



Grace Church Elementary

Camp Grace

LESSON 28

1st and 2nd Grade

Principle: We reap what we sow, even if it takes a while. Following God's plan and not our own.

Bible Character(s): Samson

Scripture Reference: Judges 15-16



PERSONAL PREPARATION: Before this weekend, read through Judges 15 and 16.

Samson chose to live for himself, rather than follow God's plan for his life. His life was miserable because of his sinful choices, yet God used him to accomplish His plan. The Lord has a purpose for each of our lives, just as He did for Samson. Regardless of our sin, God's sovereign plan will be carried to completion, but He wants to bless us with an abundant life of joy and peace as we trust in Him. Samson faced consequences of his sin. He ended up blind, imprisoned, and alone. How often do we find ourselves in miserable situations and wonder how we got there? Do we seek to follow God's plan for our lives or do we choose to follow our own plan and struggle with those consequences? How often do we respond to God in the same way that Samson did with arrogance and a self-centered attitude? God's purpose will be carried out. Do we choose to be a part of that plan by following Him or do we live for ourselves?

PLUG IN TIME - 5-10 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

Arrive early to check the supplies in the bin and review the lesson. Write today's principle on the whiteboard. Remember to greet all campers upon arrival; meet their parents; welcome and introduce all visitors. Create a welcoming cabin for all campers!

Using Gifts for God's Glory

Have campers take turns coming to the board to write down or draw a picture of a talent or gift they have. Talk about how God gives each of us different talents and gifts to use for Him. Ask the campers to share how they can use their talents and gifts for God's glory.



BIG GROUP Time - 35-40 minutes

As you line up, remind campers we are going to have fun as an entire Camp Grace group! We are going to live out GRACE by **Glorifying God through worship, Respecting All Leaders, and Accepting Responsibility** to listen with attentive ears,

minds, and hearts – fully **Celebrating Christ** with passion! We should **Encourage Others** to do the same, by not distracting them from their worship of God.

*Take your cabin flag to Big Group.

The Bridge to Small Group

Today we will learn more about Samson's life and review the principle of reaping what we sow. We will also look at God's sovereignty; His purpose for Samson was carried out regardless of Samson's choices. We will see that Samson used his God given gifts for himself rather than to serve God.

Small Group Time - 25-30 minutes

Getting Started

If your cabin did well in Big Group, acknowledge it. If not, take a couple of minutes to talk about how they can do better next time.

What did you learn about in Big Group? Why did the counselor dig up the seeds? (The sunflowers were not growing fast enough, so he decided to start over.) Does it take a long time or a short time for a seed to grow into a plant? (A long time.) When Samson disobeyed, did his consequences happen right away? (No, he reaped his consequences of sin later in life.) When we disobey, it can take a long time to see the consequences.

A few weeks ago, we saw that God set Samson apart to bring God glory. God gave Samson gifts that were supposed to be used to save the Israelites from the Philistines. Samson disobeyed his parents (choosing to marry a Philistine women and eating something that was unclean – honey from the lion's carcass), and this brought him terrible trouble. Samson chose not to follow God.

Today we will learn that Samson continued to make decisions, out of anger, to not follow God, and this caused his family and his people, the Israelites, much sadness. Samson had to face the consequences of his sin; the people he loved were killed because of his sin and anger.

Even after this, Samson did not repent. He became angrier and sinned again by killing many more Philistines. The Philistines then attacked Samson's own people, the Israelites, so they could take him as their prisoner. Samson's own people did not like him and tried to turn him in by tying him up with a rope. God gave Samson strength to break out of the ropes and kill 1000 Philistines. Despite Samson's sin, God still used Samson to save the Israelites from the Philistines.

Samson's Cycle



The purpose is to see how Samson's anger and vengeance caused him only heartache. He reaped what he sowed, even though it took awhile.

Supplies:

Cycle of Sin poster (1 per session)

Teacher's guide – "Cycle of Sin" side (1 per bin)

Strip of leather (1 per bin)

Rope (1 per bin)

Picture of loom (1 per bin)

Look at the Cycle of Sin poster. Summarize Judges 15 by talking through the cycle of sin, consequence, and response. Have the campers show you where to write the words "Sin" or "Consequence" in the spaces on the worksheet. Use the teacher's guide if needed. Talk through what the cycle means, pointing out the opportunity to break out of the cycle by realizing, repenting, and responding by following God's plan. Discuss the explanation table at the bottom of the worksheet.

