

The Four D's

Today's Message: "Spiritual Disgrace"

Message Study Guide

Introduction

A story was told that when Benjamin Franklin was only seven years old, a man gave him a hand full of coins. Later that same day, when he saw another boy playing with a whistle, young Benjamin gave the boy all of his money for it. He played the whistle all over the house, enjoying it until someone told him that he had given four times as much for the whistle as he should have. When he discovered that the whistle was worth far less than he had paid for it, the whistle immediately lost its charm. As he grew older, Franklin used this real life story many, many times as a general life principle. When he saw a man neglecting his family or business for political popularity, or a miser giving up friendship for the sake of accumulating wealth, he would say, "HE PAID TOO MUCH FOR THE WHISTLE".

That simple story has a tremendous lesson in it for all of us even today. Too often, we pay too great a price for something that looks so good and promises so much. Fish are caught because they are attracted to something that looks like food and would make a wonderful meal only to become food themselves. As Christians, we must remember that there will always be those who offer whistles to us that are not worth the price.

In the Book of Judges, we read the story of the tragic end of a man who "PAID TOO MUCH FOR HIS WHISTLE". Samson lost everything! His strength, power, position, and his testimony, because he valued his whistle more than he valued God.

Discussion Points

Although Samson enjoyed many obvious advantages in his life that others did not enjoy, he still ended his life in spiritual disgrace. As Christians, we have the opportunity to live extraordinary lives. What will your end be?

Discussion Questions

1. After starting his life with so much promise, make a list of the obvious digressions in Samson's life that led to his ultimate defeat and disgrace.
2. After examining Samson's life from start to finish, how would you summarize it in one word?
3. Samson was obviously a man of many strengths and weaknesses. Make a list of these strengths and weaknesses from the Bible to find any parallels between the two lists.
4. The Book of Judges is a book that records many accounts of defeat and disgrace. How does Judges 21:25, "And in those days, there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes", apply to Samson's life?

Think About It

Samson's greatest weakness was when he overestimated his own strength and power. The only mention of Samson ever crying out to God was when he had been captured by the Philistines.

Do Something About It!

The biggest challenge for Christians today is to constantly remind ourselves that apart from God, we are weak and frail. Self-reliance always leads to defeat and disgrace. We must never presume that we can make it on our own.

Be Willing To Change

"And Samson called upon the name of the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." (Judges 16:28)