

Unbelievable

Episode 1: Left-handed Justice

INTRODUCTION - Why Is THAT In The Bible?

Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16-17

The question we must ask is _____ is all Scripture "useful"?

THE STORY - Left-Handed Terrorism

Judges 3:12-31

- **Context:** c. 1314-1295 BCE, continued fighting for the promised land after their success at Jericho.
- **Cycle Of Failure & Forgiveness:** Disobedience → Judgement → Repentance → Deliverance → Disobedience → Judgement → Repentance → Deliverance → etc.
- **Eglon:** The "fat calf" king of the Moabites who conquered Jericho.
- **Ehud:** A one-man, one-handed, unexpected assassination squad.
- **Deception:** Is lying sometimes acceptable?
- **Double-Entendre:** "I have a message (= an unknown thing) from God for you."
- **Sexual Imagery:** Privacy, blade, thigh, belly/womb, thrust (same as in 4:21), etc.
- **Symbolic Male Rape Scene?:** The ultimate desecration of an enemy king.
- **Assassination:** Graphic destabilizing violence akin to modern terrorism.
- **Escape:** The dirty business of making a clean getaway.
- **Discovery:** How long does it take a king to go potty?
- **Attack:** Catching the enemy unprepared because of emotional chaos.
- **Idols Left Intact:** If not rejected and destroyed, the cycle continues and the next chapter is inevitable.
- **Peace:** ...But only until 4:1.

LOOKING DEEPER - Reading Below The Lines

TAKE OUT #1 - Don't just follow the Bible; follow Jesus!

The Bible is not just God's message to us, but also the story of human _____ to follow God's message. Keep this in mind when reading.

Judges 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25; John 5:39-40

TAKE OUT #2 - God prefers to use "left-handed" people!

God tends to partner with people who have obvious _____ in order to accomplish his plans.

1 Corinthians 1:17-31

CONCLUSION - Nothing Is Ever Just A Means To An End

Ecclesiastes 9:10; Colossians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 10:31

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS

Warming Up...

1. After briefly reviewing this week's message, share one new thing you learned or one thing that most challenged, convicted, or encouraged you.

Look To The Book...

2. Read our main text, Judges 3:12-30. a) What verse stands out to you the most in this passage? Why? b) Notice the pattern in verses 7-15 (a pattern which recurs throughout the book of Judges). Do you ever see the same pattern of Disobedience → Judgement → Repentance → Deliverance → Disobedience → etc. in your life? How so? c) In what ways was Ehud's left-handedness an advantage in this story? d) What aspects of your life sometimes cause you to feel like a left-handed person in a tribe of right-handed people? e) Are there ways God could use the "left-handedness" in your life as an advantage for his purposes? f) Why do you think the Bible includes the kind of detail it does in verses like 3:20-25? g) How do you think we should go about telling children these stories? h) Israel was prepared to kill the Moabites, but apparently did not even consider destroying their idols, which may have served to perpetuate the cycle of failure. Does this remind you of any area or aspect of your life? What needs to change?
3. The tribalism of the Old Testament led to increasing violence (as Judges aptly illustrates). Identity was established and defended based on birth and bloodline. a) In light of this, what is the radical significance of Jesus' words in Matthew 12:46-50 (Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21)? Talk about it. b) What "tribe" (people group, whether set apart by ethnicity, age, gender, status, intelligence, appearance, or other things) do you find most difficult to love like Jesus?

So What?...

4. Read over the three Scriptures in the "CONCLUSION" of the message above. In light of this week's Home Church discussion, what is one area of your life that you feel most convicted to change? What is one thing you can do this week to partner with God to bring the change you want to see? Pray for each other concerning this.

Bruxy Cavey @ The Meeting House - Sunday, July 9 / 16, 2004