

**Say Goodbye to Samson – Judges 15:16-20; 16:1**

Judges 15:14 is after Joshua and if you are in Psalms, you are way too far. So in verse 14, he says, **And when he came into Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him** now underline that because that is kind of the key, and the spirit came upon him **and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became just broken and burnt with fire, and his bands loosen from off his hands,** so his hands were tied by the Philistines. You remember that the Philistines came against Judah, he surrendered and once again as he was walking back he allowed them to tie his hands with new cords, and all of a sudden, the Spirit of God came upon him. **And he found a new jawbone of a donkey, and put forth his hand and took it, and slew a thousand men therein.** (Judges 15:15) So I held up that jawbone last three months ago, was a huge jawbone you can see that it did tremendous damage. **And Samson said, with a jawbone of a donkey, heap upon heap, with a jawbone of a donkey have I slain thousands.** (Judges 15:16) And so the slaying, but notice "I" slayed a thousand, I did it. **And it came to pass when he had made an end of speaking, he cast away the jawbone out of his hand and called the place Ramath Lehi. And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant** and underline **and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised** that would be the Philistines. **But God split a hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout.** so a miracle of God, underline verse 19, he took that jawbone of a donkey, he hollowed a place, water therefore came out, **and when he had drunk, the spirit came again and he revived: wherefore he called the**

**name of that place En Hakkore which is in Lehi unto this day. And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.** (Judges 15:19-20)

Now a couple of things that stand out to me and then we are going to kind of jump into the story is, notice he says "I" did it, I slayed the thousands in verse 16. But then it said that he did something kind of foolishly. He says once again, did you bring me here to die? Are you not going to help me? But then it says in verse 19, but God, but God began to work in his life. And then if you notice in 16:1, **then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there a harlot, and went in to her.** (Judges 16:1) And so we find the downfall of Samson once again. He did good, then he did bad, and then he was revived, and then finally after a time of judging Israel towards the very end of his life, one day he just got up, went to see a harlot, when he was done with her he went and met Delilah and you know that story, we'll pick that up next week.

And so I've entitled the study tonight very simply "Say Goodbye to Samson". And I think a lot of times that we need to learn to do the very same thing, we say goodbye to the work of the flesh. And maybe this year has been a year that has been kind of up and down, all over the place. In fellowship, out of fellowship; hanging out with the Lord, not doing so well with the Lord; walking in the Spirit, walking in the flesh; being led by the Spirit of God, taking things into your own hands. And you've seen some of the damage that has been done, and you see some of the things as you kind of look back in a very Godly way realizing that you could have built relationships, things could have gone better, the marriage, the single life, the dating, every relationship could have been better. And we could have loved a little bit more, and we could have given a little bit more, and when you look back often times, we see the selfishness of our life. And I think that sometimes, God in His word lays it out so crystal clear to help us, not to condemn us. And when we look over his life, we realize there are certain things we do not want to do because towards the very end of his life the Bible says that he jumped up and he knew not that the Spirit of God had departed. And the reason why is

because he had violated God. And maybe this is a year as you look back; you see some of those violations that you have done that no one else knows. You kind of twisted or bent, or kind of gone down a road that you shouldn't have, or maybe you've gone backward just a little bit when in all reality God has been calling you to a deeper, more committed life to Him, not to the church but to Him. And so when I look at Samson and begin to realize, he made some major, major mistakes in his life, he chose to do certain things the wrong way. And the number one thing that he did that I'm convinced the church of Jesus Christ does all the time is they do not see God in their life. They think they are doing it; I have built this, or I have done that, or I have done this, and they see, America sees what they have done. But it's God who watches the city, and it's God who keeps the country safe, and it's God who keeps the people on track, and it's God that has kept me and you together, and it was God that sent the lion to protect Samson from going into the vineyard. But then it was God that sent the Spirit to give him the strength to overcome the lion. In other words, no matter where you look at this guy, it was the Spirit of God seeking to help Samson out of the mess he got himself into. And when I look back, I have to confess that God has been faithful, that God has done certain things that have been so neat that He has redeemed, and He has rebuilt, and He has solidified certain things. And so when we look at his life next week, he's going to fade out of the picture, he's going to be healed, he's going to pull the temple down, he's going to kill three thousand, and what he did at the very end was more than he did in his own lifetime. But the one thing that Samson would never do, listen, he would never yield his life to what he knew God wanted him to do.

