

“Jephthah (part 1) – Love for the Outcast”
Judges 11:1-11

Open: Story

- Jephthah was the son of a harlot – He did not have a good heritage. **(vs. 1)**
- Jephthah’s half-brothers disowned him and eliminated him from the family inheritance. **(vs. 2)**
- Jephthah leaves and gathers together a band of misfits. **(vs. 3)**
 - **Vain** = *Empty, worthless, unsuccessful, without significance; having no appearance of value or importance.*
- The time comes when Israel finds themselves in trouble and needing help in their fight against the children of Ammon, so they called upon Jephthah. **(vs. 4-6)**
- Jephthah responds with a reasonable question: **(vs. 7)**
 - Did ye not hate me?
 - Did ye not expel me from my father’s house?
 - Why are you come unto me now when ye are in distress?
- A deal is made between Jephthah and Israel. **(vs. 8-11)**
 - Jephthah makes an agreement to help them if he is made the leader.

Tran:

- Do not allow the life God has given you cause you to become bitter in the life God has called you to live.
 - Jephthah did not get to choose who his mother or father was, but he did have a choice in not holding his future hostage by his past.
- Do not allow others’ view of your past to cause you to lose focus on your potential.
 - Jephthah could have allowed how his brothers treated him to ruin him, but he chose to prove them wrong instead of allowing their view of him to be fulfilled.
- Use the lessons you have learned from past struggles in life to help those who are facing the same problems you face in life.
 - Jephthah did not waste the difficult times. He took what he had learned and was learning, and helped others who could have potentially fallen into the same pitfall and helped them become a success.
- Do not allow how others in life have treated you to rob you from the blessing of being used by God to deliver your accusers from being defeated. **Prov. 25:21-22** *“If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: [22] For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.”*
 - Jephthah could have sat back and watched those who mistreated him be destroyed, but he chose to use this as a steppingstone to success and to not use it as a stumbling block.

I. Do not hold a person's past against them.

- Learn to see people's potential, by seeing in them the purpose that God has for them.

ILL: John 9:1-7 "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. [2] And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? [3] Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. [4] I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. [5] As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. [6] When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, [7] And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing."

- A. Do not hold the decisions that people had no control over against them.
- B. Do not allow someone's past to define their potential in life.
- C. Do not predetermine how someone will turn out because of your view of their potential.

II. Do not push someone away because they are not like you.

- There is no such thing as success based on skin color, social class, skill set, or sinlessness in God Word, God has a purpose for every living person. *ILL: Mk. 5:1-15; 18-20 "And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. [2] And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, [3] Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: [4] Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. [5] And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. [6] But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, [7] And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. [8] For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. [9] And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. [10] And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. [11] Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. [12] And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. [13] And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. [14] And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. [15] And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind... [18] And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. [19] Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. [20] And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.*

- A. Do not be so proud in failing to realize that every one's purpose is different and no less important than another's.
- B. Do not allow someone's appearance or upbringing to cause you to think that you are better than they are.
We are all made from the same substance, by the same Supreme Creator.
- C. Help others to see in themselves what Jesus sees, when they don't see in themselves who Jesus made them to be.

III. Don't let somebody's mistreatment of you cause you to be destroyed.

- Do not live life with a “victim” mentality – I’m not good at anything...no one likes me...its not fair that someone said something about me...etc. *ILL: Jephthah did not allow how others treated him to define how his life would turn out.*

A. Chose to become better, not bitter.

B. Don't let how someone else views your life, determine the outcome of your life.

C. Do not allow other's view of you to hold your potential hostage.

Close:

- Do not hold a person's past against them.
- Do not push someone away because they are not like you.
- Don't let somebody's mistreatment of you cause you to be destroyed.

Gal. 6:1

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”