

WHEN EVERY MAN DOES WHAT IS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES
3-26-17 MESSAGE

Judges 17:1 And there was a man of mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah.

Judges 17:2 And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it. And his mother said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my son.

Judges 17:3 And when he had restored the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image: now therefore I will restore it unto thee.

Judges 17:4 Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image: and they were in the house of Micah.

Judges 17:5 And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.

Judges 17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Intro: Text we find in Judges 17:6 is repeated in Judges 21:25

Judges 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

The times of the Judges were strange and bizarre.

It is an example of what happens when every man does what is right in his own eyes:

So many skeptics read the Old Testament and especially accounts like what we read in Judges and become critical of the Bible. Yet they read similar things in their newspaper and accept what is happening all around us. The Judges is a sad commentary of what happens when people abandon the God of the Bible and do what is right in their own eyes.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN EVERY MAN DOES WHAT IS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES?

FIRST WE SHOULD NOTE:

1. THERE IS A CORRUPTION IN THE AREA OF LEADERSHIP:

There were a lot of corrupt leaders in the days of the judges.

The story of a man named Abimelech, the illegitimate son of one of the concubines of Gideon, was a prime example.

Judges 9:23 Abimelech killed all the sons of Gideon and set himself up as a king.

We read this statement:

Judges 9:22 When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel,

Judges 9:23 Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech:

Judges 9:24 That the cruelty done to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother, which slew them; and upon the men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing of his brethren.

Samson, though we like to think of him as a hero, was in many ways corrupt. Visiting prostitutes, violating his Nazarite vow, it was almost a slap in the face to Israel.

We also have the story of Deborah was almost a mockery to the nation.

Judges 4:9 And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.

Jael killed Sisera in her tent with a tent peg.

Often God gives a nation the leadership they deserve.

God raises up leaders, sometimes as a blessing and sometimes as a curse and sometimes as a rebuke to a nation.

I think today our nation is grasping at straws to find deliverance and leadership.

First with Obama, how did he ever get elected? Who was he? Where did he come from?

And now with Donald Trump. Really a man who did not aspire to be a life of being a politician, an outsider. A slap in the face to our politicians.

America is struggling to find its identity and struggling to find leadership and all because like Israel we have abandoned God as our leader. Our leaders have abandoned God as their leader and God is slapping them in the face with Donald Trump, a man they say is unqualified to lead. Yet he was elected. How can this be? Donald Trump is in fact God's slap in the face to the leaders of our nation. They rejected the Lord as their leader and so God lets a man excel above them who never trained to be one of them!

I BELIEVE NO MAN IS QUALIFIED TO LEAD WHO WILL NOT BE LED OF GOD!

NOW ANOTHER STORY IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES EXEMPLIFIES WHAT HAPPENS WHEN EVERY MAN DOES WHAT IS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES:

2. THERE IS A CORRUPTION IN THE AREA OF WORSHIP

This is exemplified in the story of Micah.

Here we have a crazy story about a man who steals some silver from his mother. She starts cursing up a storm one day about it so the man confesses he stole the money from her.

Judges 17:3 And when he had restored the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image: now therefore I will restore it unto thee.

Judges 17:4 Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image: and they were in the house of Micah.

Judges 17:5 And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.

Judges 17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Judges 17:7 And there was a young man out of Beth-lehem-judah of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there.

Judges 17:9 And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I am a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a place.

Judges 17:10 And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite went in.

Judges 17:11 And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was unto him as one of his sons.

Micah decides to hire this Levite to be his priest. The priest becomes a priest over this little house of gods. Just how bad does it get? Micah steals money from his mother, the mother dedicates some of it to build a graven image, and Micah hires a hireling priest. All in the name of the Lord! How bizarre, how wicked.

It gets even more bizarre then the men of Dan see the priest and the molten image and come and steal away the idol and the priest and he becomes their own little minister in the city of Dan.

Judges 18:19 And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest: is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel?

Judges 18:20 And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people.

All this drama because of doing what is right in their own eyes in the area of religion.

So this is where America is today when it comes to church and worshipping God. More and more our churches are following the pattern of worldliness. Doing what is right in our own eyes. Seeking to market the church to each generation based on their own bias and ideas rather than molding the generation according to the Bible. We want to bend the Bible to the ideas of the people and not to bend the people to the standards of the Bible.