And secondly, he would never yield his life to the Spirit of God speaking to him. In other words, he resisted the voice of God, he ran from the commandments of God, and he constantly took things unto his own hands. And I think this year, we need to look what Samson did and we need to make a covenant that we want to go a different way. We don't want to live in the flesh, we don't want to destroy relationships, we want to build relationships. And one of the things that is hard and probably the key to the

whole study tonight – it’s hard for strong people to stay humble, and humility brings the strength. And when you can bring humility and strength together, God will use you for the rest of your life. But the moment to begin to think it’s you, God is going to begin to do things in your life that you can’t believe. And it was Jonah that had an attitude but it was God that sent the worm to get his attention. And so we read here in verse 19 **But God**, and that is the key I think more than anything else, it’s a year that God has stretched us, it’s a year that God has worked in our life but out of it all and here is the key, out of it all, we need to leave it in God’s hands and we all need to say it was God’s faithfulness that got us through and it was the goodness of God that gave us the ability to grow in spite of who we are and it’s always been that way. You remember there in the very beginning, it said that the world was without form and void but God by His Spirit brought light, and so when there is chaos, and there’s void, once again it’s the Spirit of God that brings order and consistency within our life.

And you remember when Abimelech was lied to by Abraham, Abraham was now making a lie about his wife that she was his sister, Abimelech took her, he was now going to sleep with this woman named Sarah, and God woke him up and the bible says, but God stopped Abimelech (Genesis 20). It’s always God stopping men from doing wrong things and trying to redeem His saints to do the right things. It was the same with Joseph, he was sold into bondage but then Joseph stood before the people – his own brethren, his own brothers, eleven of them, and he said you thought to do me evil but God sought to do me good (Genesis 50). And it was God that brought me down to Egypt so I would be able to feed the family for the rest of their life – it was God. And it was Paul that was thrown in the prison but it was God that came and stood by him that night. And you remember the Bible says we were lost in sin, alienated from God but God in His riches has saved us by His grace – and so it’s never who I am. And so I need to look back and see some of the failures in my life, some of the great things in my life. But overall it has been God’s faithfulness again in my life. But this year I believe that I need to give God more honor, and more praise, and more adoration for

what He's done in and through our life and that's what we want to take a look at in a interesting way.

Three things I want to share with you tonight. Three things for you to stick in your mind and your heart very simply and we'll look at just simply chapters 13, 14, and 15 (Judges 13-15). We're not want to look at verses because I've taught it already but I want to give you a little bit of an exhortation, a heart, kind of bring you back up to speed where we were so when we hit the ground next Thursday, we can start verse by verse through chapter 16 again. So in chapter 13 the number one rule that we learned was "he had to stop running". In other words, he was running away from the call of God upon his life – Samson. And I think that when we look back this last year, the number one thing that we have done is we have run away from responsibility. It might be in the home, it might be in business, it might be in responsibility of how we do things, or how we do things ethically, or how the standard we have in our life. But we have a tendency as people to run away from the things that God is calling us to do. And God will say to you it's time for you to love in a different way – unconditional love. It's time for you to be forgiving, or it's time for you to let go of your pride, or it's time for you to accept the responsibility or to repent. And what we do is we run, and we don't face reality. Here we find in chapter 13 that Samson had some things going for him in a very powerful way. Number one, his birth was unique. You remember it was the angel that came to mom and dad and said, you're going to have a child and this child is going to be special. He is going to be groomed to be the servant of the Almighty God, he is going to be a Nazirite, and he is going to be separate; he is going to have certain things that he cannot do. And the angels spoke to his mother and said it is going to start with you. She also accepted that, so she did not violate her pregnancy with wine or touching dead things or allowing certain things into her life. In other words, she sanctified herself for this birth. So we find that first of all, he had a very unique birth and very unique parents, both of them were really committed to the Lord. But he also had a very unique lifestyle. He understood that God had called him

