years in the days of the Philistines.*

- Have everyone read the passage on their own then fill out the chart below together.

Samson’s Action	Emotion/desire it was driven by





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Judges 16:1-3

*Samson went to Gaza, and there he saw a prostitute, and he went in to her. The Gazites were told, "Samson has come here." And they surrounded the place and set an ambush for him all night at the gate of the city. They kept quiet all night, saying, "Let us wait till the light of the morning; then we will kill him." But Samson lay till midnight, and at midnight he arose and took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two posts, and pulled them up, bar and all, and put them on his shoulders and carried them to the top of the hill that is in front of Hebron.*

<https://my.bible.com/bible/59/JDG.16.1-3>

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Proverbs 7:21-23

*She seduces him with her persistent pleading;  
she lures with her flattering talk.*

*He follows her impulsively like an ox going to  
the slaughter,*

*like a deer bounding toward a trap*

*until an arrow pierces its liver,*

*like a bird darting into a snare —*

*he doesn't know it will cost him his life.*

- How does this woman fit this description of a seductive woman?
- We may not have a seductive woman whispering in our ear, but we all have temptations calling to us. What temptations are you facing and battling?
- How do pride, emotions, and desires sabotage our ability to fulfill God's purposes for our lives?

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## 1 Corinthians 10:13

*No temptation has come upon you except what is common to humanity. But God is faithful; he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to bear it.*

## 1 Peter 5:6-9

*Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you. Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. Resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world.*

- How can we stand up to these temptations?

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## Next Steps

- What are some temptations that you are facing?
- Are there practices or people that you need to distance yourself from? Take concrete steps to move away from those temptations this week.

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