

Going your own way – Judges Chapter 17 v6

In these days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Everybody did their own thing.

Message: “People did whatever they felt like doing.” No authority or leadership for the people of Israel.

It’s my life and it’s my right, I can do what I like when I like.”

Very much like today, its my right to be who I want to be, gender, ethnicity, or basically I don’t want to do what the law of the land tells me I should do.

Form of anarchy. “Non recognition of authority or other controlling systems.”
Lawlessness.

We make between 300 – 17,000 decisions in life,

Some are extremely difficult:

Some easy.

All have consequences.

Judges

History of Israel

Slavery for over 500 yrs.

Dominated by Egyptians.....throughout the whole time they had not had one King they could turn to for help and for guidance.

God gave them Leaders, who feared and honoured God in all they did.

Moses: had delivered them from slavery.

Not a king but was called a “King in Jerusalem”.

He gave them direction and a sense of purpose for their lives.

Joshua: Conquering leader.

Took the people into the Promised Land into Canaan.

Through his Godliness and by always putting God first in everything he did and before every decision he made: God blessed not only him, but all the elders of that generation.

Joshua was not perfect. He was 110 yrs old when he died, but he failed to tell the younger people and future generations of Israel the importance of putting God first, if they wanted to succeed.

In the book of Judges we then see that the freedom days turned into a dark age for the Israelites.

They didn't want God in their lives anymore. There was no need for God. Everything was fine, life was good.

There are three other verses through this book which says exactly the same words. In chapter 18v1 and 19v1

In Judges 17:6 “in those days there was no king in Israel and everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

Micah: he was a person who thought he could live two lives. “a foot in each camp” served all the pagan gods and built idols to many of them, but he thought that he could basically live both lives and please God by bribing a young Levite from Bethlehem to be his priest.

Verse 13: Now i know that the Lord will be good to me, since i have a Levite as my priest.”

It doesn't matter how much you think you are a good person / I go to church every Sunday/ I contribute to charity / I'm good to my family / I'm well respected in my community.....it's not going to get you to Heaven and everlasting life,
If you are leading a double life and serving modern day pagan gods.

We all need to realise the importance of God being the main purpose of your life. Everything else such as family / job / relationships will all come after that.

18:v1 The Danite tribe again not knowing what to do or where to turn, went to Micah for guidance. But it ended up with all the various tribes fighting among each other.

19: 1 another Levite thought he would do the right thing, but wherever he went he found severe brutality and immorality. Across the whole land people were doing what they wanted and saying it was their right.

But nobody thought of the consequences of their actions and how this was so upsetting to God and what it was eventually going to lead to the people of Israel.

Today: Everybody has got their own standard for life. What's right for them maybe not right for you and me, but the question we must ask is "is it right in Gods eyes and what does it mean for you and me, when this life comes to an end.

Judges chapters 12-14: we see what happens when the Judges are put in charge. The whole section relates to four things.

Disobedience – Judgement – Repentance – Deliverance: 400 years.

Families became wealthy,

Battles against pagan nations ended in victory, they conquered many nations when God was their first priority, when they first asked God for guidance and safety.

Then over a period of time,

It was like as soon as God blessed them, they would forget all about serving and worshipping God, suddenly putting God first became not that important, everything was going well for the Israelites, life was good.

They started to worship other gods, made idols, married pagan women from other nations who despised the people of Israel. Through all this they then managed to deceive the people, who then once again ended up in slavery and bondage.

All over again they would then cry out to God, why have you abandoned us.

I can't worship God: this is all his fault....Blaming God for their own mistakes.

It wasn't God abandoning them but them neglecting and forgetting all about God and how good he had been to them. How many people do you know that the only time they call out to God is when they are in trouble or distress.

Let's move into life today.

1960's things started to change:

We started through the media of TV and music to see a culture change.

Young people were told to express themselves, experiment in drugs, sexual immorality.

P.C. brigade: WOKE (Afro/American vernacular English meaning: alert to racial prejudice & discrimination) 2010 this changed to encompass the LGBT and sexism Brigade. Everybody has the right to do what they think is right in their own eyes.

Anything goes: except for normality.....Except for Christianity.

Workplace:

Human rights:

Governments are now frightened to make decisions that will affect the minority and not the majority.