to separation. He understood that God had challenged him and demanded him that he would be sanctified, set apart for something very special within his life. And not only that, but we also realize that he had a unique strength. So he had a unique birth, he had a unique strength that he was able to take a lion and rip that lion apart; he was able to chase three hundred foxes and catch them and tie their tails together; he was able to take a thousand men and slew them and kill them and stack their bodies; he was able to take the gates of the city and put them on his back and walk twenty miles and stick them on the top of the hill out of his spite; and he was able to take these two pillars and pull them down and to destroy 3,000 people. The man was gifted and he knew it, he knew the call of God upon his life, his mother, his father taught him. The Spirit of God came upon him, God showed him over and over and over again about what God wanted to do and God vindicated his life and God gave him the ability to do supernatural things – but he didn't want it. And I think sometimes, that is where we are. God has spoken to you for years about the things He wants to do in your life and all He's asking you to do is to be separate and sanctified and holy before Him. In other words, to build a relationship, to have something between you and God which is far greater than anything you could ever enjoy in this earth. But somehow the things of this world pull us, and we think what are we going to have to give up? And we're going to be committed, and we're going to have to have this low life, and we're going to have to do these things and...you are missing the point. If God Himself is calling you, if God Himself is calling you from that heavenly calling, then that calling is the most important gift in your whole life. And I'd rather have you in the will of God doing trash pick up for the Torrance district rather than being a billionaire out of God's will and being just wiped out spiritually in your life. Now you might want to be a billionaire but it might take your heart away from God. What is God's will for your life? What is God speaking to you? And there is no doubt that God has said certain things. Hey! Get involved, pray for people, reach out. You know I am just kind of busy, you know I just. Listen! He knew what God wanted, he saw the giftings in his life, he witnessed the power of God upon his life, but what came down to the nitty-gritty, he refused to surrender. In

other words, he dishonored God and not only did he dishonor God, he disgraced his parents. They raised him in a way that would be pleasing to the Lord, but he disgraced his parents and he defiled his purity, he flirted with the enemy, went after the women. He knew that he should not be in the Philistine country; he knew that he should not be messing with them, but he went anyway, he knew he shouldn't be in the vineyard, he went down. In other words, he constantly refused to give God what He wanted. And I think this year; my challenge for you is you have got to stop running and start giving God what He wants. I don't know what He wants! But I'm saying that the more you run, the more miserable you are going to be and God has a purpose and a plan in your life, and God wants to do wonderful things in you and through you, but He cannot use something that is unyielded and unsanctified for Him. And you heard His voice saying to you, don't go there, get out of there, get away, you have no business being with this person, change your attitude, deal with your humility or your pride. And yet we don't listen to what God is saying, we run away from what God is saying. He knew, I know what God wants and I'll tell you what, I know what God wants for you. That you would **present your body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, this is your reasonable service** (Romans 12:1). He had shown the old man what is good, and what is right. Humble yourself before God (Micah 6:8). **How can two walk together unless they be agreed.** (Amos 3:3) **Abide in me, and I in you** (John 17:21). In other words, we know what God wants – have we given that to Him? Well, we've been doing this, and taking care of the building program, and doing the business, and taking care of the marriage. Have you done what God has asked you to do? That is the number one question in your life. And if you say no, then you are running from meeting God head on. Well God might change my life, yes He will. And God might have me do something, yes He will. But let me tell you, the worst thing that can happen in your life is you get your way and God will give you leanest of soul because you don't know what's best for you – God knows. And so God gave him everything but he didn't yield his life. And finally, we find that his whole power was diluted. In other words, here is a man that ran from the calling of God and ended up with a harlot. Why

did he end up with a harlot? He ran from God. Why was he chasing the foxes? He ran from God. Why was he in the Philistine camp trying to marry a woman? He ran from God. Why was he so angry? He ran from God. Why is this guy telling Delilah the secret of God in his life? Because he ran from God and when you run from God, everything falls apart in your life – that is chapter 13.