If the Word of God is unchangeable why do we need to change it to cater to a changing world?

3. *THERE IS A CORRUPTION IN THE AREA OF MORALS:*

Children of Benjamin become perverted:

Judges Chap. 20: Levite goes to the town of Gibea a city of the Benjamites and the men sought to rape and kill him just like they tried to do to the angels in Sodom.

How could this happen?

Judges 19:1 And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him a concubine out of Beth-lehem-judah.

Judges 19:2 And his concubine played the whore against him, and went away from him unto her father's house to Beth-lehem-judah, and was there four whole months.

Judges 19:3 And her husband arose, and went after her, to speak friendly unto her, and to bring her again, having his servant with him, and a couple of asses: and she brought him into her father's house: and when the father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to meet him.

The Father in law keeps this Levite for 5 days. On the 5th day he gets anxious to leave and decides to leave in the evening.

When they pass by Jebus or Jerusalem, they decide not to lodge there. Instead they pass over to dwell in Gibeah, a city of the Benjamites.

An old man in the city took him in and he lodged with him. That night the Bible says that certain men of the city beat at the door and demanded that the old man give them the Levite because they wanted to rape him and abuse him.

What is amazing is that a city of the children of Israel became as bad as Sodom and Gomorrah.

But notice what the man who took in the levite said:

Judges 19:23 And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, nay, I pray you, do not so wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, do not this folly.

Judges 19:24 Behold, here is my daughter a maiden, and his concubine; them I will bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not so vile a thing.

Judges 19:25 But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go.

Note how the man looked at the homosexual act as being worse than the act of raping his own daughter? There has always been this mentality culturally and ethically that there are some sexual sins worse than others. The worse of them is the act of homosexuality.

We do not understand that because we do not have a biblical mindset. Yet this was such an abomination that it led to an act of civil war!

They settled on raping and abusing the man's concubine instead of abusing the priest. They abused her all night and actually killed her.

When the Levite got home we read this:

Judges 19:29 And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her, together with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel.

This caused such an outrage that it led to a civil war. And in the process thousands died.

It is a mystery, but in fact :

400,000 men of Israel went up to fight 26,000 men of Benjamin.

You would think it would be a no brainer and Benjamin would have given up the men who did this wicked deed. I have no idea what ever possessed them to defend these perverts. So in all:

22,000 die in one battle

18,000 men of Israel died in the next battle

30 Men die in the next battle, in a strategic move to draw the men of Benjamin from the city.

Then about 25,000 men of Benjamin were killed.

So of Israel over 40,000 men died.

And of Benjamin about 25,000 men died.

A total of 65,000 men died in this civil war all because of some perverts that started doing what was right in their own eyes.

When men do what is right in their own eyes there is a cost and that cost runs high for everyone.

The bloodiest wars are civil wars. To this day the bloodiest war our nation has ever faced was the civil war. A war that took place because of the injustice of slavery. I think it was not because of slavery but because of the secret wickedness that was going on in our nation. There are some sins that bloody up the land. There are some sins of the land that cause civil unrest and cause a spirit of division in the land.

I have never seen our nation so divided. There is civil unrest in our nation today. It is sad but our nation seems on a path of self destruction.

Can we defend those who commit abominations and think we can have peace and unity?

Can we defend the murder of innocent babies and think God can bless our nation?

Can we sanctify sexual perversion and expect God's smile on us?

What amazes me is that in this civil war more of the people that were not involved in the sin were hurt than those who defended the sin! This is a mystery. Why did God let 40,000 men of Israel die, and only 25,000 men of Benjamin die?

We have this attitude today in our nation that we should live and let live. As long as it does not affect us what does it matter? The truth is that it does matter. God is keeping a record in heaven and sin becomes a reproach to a nation and untimely produces strife and civil unrest.

WHEN WE ABANDON GOD'S LAW AND DO WHAT IS RIGHT IN OUR OWN EYES IT LEADS TO OUR OWN DESTRUCTION.

Proverbs 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

It seems right.

Instead of looking to God's Word our nation has slipped into doing what is right in our own eyes. This is especially true when it comes to morality!

What is wrong with a man thinking he is a woman?

What is wrong with a woman wanting to be a man?

Let them do their own thing! That is what we think is right in our own eyes. So that is what happened in the tribe of Benjamin and it led to civil unrest, greater perversion and to civil war and unrest!