Question: What are the priorities in your life?

Living life to the full.

Self-centred life. It's all me !

Focused on your family: making sure they are happy and content.

Friends: do you crave a big circle of friends: who you believe will be there for you when things go wrong.

Work / Money.

Health. I haven't got time to go to church i'm a busy person.....but you can find time to go to the gym or do some sort of physical exercise.

Nothing wrong with any of these things. BUT

Where does God fit in too all these other things.

How important is He in your life.

What is your relationship like with Jesus Christ?

Do you have relationship with him?

Did you have a close relationship or is it now an occasional one, when I can fit it in around all my other commitments.

Somebody who will stick closer to you than any friend or family member. Who will always be there for you in every situation you go through, Is Lord Jesus Christ.

John 14: 21 *“whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my father, and i too will love them and show myself to them.”*

There is nothing like the love of Jesus,

Is he your priority in Life?

Are you committed to serving God as you are to doing everything else in life?

Or is this something you do every so often. Just to satisfy your conscience or to please your family (Nagging), or do you just come on special occasions.

We find it so much in our daily lives, where people only want God when things are going wrong for them.

But even then: Our God is a forgiving God, and he will always be prepared to forgive us from our sins and the faults we make as we go through life.....Love

Dan 9:9 *“The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him.”*

Verse 23 “ As soon as he began to pray”

Immediately God listens to what Daniel had to say:

It doesn't matter if we are asking for forgiveness or for some other problem. He is always there for each one of us.

1 John 2:1 “My little children, these things i write to you, so that you may not sin, and if anyone sins we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

And he himself is the propitiation (deliverer) for our sins, and not for ours only but for the whole world.

God does not want people to sin or “do their own thing” He wants each and every one of us to enjoy our lives on this earth, and then to live in Heaven forever worshipping and praising our God. But we need to put Him first in our lives.

But there are times when we will fail Him, times when we drift away from our first love of knowing Jesus as our saviour and Lord.

We may think I'm alright, go now and again...i live an honest life.

But we have a hope and an assurance.....Jesus Christ.

“Forgiveness is not a reason to sin....it is an incentive Not to sin.”

If we want to stay on Gods path... He promises that he will guide you

Ps 32: 8 “ I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go: i will counsel you and watch over you”

God does not want to be a dictator: he has given us a free will to do what we want, but he wants each and every one of us to follow him freely: Our choice

You may think, God will never forgive me for what i have done.

The key thing we have to remember friends is that God will forgive you first.

C. S. Lewis wrote.....”*As far as forgiving ourselves is concerned, If God forgives us we must forgive ourselves. Otherwise it is almost like setting up ourselves as a higher tribunal than him.*”

We must realise that we are not greater than God.

Through Jesus, God has made total forgiveness available to you and to me.

Christian: Is he your first priority in life: You’ve probably giving your heart to Jesus and know him as saviour.

But are you still as enthusiastic in your Christian walk as you were 12 months ago.

If not, what has taken over your life?

Seek ye first the kingdom of God.....and all these things shall be added to you.

Having friends / loving family / nice home etc can still be all yours...put God first

When you go home tonight and you think on where you are in life, just ask yourself, Am I where God wants me to be.....If you’re not then put it right straight away.

Don’t just wait until something goes wrong

We need to recognise that living a life pleasing to God should be our priority.

Reading Gods word

Prayer:

Fellowship: if we love Jesus.....then we will want to spend as much time as we can in fellowship with others who love Jesus, and spend as much time as we can in worship to Him.

Why: Because he loves us and through Jesus Christ he has forgiven us of all our sins.

To be remembered no more: it doesn't matter what we did in the past we can have that slate wiped clean. Not just tipexed over but completely clean.

Smith Wigglesworth: 1859 – 1947

“The reason the world is not seeing Jesus is that Christian people are not filled with Jesus. They are satisfied with attending meetings weekly, reading the bible occasionally, and praying sometimes. It is an awful thing for me to see people who profess to be Christians lifeless, powerless, and in a place where their lives are so parallel to unbeliever's lives that it is difficult to tell which place, they are in, whether in the flesh or in the spirit.” Not perfect by any stretch of the imagination. But we all need to look and see where we are in Gods family.