And so my prayer this year is no more running. It's time just to stop and say, Lord whatever you want, whatever you want me to do, if it's time to go down to Mexico; if it's time for me to share with my neighbor; if it's time for me to change my behavior. I'm telling you, there are some exciting things happening. Saw the pool guy today, boy what a great attitude, you know what happened? He came to church, isn't that cool? He came to church, he said you look kind of small up there, I said, Oh that is Pastor Rob, it wasn't me. He couldn't see but he came to church! I've been trying to get him to church, what brought him to church? The Christmas present, he couldn't believe he came to church! You give, God blesses. Maybe it's time for you just to learn how to turn off the television and sit by the fire and talk to your wife. I don't want to do that, she's going to tell me everything wrong with me, well good – someone has to. And no one else lives with you, she lives with you, she knows you, she speaks the truth. No she doesn't. She speaks the truth. Why would she want to lie to you? Well, she does not like me. Well, why doesn't she like you? Because I lie all the time. Well listen, ask God to give you the strength to sit there and take it. I don't have to take it – No, but humility would. Jesus hung upon the cross, He took it. If He took it, you can't take it, you are pretty frightful. I don't like you Pastor Steve, go back and get sick again. This is the truth, you see you run from God and you are miserable, you are running here, running there, and you know what God wants. You run away from your financial responsibilities of giving to the church? You justify it and say that you don't have enough, and you are broke is exactly what the Bible says. You hold back and you have holes in your pocket. You give and you have more than you can give. I don't believe it, I know, it's faith, that has nothing to do with giving, that has everything to do with

trusting God with all your heart. How does God start teaching you how to trust Him? With something tangible in your life! Something that you have to sacrifice! If you can't sacrifice your money, you are not going to sacrifice your time, you're not going to sacrifice your heart, you're not going to sacrifice anything. Christ gave it all. I need to stop running, face the music, look at the situation and say, God you make me the man you want this year in my life. I'm not going to blame the staff, I'm not going to blame the pastor, I'm not going to blame the church, I'm not going to blame my ex-wife, I'm not going to blame the job, I'm not going to blame the country, I'm not even going to blame my rat. I'm going to blame me because I haven't been there. Heather one day looked at me and said to me, "you know the problem with you is that you blame me for everything, you need to get right with God." And she was right! Sometimes we just have such an easy way of running.

Secondly, I find in chapter 14 (Judges 14), second problem he had and the second thing I want to help you with this evening. Number one, I don't want you to run this year from what God wants in your life. But number two; I don't want you to resist what God has in your life. In other words, Samson ran from the calling of God. But number two; Samson resisted the authority of God in his life. Let me say that again. Samson resisted the authority of God in his life. In other words, he rejected God's authority, he didn't like authority, he hated authority, he hated to be told what to do, does that sound familiar? My dumb teachers, they gave me an F, well why did they give you an F? You deserve an F that is why they gave you an F. No, it's my dumb teachers. No! You are dumb because you haven't figured it out. In other words, we hate authority. Don't tell me how to do it; I'm not going to do it. What do you mean you are not going to do it? You can't tell me anything, you're right. But we don't yield to authority, we don't surrender, we have a chip on our shoulder. My wife tells me something, I don't like the way she tells me it. Well how is she supposed to say it? The Bible says, **Submit one to another in the fear of God, submitting one to another.** (Ephesians 5:21) In other words, we hate authority. We know we are to