II. HOW DO WE AVOID THIS PLIGHT?

We do it by submitting to biblical authority and leadership.

There was a reason that our text equates all the craziness of the day to the fact that there was no king in Israel and that every man did what was right in their own eyes.

Leadership by its very nature restrains people.

God wants people to be under His leadership and He gave the children of Israel the opportunity to have him as King.

But the Children of Israel, like so many other people, need a visible head.

To Avoid:

Moral corruption.

Civil corruption.

Religious corruption.

We need leadership and accountability.

God gives human authority to restrain, and that authority that has been set up should never be circumvented to do what is right in your own eyes.

1. THE RESTRAINER #1 THAT GOD HAS GIVEN IS PARENTAL AUTHORITY.

Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Ephesians 6:2 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

Ephesians 6:3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

It is the job of parents to train up their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. This is the backbone of any nation. A godly family is where it should all start.

2. THE SECOND RESTRAINER GOD HAS GIVEN IS GOVERNMENT.

Area of thefts.

Area of doing evil to our neighbour.

The governmental authorities are set up by God based on the morals of the people themselves. God gives us the leadership we deserve.

3. THE THIRD RESTRAINER GOD HAS GIVEN IS THE CHURCH.

The Church should be the conscience of our society. The reason people do not know right from wrong is because the church is not preaching and teaching God's law.

III. WHEN YOU REJECT THE RESTRAINER THAT GOD HAS GIVEN, YOU GET OUTSIDE OF THE WILL OF GOD AND OFTEN EXPERIENCE CHASTENING FROM GOD.

Children with parents, our nation is teaching children to dishonor their parents.

People with government, have you ever seen such dishonoring of our police? What is going on?

In the past God used the counsel of my Pastors to direct me.

Proverbs 11:14 Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.

Proverbs 15:22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.

Proverbs 24:6 For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety.

Avoid receiving counsel from those who are not the Authority that God has set up for you.

Spiritual matters go to Pastor, ethics, Scripture, ministry, will of God...

Legal matters go to the government, taxes, laws.

Family social matters go to your parents.

Parents, guidance for life partner marriage, job occupation.

IV. WHAT ARE THE EVIDENCES THAT YOU ARE DOING WHAT IS RIGHT IN YOUR OWN EYES?

1. Your endeavors fail and God's blessing is not in your life.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

Psalms 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

Psalms 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Psalms 1:3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

2. *Your life becomes unstable.*

Lack of direction: Notice how this worked in the book of Judges, people going here and there wandering around getting hurt and getting in trouble.

3. *You Experience Chastening Of God.*

Book of judges - times of chastening.

God would chasten, God's people would repent and cry out for help.

God would send a deliverer, a JUDGE.

What was their problem? It was a spiritual problem.

THE LEVITES WERE TO BE TEACHING THE PEOPLE THE WORD OF GOD.
THE PEOPLE WERE TO BE WHOLLY FOLLOWING THE LORD.

THEIR LIVES WERE TO BE WRAPPED UP IN KEEPING THE ORDINANCES OF GOD AND EXPERIENCING THE BLESSINGS OF GOD IN THEIR LIVES.

Instead, we have this sad commentary on the state of the affairs of the people of God.

Judges 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

V. *THE GREATEST EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW IN THIS AREA OF NOT DOING WHAT IS RIGHT IN YOUR OWN EYES IS FOUND IN JESUS CHRIST.*

John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

Hebrews 5:7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

Hebrews 5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

Hebrews 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

Hebrews 5:10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Jesus was totally submitted to His father. So too we need to be committed to the Lord and submit ourselves to Him!

Conclusion:

The book of Judges is a sad commentary of what happens to a Nation and a people who start doing what is right in their own eyes. In this book God's people vacillated between serving the

Lord and serving their whims and idols. God's chastening hand. Spiritually they vacillated between blessings and cursings. Ups and downs, this characterized the nation. What a sad commentary it was.

So too, our nation seems to be in a downward slope. If we would only read and learn from this blessed book we could learn to avoid these pitfalls. Paul said it right:

I Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

The old saying is so true.

THOSE WHO DO NOT LEARN FROM HISTORY ARE DOOMED TO REPEAT IT!

The book of Judges is a historical record of what happens when a group of people DO "WHAT IS RIGHT IN THEIR OWN EYES! "