

Remember the Great Works of God – Are you letting the Lord Reign in your life?

Judges 17-18

Context:

Judges chapter 1-3 has two introductions: 1. Political corruption; 2. Spiritual corruption
Judges 4-16 all about Judges – heroes of the people, after chap. 16, no judges were mentioned
Judges 17-21 has two conclusions: 1. Spiritual corruption; 2. Political corruption

Do you see the pattern? Political corruption; Spiritual corruption; Spiritual corruption; Political corruption

Today, we are going to look at the following and learn what it means to follow God.

Three Sections:

1. Judges 17:1-6
2. Judges 17:7-13
3. Judges 18

1. Judges 17:1-6 – Family Teachings that did not let the Lord Reign

- Micah's mother cursed the person who stole her 1,100 shekels of silver
- 1,100 shekels of silver = 28 lbs = \$6,700 CAD, so lots of money
- When Micah confessed to his mother that he took the money
- Micah's mother changed her attitude from the curse to bless (v.2)
 - a. **Inconsistent family teaching – Principle changes based on the situation**
 - b. **No desire to give an offering to God and Broke the Ten Commandments:**
 - i. Micah's mother worried her words of blessings are not good enough, so she took 200 shekels of silver = 18% of 1,100 shekels of silver (over 10% of offering) = \$1,200 CAD to the Lord through a silversmith. Two idols were made: 1. Crafted; 2. Silver casted.
 - ii. Micah made a shrine for the idols and made an ephod. An ephod is a priestly vest only for priests. Micah thought a priestly vest and idols in his shrine
 - c. **Failed to follow God's teachings through Moses on priests:** Micah installed one of his sons as his priest. According to God's teachings through Moses, at that time, only Aaron's descendants can be priests. i.e. instead of going to the church building to worship under the leadership of the pastor, Micah placed a priestly symbol and some idols in his shrine, then he made his one of his sons the pastor and have church worship at home.
- That's why the author of Judges said, "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit." (v. 6)

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2. Judges 17:7-13 – Jesus' Followers that did not let the Lord Reign

Background:

- A Levite from Bethlehem in Judah was looking for a place to stay

- Levi is one of the tribes that does not own any land. When they entered into Canaan, Joshua said that they are not allowed to be landowners because the Lord is there inheritance. The Levites are supposed to be spread among the Israelites and serve in the temple. The rest of Israel tribes are supposed to care for them as they serve in the temple.
- This Levite from Bethlehem was probably looking for a place to stay and work.
- Micah who is a follower of the Lord saw this Levite and decided to care for the Levite
- Micah made this young Levite be the priest of his home (remember only Aaron's descendants can be priests during that time; Judges 18:30 said that this young Levite was the descendant of Moses) instead of one of Micah's sons
- Although the young Levite is probably younger than Micah, Micah decided to treat him as a father
- Micah also decided to cover this Levite's clothes and food and an annual salary of 10 shekels of silver = \$60 CAD = \$0.164 CAD/day (\$60/365 days). Not generous.
- Micah said, "Now I know that the Lord will be good to me, since this Levite has become my priest." (v. 13)
- **Micah thought he is serving the Lord: Micah thought that by hiring a Levite who cannot be a priest according to God's teachings through Moses at that time are going to please God.**
- How often today do we follow God and not with God's ways but in our own ways?

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3. Judges 18 – Serving/Ministry Attitude that did not let the Lord Reign

- The chapter starts off by saying, "In those days Israel had no king." (v. 1)

Background:

- The tribe of Dan is the smallest of all Israel tribes. As they couldn't remove the people in their land, the Danites decided "to seek a place of their own where they might settle." (v. 1)



So, the tribe of Dan sent five people "to spy out the land and explore it."

- As the five Danites were exploring, they came to Micah's house and stayed there.
- I suspect Micah's house must be so big that he didn't even know 5 people entered his house and stayed for a night.
- The five recognized the ascent of the young Levite and asked him three important questions:
 - i. Who brought you here? (A question of who is in charge)
 - ii. What are you doing in this place? (A question about meaning and existence)
 - iii. Why are you here? (A question about worth. What do you get?)
- If the young Levite was being truthful, then his life may be different.
- The five asked the young Levite to inquire God about their journey.
- The Young Levite saying something to appease the five.
- The five did find a place up North so they went back home and gathered the rest of the Danites including 600 soldiers to capture the land
- This time, the Danites passed by Micah's house again and took the idol, the ephod, and the household gods. (v. 17)
- The young Levite (priest) also came with them.
- Interesting dialogue, "And they said to him, "Keep quiet; put your hand on your mouth and come with us and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be the priest to the house of one man, or to be the priest to a tribe and clan in Israel?" And the priest's heart was glad. He took the ephod and the household gods and the carved image and went along with the people." (v. 19-20)
- **Climbing up in the cooperative ladder in ministry was the young Levite's ministry/serving attitude.**
- If we can ask and answer ourselves honestly the three IMPORTANT questions, our lives will be different too.
 - i. Who brought you here? (A question of who is in charge)
 - ii. What are you doing in this place? (A question about meaning and existence)
 - iii. Why are you here? (A question about worth. What do you get?)
- For example, joining a church:
 - i. Who brought you here? (A question of who is in charge)
Does God brought, called us here? Or is finding a church like a going to a supermarket, what can this church give me or my kids? The question is about meeting my needs or meeting others' needs. Did God call you to serve or not to serve? Or services are for one's interest rather than God's mission and call. If it is for ourselves, does it still call it a service? Hopefully, God brought/called you here.
 - ii. What are you doing in this place? (A question about meaning and existence)
I am here to serve God and others. Do we serve God by faith and let God open doors or by our own strength to open doors for ourselves? When face challenges do we have endurance from God and see God's intended meaning in the midst of trials? Or we are the only person to make the call of whether trials have meaning or not?

iii. Why are you here? (A question about worth. What do you get?)

I am here to learn about God and get to know God better and that's pleasing to God. Are we being honest with what we try to get? Have we asked God what's the purpose for God to call us to serve in this time and age? Do we try to please people or God himself alone?

- For the young Levite:

i. Who brought you here? (A question of who is in charge)

- In Micah's house: I passed by Micah's house and thought that it's big, the people who lived here must be rich. So, I hope to stay here.

- Leaving Micah's house: instead of being a priest in Micah's house, I will become a bishop in Dan's tribe.

i. What are you doing in this place? (A question about meaning and existence)

- In Micah's house: I am here as a priest to serve Micah and his household even I am not supposed to do that according to God's guidance through Moses.

- Leaving Micah's house: I will be the bishop in Dan's tribe even though that's sinning against God.

i. Why are you here? (A question about worth. What do you get?)

- In Micah's house: I am getting my free clothes and meals.

- Leaving Micah's house: I am finally getting what I deserve.

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Summary: Let the Lord Reign

1. In our Family Teachings
2. Of how we follow Jesus
3. Of our Serving/Ministry Attitude