clock out, we don't clock out; we know we are to check in, we don't check in; we know we are to call and tell somebody we're going to be late, we don't do it. In other words, we know we should do 55, what do we do? 55! We do 75-80. We know! We just like breaking things. And so all of a sudden we find him resisting authority. Let me tell you how it worked in chapter 14. You remember very simply, God told him what to do and what not to do but he didn't listen! God told him to separate himself unto the Lord, he was hanging out in the Philistine country; and God told him not to go into the vineyard, he was hanging out in the vineyard; God told him not to touch anything dead, he was reaching his hand inside of a dead lion; God told him not to touch anything dead, he picked up the jawbone of the donkey. In other words, you couldn't tell him anything, he had his own mind. You think, well that's tough, that's strong, that's neat, that's what America is made of – that's stupid. You are fighting against God. There is a time to be strong, there is a time to be humble, there is a time to stand, there is a time to yield, there is a time to stand up and speak, there is a time to be silent (Ecclesiastes 3:7). And when God speaks, we listen. You do not challenge God's authority? And when all of a sudden you feel that you have to challenge everybody's authority, you did not ask me right! You did not smile when you ask me! You did not say please! Time out! Jesus took the sins of the world and He said **"Father forgive them for they don't know what they do."** (Luke 23:34) I think the greatest cursed of this generation is we resist and hate authority. And so we fight. You have to read your Bible – I don't want to read it. You have to go to church – I don't want to go to church. You have to give – I don't want to give. Well what do you want? I want to drink and have a beer, well then go do that. But if you're going to love the Lord with all your heart, were going to go God's way. It's not my authority; it's not your authority, its God's authority. What does He say in the Bible? You say this, Pastor Steve – No. This is what God says – we're to humble ourselves, and yield, and go God's way but we resist. How we love to resist and all of a sudden the one thing we like the most are our dogs because they don't resist us. Cats we hate them, because they resist, dog will always come wonderful thing, God made him a dog. And he not only rejected God's

commandments by refusing God's law but he rejected the Spirit, the Spirit was saying to him "don't go, stay back" he wouldn't listen. The Spirit had to send a lion to get his attention. But also, he rejected his mom and dad's commandment. Son, you shouldn't be down in Timnath, you don't need to marry, she is a Philistine. Isn't there anything here? Get this woman for me. Listen to him! Get this woman for me! You see, he's crazy. And when you run from God, you begin to demand, you expect, you have to have. You see, a Christian when he is submitted to God, he knows that God will give the revenge, and God will do the work, and all he needs to do is rest in the Kingdom of God. And so not only was he resisting but also he resisted the people of God. There was no leadership in his life, he never took them to war, he never led them. In other words, here was a guy that his whole life was resisting and you see no fruit except revenge. And I think that sometimes we come out of the world, we get saved, and we have given this up to God, but we got a little chip right here. You can't talk to me that way, you can't do that, I don't want to do that! And all of a sudden...you know, it's that crazy. People come to church and they don't want to, all of a sudden stand up and...we say, you know we don't do that here. Well, why not? Well we just don't! And why do you want to change what we're doing? And they get all mad, well why do you go to church if you can't stand up? But why make...you know people are fighting. You go where God is leading and you enjoy what God is doing, but God hasn't called you to resist and to get angry and to fight and to challenge and to be aggressive and to tell your kids and tell your wife and tell your date, get this and get that and man...I tell you. All of a sudden it sounds like the world. Maybe you've been running in 2004. Maybe you look back and you realized, you know what? Maybe I've resisted, maybe I fought over certain things I shouldn't. Let me tell you what happens just between me and you. When you resist God's authority, you go down. And you remember in this chapter 14 he went down to Timnath, and the word down is in that verse, in Judges 14:1. He went down, he went down to see this woman and then it says in chapter 14 he went down into the vineyard, interesting! And then it says in chapter 14, he went down to a feast, his wedding feast, he was going down. And then it says that he went down in