Tie It Together

 Samson was not following God's plan. Samson was not supposed to marry a Philistine. He did marry her and this led to many problems. There were consequences to his sin. Samson then continued to disobey God; he became very angry and used his gift of strength to kill the Philistines. One consequence to this sin was that his own people, the Israelites, did not like him. When we choose to follow our own plan, instead of God's, this is sin. When we sin, there are always consequences. Samson's life is a great example. We have the opportunity to repent of our sin and respond by following God's plan instead of choosing to follow our own plan. Samson chose to follow his own plan and that is why he did not break from his cycle of sin.

Let's continue to learn about Samson's life, and see the consequences of Samson's decisions to not follow God.

God gave Samson special strength. Remember how he killed the lion with his bare hands, and today we saw him kill 1000 Philistines by himself? The Philistines wanted to find out what made Samson so strong. After Samson's wife died, Samson fell in love with another woman whose name was Delilah. The Philistines promised Delilah money if she could find out the source of Samson's strength. Several weeks ago we learned that Samson was a Nazirite. God had instructed Nazirites not to cut their hair. Let's read the Bible in Numbers to learn more.

Numbers 6:5

5 They must never cut their hair throughout the time of their vow, for they are holy and set apart to the Lord. Until the time of their vow has been fulfilled, they must let their hair grow long.

Samson had not obeyed all of God's instructions, but this is one he had followed. Let's read more to see what happens next with Samson and his new wife Delilah.

Judges 16:6-9

6 So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me what makes you so strong and what it would take to tie you up securely."

7 Samson replied, "If I were tied up with seven new bowstrings that have not yet been dried, I would become as weak as anyone else."

8 So the Philistine rulers brought Delilah seven new bowstrings, and she tied Samson up with them.

9 She had hidden some men in one of the inner rooms of her house, and she cried out, "Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!" But Samson snapped the bowstrings as a piece of string snaps when it is burned by a fire. So the secret of his strength was not discovered.

(Show the campers the strip of leather.)

Judges 16:10-11

10 Afterward Delilah said to him, "You've been making fun of me and telling me lies! Now please tell me how you can be tied up securely."

11 Samson replied, "If I were tied up with brand-new ropes that had never been used, I would become as weak as anyone else."

(Show campers the rope.)

Judges 16:12-13a

12 So Delilah took new ropes and tied him up with them. The men were hiding in the inner room as before, and again Delilah cried out, "Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!" But again Samson snapped the ropes from his arms as if they were thread.

13 Then Delilah said, "You've been making fun of me and telling me lies! Now tell me how you can be tied up securely."

Samson replied, "If you were to weave the seven braids of my hair into the fabric on your loom and tighten it with the loom shuttle, I would become as weak as anyone else."

(Show a picture of a loom.)

Judges 16:13b-17

So while he slept, Delilah wove the seven braids of his hair into the fabric. 14 Then she tightened it with the loom shuttle. Again she cried out, "Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!" But Samson woke up, pulled back the loom shuttle, and yanked his hair away from the loom and the fabric.

15 Then Delilah pouted, "How can you tell me, 'I love you,' when you don't share your secrets with me? You've made fun of me three times now, and you still haven't told me what makes you so strong!"

16 She tormented him with her nagging day after day until he was sick to death of it.

17 Finally, Samson shared his secret with her. "My hair has never been cut," he confessed, "for I was dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as anyone else."

Delilah told the Philistines to come back because she knew what to do. After Samson fell asleep, she had a man come in and shave all of his hair off. This caused Samson's strength to leave him. Samson was tricked by Delilah. When he awoke and found that Delilah had shaved his head, he knew that God would not give him strength. The Philistines captured him. Samson's sin had consequences, but it took a long time for Samson to see the consequences of his sin. He lost his strength, his sight and lived as a prisoner to the Philistines. God took all of those things away from him because he did not trust God.

Reap What You Sow



The purpose is to see how Samson's sin led to the consequence of being captured by the Philistines.

Supplies:

Worksheet – “Sow and Reap” side (1 per camper)
Set of seeds sown/consequences (1 per camper)
Teacher’s guide – “Sow and Reap” side (1 per bin)
Scissors
Glue

Give each camper a worksheet and a set of seeds sown/consequences. Have the campers cut out the seeds the consequences. Then have them glue the correct seeds Samson sowed to the top of the worksheet and the correct consequences he reaped on the bottom picture. Use the teacher’s guide as needed.

