

# Small Group Study Guide

Near to God when Alone in Sin |

Judges 16:19-20

From Sunday May 24, 2020

## Appetizer:

**Question:** Does anyone have any funny stories when they were caught doing something they shouldn't be doing, and they were caught red handed?

### A couple questions from the passage:

This week we talked about how Samson had all the exterior qualities of being a follower of God, but at the same time ignored the habits that he was participating in that were bringing him towards his death. Today we are talking about being alone in sin. Sin is never an easy topic to discuss. The discussion should convict us... but it shouldn't condemn us. Remind yourselves that you are in a group of friends that have grace and love for one another.

**Have someone read Judges 16:18-20.** In the book of Judges, we are introduced to different heroes that help Israel after they face the consequences of doing what is right in their own eyes. These judges weren't perfect; in fact, their imperfect qualities become more and more obvious the farther you read into the book. And that's where we run into Samson. A judge called to help the people of God who were doing things their own way... yet lived a life based off of his own way of doing things apart from God. How ironic.

## Main Course:

The bottom line of the sermon from Sunday is this: Sin, especially sins that hide in the background and that we have become comfortable with, numb our ability of remembering who we are and where we're supposed to be. In Samson's story, we have someone supposed to be the exemplary leader of the people of God, leading the charge against their enemies. Instead, he often found himself hanging out with the enemy, and not taking up his responsibility as a judge.

**Question:** Why is it so easy to allow regular, ongoing sinful habits effect our Christian identity and purpose?

"Sin takes a rule and turns it into a suggestion." It is interesting that often when dealing with people who are doubting their faith, it is discovered that they are not necessarily having a faith crisis but a sin crisis; their behaviour is going against what they know is right, so they begin to question what is right in order to soften guilt or pain or their desire to pursue things that are not of God. **How does lessening the rules by turning them into suggestions make it easier to continue in sinful habits?**

Samson has a way of nagging us and flirting with us. We have a love/hate relationship with many of the behaviours that we know are wrong... and yet we feel pulled to continue in their grasp. **In what ways does sin nag us and flirt with us?**

Samson should have known better. He shouldn't have been where he was. And yet, instead of breaking off his relationship with Delilah, he allowed the relationship to break him.

**Question:** Sin is no friend of community. How does sin make you empty and alone?

## Dessert:

There are two "pinching" questions that we should ask ourselves when we are discovering whether we are being numbed by sin; questions that help pull us out of the pits that sin has placed us in:

### 1. What am I doing here?

Enter into a quiet time as a group, reflecting on whether you are in places that you shouldn't be, either spiritually, mentally or physically. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you whether you are in places that he hasn't called you to be.

### 2. Who am I in God's eyes?

Our identity affects our trajectory. Take time as a group to encourage each other with statements from Scriptures that define who we are in Christ. For even when we sin, we know the person who is the friend of sinners, who tells us that we are no longer slaves to sin: we are children of God.