anger. In other words, the whole chapter is about who? Samson. Doing what? Going down. Why? Because he's resisting authority. And when I resist my devotions, and when I resist worshiping the Lord, and when I resist loving people, I am going what? Down. Oh no, I'm not! Yes you are. Because you are fighting against God. Why? Because you're running! Why? Because you will not yield your life to the things of God. And so we find that he rejected and he went down. In other words, he went down to Timnath, he was in the wrong place. Have you been in the wrong place in 2004? Yeah! Well how did you get there? I don't know! I'll tell you, can I tell you? You ran from God! When you are in Tarshish you should be where? Nineveh. What are you doing in Tarshish? I ran from God. What's John Mark doing over here? He ran from Paul. In other words, every time you run, you're going to find yourself in the wrong place, he was down in Timnath. But not only was he in the wrong place, he was with the wrong people, he was hanging out with the Philistines, doing his wedding, a wedding that if he would have got married, his ministry would have ended. Therefore, God had to make sure he didn't get married. You say that is terrible! It's wonderful! When God challenges you, and protects you, and stops you, you say, well I disagree. Would you let a child, a two-year-old play with a razor blade? No. Don't be silly Pastor Steve. And sometimes God doesn't give you things because you are going to hurt yourself. And so God takes them away and you throw the rattle, and begin to move the crib, and you begin to throw your tantrum, and it is just like a child. And Paul says we are no longer children, we ought to be growing up. You see grown up people they don't run, they face their problems, and number two they don't resist, they could be wrong. It's just a possibility, I could be wrong. Not much, but possibility. See 2004 if I look back I know I've made some bad decisions and I'm willing to look at that and say help me. I don't want to go in the 2005 running away from what God wants in my life. Maybe God wants more, maybe God wants to push me more, maybe God wants me to sacrifice all my time, maybe God wants me to be away from my wife more in 2005, maybe God really wants me to go for it in 2005. Ah, see I'm kind of tired, my back...oh my head, I can't breath. Well, if I want God's best I'm going to do what God tells me

to. And I'm not going to resist, I'm not going to go my way. And the Bible says that he went down and he said, You get me that woman, I want that woman for my pleasure. Listen, I want my pleasure – you are going down.

And finally we find that not only did he go down to Timnath, he went down to the vineyard, and in the vineyard, he had to kill that lion. But you know what is sad, folks? After he killed that Lion, you remember the story, few days later he went back to that lion, he wanted to see that lion, he wanted to look at that lion, he wanted to reach his hand inside and grab that honey. Sometimes we sin and we go back and do it again and we can't stay away from it. It draws us in, it is sweet but it is death, it is honey in a carcass. And he is now touching. You see he started by looking and then he was talking to that woman and then he was going to marry and now he is in the vineyard, now he is killed an animal, now he is touching the animal; he is going down. Why? He run, he is resisting. There is a time to run, you flee from certain situations; there's time to resist and Satan will flee but you don't resist against God and you don't run against God.

And then we find also, the third thing, we find very simply we have to stop reacting, we have to stop reacting. And I see that in chapter 15 in a wonderful way. He had to stop running in chapter 13, he needed to stop resisting in chapter 14, and then in chapter 15 he needed to stop reacting. And when I look back, I realize that sometimes we definitely react when we ought not to be reacting. And I find very simply he rejected God's way. And so in chapter 13 he rejected God's call, in chapter 14 he rejected God's authority, but in chapter 15, this is the key, he rejected God's ways. And God has given you a way, and God has given me a way but I disagree with that way, he says, you are to love, I don't want to love, I hate. And you are to forgive; I don't want to, I got bitterness in my heart. And you are to give. No way, they owe me. Listen to you? No one owes you anything, Jesus paid for all your sins. I've been running, I've been resisting, and now I'm reacting. And it's a sad thing when you find brothers and sisters

reacting. Well he said this, and she said that, and he felt that, and they felt this, and they didn't do that, and they didn't do this, and all of a sudden Satan has me reacting and not worshipping. And I think if you look back in 2004 there's been a lot of running, there has been a lot of resisting, and there has been a whole bunch, a whole bunch of reacting. Excited, jumping, saying things, doing things that have not been Spirit led. And we get tense, and we get excited, and things don't go right, and we see things begin to fall apart but a Spirit-filled man and woman would just act different. They would go God's way, they would ask for the peace of God to be upon their life and they would respond like Christ. And if Christ would respond that way to me, man I would be a mess. And that's why there are so many messes in the church because of how we react. Someone has to stop and say, "You know something?" If I don't run, and I don't resist the Spirit of God, then I don't really have to react because I want to make sure I do it God's way. And so we find in chapter 15 he rejected God's way and he was out of control and we ended up three months ago right here. And you kind of remember, let me refresh your mind, he became so angry at the wedding that he left and because he left, the father of the bride got even with Samson and gave Samson's wife to the best man. Well, that kind of really ticked off Samson. So Samson in revenge goes out and burns the fields, the Philistines...remember, he takes the 300 foxes, ties the tails together? Animal life back then would be pretty upset with him...sets the fields on fire and just destroys them. The Philistines can't believe he did this so the Philistines react, they go and find Samson's wife-to-be whose now married and they burned her alive. Well Samson is now real upset, so Samson goes out and finds a bunch of guys and just wipes them out, kills them. When all of a sudden, the Philistine army finds this out, they go into Judah and they begin to threaten Judah, and when Samson finds out, he now allows them to tie his hands and then he kills a thousand of them and now they are really upset. And so they bribe this woman Delilah, and all of a sudden Delilah hands Samson over and they pluck his eyes out and that really bums Samson out because now he can't see so he pulls down the temple. I mean, the whole chapter is about you did this, I'm going to do that. You did this to