Tie It Together

 Samson was living the way he wanted to live; he wasn’t following God’s plan. He continued to disobey God and use his gifts for himself instead of God. He thought this was better for him. When he was tricked by Delilah and told her his secret, he began to experience the consequences of his sin. He saw that the bad seeds that he sowed (disobeying his parents, disobeying God, using his gifts for himself, living the way he wanted to live) led to him losing his strength, losing his sight and living his life as a prisoner to the Philistines

Healthy and Unhealthy Seeds

 The purpose is to examine the consequences of our decisions.

Supplies:

Sunflower pictures (one healthy, one unhealthy) (1 per bin)

Show the campers the pictures healthy sunflower and the unhealthy sunflower.

Tie It Together

 Look at these two pictures. Which sunflower do you think came from a good, healthy seed? (Healthy sunflower.) Which came from a bad, unhealthy seed? (Unhealthy sunflower.) The decisions we make always have a consequence – either a good, healthy consequence, or a bad, unhealthy consequence. Samson’s decisions to sin, to not follow God, led to bad consequences. He caused pain and sadness for his family and his people. He reaped the bad seeds that he sowed. Can you think of a decision that you have made that caused a bad consequence? (Ex. disobeying parents caused a time-out.) Can you think of a decision that you have made that caused a good consequence? (Showing kindness to a friend caused this friend to share his/her toy with you.) As you can see, we always have a choice to follow God (good decision) or sin (bad decision), and there is always a consequence that goes with it. God wants us to follow Him, and He blesses us when we choose to follow Him instead of choosing to sin.

God still loved Samson, even though he was living a life that was not pleasing to Him. Let’s see how God used Samson, even though he did not follow God’s plan for his life.

While captured by the Philistines, Samson was used as their entertainment. In Chapter 16 we see that the rulers of the Philistines were all together in their temple sacrificing to their god. They called for Samson to be brought out so that they could laugh at him. Read what the Bible says happened in the verses below.

Judges 16:26-30

26 Samson said to the young servant who was leading him by the hand, "Place my hands against the pillars that hold up the temple. I want to rest against them." 27 Now the temple was completely filled with people. All the Philistine rulers were there, and there were about 3,000 men and women on the roof who were watching as Samson amused them.

28 Then Samson prayed to the Lord, "Sovereign Lord, remember me again. O God, please strengthen me just one more time. With one blow let me pay back the Philistines for the loss of my two eyes." 29 Then Samson put his hands on the two center pillars that held up the temple. Pushing against them with both hands, 30 he prayed, "Let me die with the Philistines." And the temple crashed down on the Philistine rulers and all the people. So he killed more people when he died than he had during his entire lifetime.

Despite Samson's sin, God still used Samson for His purpose - to save the Israelites.

Samson's End



The purpose is to show that God used Samson for His purpose even though Samson did not obey God during his lifetime.

Supplies:

Worksheet – "Samson's End Maze" side (1 per camper)

Have the campers complete the maze.

Tie It Together



Samson sowed bad seeds rather than good seeds in his life. He used his gifts for selfish purposes, he didn't respect the authority that God placed over him and he bragged about the gifts God gave him. We reap what we sow, even if it takes a while. These bad seeds, or sin, in Samson's life brought about consequences for him. God's purpose for Samson was that he would save Israel from the power of the Philistines. Samson did this when he pushed down the pillars of their temple, killing the rulers of the Philistines. God still loved Samson and listened to Samson's prayer. God still used Samson to conquer the Philistines, but it cost Samson his life. Samson did what God had created him to do, but he lived a miserable life because of his sin. He lost his strength, lost his eyes and became a prisoner to the Philistines. He lost every relationship he had. He had no close friends or family.

This maze was pretty hard. There are lots of dead ends and wrong turns. Samson took a lot of wrong turns in his life. He sowed some bad seeds because he followed his own plan rather than following God's plan for his life. He faced some hard consequences for these bad seeds.

Wrap it Up

God has a plan for our lives as well. He has given us special gifts and talents to use for Him. He has called us to obey Him by obeying the authority (parents, teachers, coaches) He has placed over us. It's important for us to follow God's plan. We need to use the gifts He gave us for His purpose and not our own.

Prayer Time

Spend some time in prayer to close small group time, asking God to help us choose to follow Him.



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