

SERMON OUTLINE

GOD'S PERSON AND MAN'S SELFISH PASSIONS

JUDGES 14:1-20 | REV. LITO VILLORIA

Despite God's gracious calling and consecration in Judges 13, Samson's story begins with compromise. Rather than seeking a godly wife, he desired a Philistine woman—defying both parental counsel and covenant boundaries. Though chosen by God, Samson chose what was "right in his own eyes," revealing a heart ruled by self.

Samson's selfish desires were not hidden, they were pursued with urgency. His parents protested, but Samson insisted—showing no concern for God's will or Israel's purity. Yet, God allowed this, not because He approved, but because He would use even Samson's folly as an occasion to act against the Philistines, whom Israel had failed to confront (Judges 14:1-4).

As he traveled, a lion attacked Samson, and the Spirit of the

LORD empowered him to kill it barehanded. But, rather than giving glory to God, Samson kept silent. Later, he returned, found honey in the carcass, and violated his Nazirite vow—touching a dead body and eating unclean food (Judges 14:8-9). He shared the honey with his parents but withheld the truth, revealing deeper spiritual compromise (Judges 14:5-9).

At the wedding feast, Samson proposed a riddle rooted in his private experience with the lion. When the Philistines could not answer, they coerced his wife to betray him. Her tears wore Samson down, and in a burst of rage, he struck down thirty men in Ashkelon to pay his debt—violence rooted not in justice, but in wounded pride. Humiliated, Samson returned home, and his wife was given to another man (Judges 14:10-20).

This chapter highlights the tension between God's sovereignty and man's selfishness. Though the Spirit empowered Samson, his life was marked by impulse, deception and revenge. God was present, but Samson was not aligned with God's person.

God is sovereign, but He also desires surrender. His purposes will prevail, yet His people are still accountable. When we chase selfish passions, we may still be used, but not approved.

Sermon Focus: Samson was used by God, but his story is a warning. We must not confuse God's use of us with His approval of our lives. Let us align our passions with God's person, and submit our strength to His sanctifying work. ✨

UNITY IN CORPORATE WORSHIP

REV. REVIN VASALLO

In leading God's people in worship, we never lead alone. We lead as a team. That's why unity is not just important; IT is essential. Without unity, our service becomes fragmented, but with unity, our worship can resound with one voice to glorify Christ.

As I look back on my own journey, I see how unity has always been necessary in different seasons of life. As a child, I played with my neighbors on the street. The games we enjoyed most were team games, and the fun only lasted when everyone played together. Later, when I became a chess player, I realized that even an individual game like chess becomes a team sport in leagues like NCAA and UAAP.

When I entered the construction industry, I saw how unity is critical between engineers and architects. We designed layouts for air conditioning, ventilation, and fire protection. If engineers and architects fail to cooperate, projects suffer. I also served in the worship ministry during those years, and again I discovered that whether in a band or among singers, unity is vital.

Over and over, life has taught me that unity is essential in every sphere. And yet, unity is never easy. Sometimes unity happens naturally, but more often, it requires compromise, conflicts, and concessions.

The apostle Paul recognized this challenge. In Romans 15, he exhorted believers to live in harmony. Harmony, as we know in music, means blending DIFFERENT notes to create ONE beautiful sound. Paul knew the church was full of differences—different gifts,

talents, levels of maturity, and cultural backgrounds. These differences could easily cause division, but Paul prayed that God would grant them harmony.

Differences make unity challenging. We all see this in life. Introverts prefer smaller, familiar circles, while extroverts thrive in larger groups. Engineers focus on function, while architects prioritize beauty. Neither is wrong, but without unity, their differences clash instead of complement. The truth is we cannot eliminate differences—they are part of how God designed us. But here's the key: a common goal sparks unity.

Why did Paul want the Romans to live in harmony? He gives the answer in Romans 15:5-6:

"May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The goal is simple but profound: that with one voice, believers may glorify God. That's why unity matters. Not for our convenience, not to avoid conflict, but to glorify Christ.

In the Old Testament, different people have different roles in worship. First Chronicles 9 describes priests, musicians, gatekeepers, bakers, and caretakers—all serving different functions but aiming at the same goal: to honor God. In our modern context, we also have different teams—the music team, ushers, production, tech, and media. Each one contributes to an environment that helps God's people worship. Though our roles differ, our

calling is the same: to glorify Christ together.

Think again about harmony in music. To sing in harmony, you need two things: to listen and to blend. Listening means paying attention to others, not just yourself. Blending means adjusting your own part so the whole becomes beautiful. The same is true in ministry—we must learn to listen to one another, to consider each other, and to adjust for the sake of unity.

It's striking that Paul prayed to the "God of endurance and encouragement" when asking for unity. Why not the God of peace or the God of harmony? Because Paul knew that harmony requires endurance and encouragement. Differences won't vanish, but with endurance, we learn to bear with one another; and with encouragement, we strengthen one another when ministry gets hard.

A common goal may bring us together initially, but endurance and encouragement will keep us united for the long run. Conflicts will come. Preferences will clash. But these challenges do not mean we lack unity. They mean we must lean on God's endurance and practice encouragement daily.

So, GCF South Metro Church, remember, unity is God's desire for His people. Let us continually be united so that we may cultivate a culture of endurance and encouragement. Let us choose to listen, to blend, to bear with one another, and to strengthen one another. As we do, we will reflect Paul's prayer: different people, different roles, but one heart, one voice, and one goal—to glorify Christ. ✨

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