me, I'm going to really that, I'm going to get even, I'm going to make your life miserable, I'm not going to look at you, smile at you, look at you, think about you, I'm going to let you know I can destroy you with my mind. And so you have marriages, they're living together but there's no love. You have staff, serving together but they don't love each other. You have congregations hanging out, "have go to get out of here I don't want to see nobody." You might get married! Well, I'm married already, don't want to do that. In other words, there is such a tension and I just want to share with you. I think the tension is because I'm running from God. And when you find God's peace and find God's will, no matter what happens you can do it, God will give you the strength. But like Samson, even in this 15<sup>th</sup> chapter, he says, "**I slew a thousand.**" He didn't do nothing, he never did anything, all he ever did was mess things up. It was God that gave him the power. It was God that gave him the supernatural ability and not once did he ever give God the credit. And finally, when he became thirsty, he challenges God, "you never help me at all!" And in God's kindness, God gave him water.

And I just want to say tonight that no matter how you feel about God He's always been there for you. He has listened, He has put up, He has helped you, He has supported you, He has watched over you, He has protected you, and He has kept you together all these years. And there is no reason to run from His loving touch, and there is no reason for us to resist His calling, and there is no reason for us to react out of anger. And that is why we have to say goodbye to Samson – a man of the flesh.

And this year, this year is the year I believe that the Spirit of God is going to come upon our church, upon this country, and God's going to do a work. But God is looking for men and women who will stop running, they will stop resisting, and they will stop reacting and when God has that, it is going to be a wonderful day. What do I do? Well, you might just want to stop and see what God has for you, I think it will blow your mind. I think it's better than anything you are doing now in your whole life. And

secondly, you can resist but I think you want the power in you and around you and through you because I think you want to resist sin, and Satan, and the devil. I don't think you really want to resist God, I mean He's on your side; you want Him on your side. And about this thing reacting, it gets a lot of people put in prison, it ruins a lot of businesses, it destroys a lot of marriages, it's just not working. This year, no more running, no more fighting, and no more challenging. Let's yield to what God wants, Amen?

**Closing Prayer:** Father we thank You. Lord, for Your heart in this book. And God I thank You for Samson. And even in all this, I am reminded how that Lord, You gave that one incredible promise that he goes down in the Hall of Faith (Hebrews 11). And Lord, it boggles our minds, but Lord, there was faith in his life, there were times that you moved and just moved in a powerful way. But Lord, even with all the right things, it is still our choice to accept. And even with Your power to deliver us, it is still our choice to decide. And even with Your anointing, it is still our power to decide if we desire to be pure. Lord, we don't understand why the vineyard pulled him so hard. And we don't understand why the women of the Philistines drew his soul. Father, we don't know why he was so angry always wanting to kill people even for their clothing. Father, how lonely of a man he was, never leading or developing or doing, it was all about him. Everything was about him and he knew it. Finally You had no other course but to shock him, and that day he jumped up knowing in himself that he would be able to destroy the enemy and You removed Your strength. Oh they took him, they tied him, they plucked his eyes out, and they mocked him. Every single time I take the glory, every single time I try to do it myself, Lord, You sometimes just remove things to remind us how weak we really are, but with You we can do all things. And so this year Lord, we want to come alive. Lord, we want to run into Your hands. Lord, we want to resist the evil one, not You. Father, we want to react by the Spirit of the Living God, not in the flesh. So take us, make us, mold us, and give us a great year, In Jesus Name, Amen.

