

Title: A Few Good Men..And Women

Date: October 6, 2013

Text: Judges 4:1-2, 4-6

Place: Decatur Church of God

Theme: The Story

Introduction: What is the first word that comes to your mind when you hear the word “judge”?

Turn to the person next to you and share what came into your mind first. Remember, no swearing in church.

(See if we can get a clip or Flip Wilson from the 70’s and a clip of Judge Judy in her courtroom.)

Some people from the 70’s might think of Flip Wilson of “Here Comes the Judge” fame. Others might think of Judge Judy.

(Put on my black robe)

Others think of the person in the black robe who hands down a jail sentence.

In The Story we come to a 300 year period known as the period of the Judges. A book in the Bible is named Judges. In the Old Testament while these judges not only could throw you in jail, they are known mostly for getting God’s people out of jail. Seven hundred years after God’s promise to Abraham, the people of God are in their own land, God is present in the tabernacle, a law guides their lives and a sacrificial system exists for forgiveness of sins.

The people were truly blessed by God. But there is a problem. **SIN**. Sin still reigns in the hearts of the people. Sin raises its ugly head.

**I. Israel’s Two Mistakes after Conquering the Land.  
(Joshua 1)**

- A. They did not drive out all the Canaanites and this led to the sin of idolatry. Judges 1:28; 2:12

***Judges 1:28***

*When Israel became strong, they pressed the Canaanites into forced labor but never drove them out completely.*

***Judges 2:12***

*They forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They provoked the Lord to anger*

**Application:** Our environment can influence us toward wrong. Disobedience sets the stage for a drifting from God.

- B. They did not teach their children about God and his great acts of deliverance.

***Joshua 2:10***

*We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed.*

\*Try it out! Ask your children to name a time when God performed a great act of deliverance in your lifetime, or your parents, or your grandparents.

**Application:** Christianity is only one generation away from extinction.

**II. The two reasons that God raises up the judges.**

- A. God has blessed Israel in the eyes of all the other nations. God wants other nations to know His goodness and blessing.

\*There are many nations and peoples around the world that see the United States as a blessed nation. We have so much...

- B. God powerfully intervenes when His people cry out to Him for help. When the people pray, God responds with deliverance.

### III. The four movements in a repeated cycle or pattern in Judges.

(The cycle is repeated 6 times in the Book of Judges)

- A. Movement 1- sin.
  - 1. The people worship pagan gods.
  - 2. God wants to be first in their lives.

#### ***Psalm 37:4***

*Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.*

- B. Movement 2- oppression
  - 1. God removes His hand of protection and allows surrounding nations to oppress His people.

#### ***Judges 2:22***

*I will use them to test Israel and see whether they will keep the way of the Lord and walk in it as their forefathers did."*

- 2. God uses 6 pagan nations to oppress His people: Mesopotamians oppress for 8 years; the Moabites for 18 years; the Canaanites for 20 years; the Midianites for 7 years; the Ammonites for 18 years; and the Philistines for 40 years.

C. Movement 3- repentance.

1. The oppressed people cry out to God for help. They “turn” or “return” to the Lord. They make a decision to do a 180 degree change in direction.
2. God raises up a judge who serves as a deliverer: Othniel delivers them from the Mesopotamians; Ehud delivers them from the Moabites; Deborah from the Canaanites; Gideon from the Midianites; Jephthah from the Ammorites and Samson from the Philistines. (...and Orkin from the Termites)

D. Movement 4- deliverance.

1. It is important to notice that God orchestrates the deliverance, not the human judge.
2. The judges were flawed human beings.

**IV. Two judges illustrate flawed humanity.**

A. Gideon: Judges 7

1. Gideon was from the weakest clan and was the weakest in his family.
2. God reduces Gideon’s army from 32,000 to 300 so that the deliverance will be from God, not Gideon and the army.

B. Samson: Judges 13-16

1. Samson reveals the secret of his strength to Delilah: Judges 16
2. Samson's pride and immaturity led to his death.

### **What should we learn?**

1. We can sin—when we don't keep God on the throne of our lives.

#### ***1 John 1:8***

*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*

2. We can be oppressed—our fellowship with God and others is broken.

#### ***1 John 1:6***

*If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.*

3. We can repent/confess—we can be restored through the blood of Jesus.

#### ***1 John 1:9***

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

4. We can experience deliverance—we can experience joy and fruitfulness.

#### ***1 John 1:7***

*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

**What say you?** Are you men and women of God or are you oppressed and overwhelmed by the control of Satan? You can experience victory today. God has raised up a Savior, Jesus the Christ who wants to help you experience joy and fruitfulness. You make the call!