

I'll admit, I enjoy a fair amount of mayhem. I'm not particularly proud of this, but one of my favorite characters to study is Samson.
He's just so cool and so ready to lay down the law.

The Law is our tutor or guardian to lead us to Christ and to help us in our faith.

I'd like to take a few moments and just compare and contrast John and Samson.
I picked them both because there are a few items that make them stand out as so similar.

They had similar beginnings and similar endings.

Judges 9

Luke 1

What lessons can we learn from each of them and how can we improve our lives in Christ by looking at each of them?

- Faith
- Strength
- Results

Samson – Judges 13-16

Mother was barren, Samson was to be a Nazirite from birth – or from the womb.

Dad catches wind of it and just like in John's case, sort of wants more proof.

Dad also wants to know "what's the plan? What's his mission to be?"

The reply is pretty cool:

And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. She may not eat of anything that comes from the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. All that I commanded her let her observe."
(Judges 13:13-14 ESV)

Samson is such a tragic, flawed hero, I can immediately relate to him!

Wanted to marry a Philistine – the people he was at war with. . .

Then he came up and told his father and mother, "I saw one of the daughters of the Philistines at Timnah. Now get her for me as my wife." But his father and mother said to him, "Is there not a woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she is right in my eyes."

His father and mother did not know that it was from the LORD, for he was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines. At that time the Philistines ruled over Israel.
(Judges 14:2-4 ESV)

His parents reminded him of the right thing to do, and then I was reminded of the point of the lesson – "it was from The LORD, for he was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines"

He was used to by the LORD to judge Israel for 20 years

Avenge his eyes in the end. . .

Then Samson called to the LORD and said, "O Lord GOD, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes."
(Judges 16:28 ESV)

John's might on the other hand was in his words (Samson in his deeds).

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."
(Matthew 3:7-10 ESV)

Samson's words were not that powerful.

Parents, Delilah, riddle

John explained by The LORD – Matt 11

What did you go to see?

John's power and strength in the palace – not afraid to say what was true to Herod

Matt 14, Mk 6:14-29

for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.
(Mark 6:20 ESV)

John realized his place and realized there was one mightier than he

And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."
(Mark 1:7-8 ESV)

Samson seems to rely on his strength quite a bit and taunts people with his might. . .

What can we learn?

What conclusions?

We are all like Samson just a bit, and hopefully growing to be more like John.

The good news is, even in our Samson like time, The LORD can use us for His purpose. If He can do it with Samson. . . 😊

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
(Romans 8:28 ESV)

Samson had some pretty concrete results in terms of enemy KIA.

John had a more subtle effect. He did not change Herod at the end when John was in prison.

Maybe the same way we can't go on results alone at the end of John's life, we shouldn't go on results alone at the end of Samson's life. Samson did after all make it to the Hebrews 11 roll call... 😊

John

I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."
(Luke 7:28 ESV)

Just as these two Nazirites, we are to separate ourselves for the LORD

Numbers 6 –

And the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head at the entrance of the tent of meeting and shall take the hair from his consecrated head and put it on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offering.
(Numbers 6:18 ESV)

Just like us – remove the filth from our hearts.

But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.
(Romans 2:29 ESV)