**CREEKSIDE’S TEACHING NOTES for Sunday, July 8, 2018**

**SAMSON**

**If Only**

Judges 13-17

Samson’s end-of-life-mantra was “IF ONLY”.

Let’s not let it be ours.

• Samson was a Judge.

• Samson was a Nazirite.

• Samson was gifted with supernatural strength.

Here was a man with incredible potential

who also had incredible weaknesses.

Three dangerous attitudes often shaped Samson’s decisions

and ordered the way he acted.

LUST/DESIRE “I want it!”

ENTITLEMENT “I deserve it!”

PRIDE “I can handle it!”

**THOSE ATTITUDES BLINDED HIM AND LED HIM TO HIS FATEFUL END.**

1. Samson Abused the Grace of God:

**One day Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute. He went in to spend the night with her. The people of Gaza were told, “Samson is here!” So they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the city gate. They made no move during the night, saying, “At dawn we’ll kill him.”**

**But Samson lay there only until the middle of the night. Then he got up and took hold of the doors of the city gate, together with the two posts, and tore them loose, bar and all. He lifted them to his shoulders and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.**

Judges 16:1-3

We abuse the grace of God when we mistake God’s patience as God’s permission.

Just because God doesn’t right away call us out on our sin does not mean it has not hurt us or hurt others or hurt him.

1. Samson Denied the Affects of Sin:

**Some time later, he fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah. The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, “See if you can lure him into showing you the secret of his great strength and how we can overpower him so we may tie him up and subdue him. Each one of us will give you eleven hundred shekels of silver.”**

**So Delilah said to Samson, “Tell me the secret of your great strength and how you can be tied up and subdued.”**

Then she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when you won’t confide in me? This is the third time you have made a fool of me and haven’t told me the secret of your great strength.”With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was sick to death of it.So he told her everything. “No razor has ever been used on my head,” he said, “because I have been a Nazirite dedicated to God from my mother’s womb. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man.”

When Delilah saw that he had told her everything, she sent word to the rulers of the Philistines, “Come back once more; he has told me everything.” So the rulers of the Philistines returned with the silver in their hands.After putting him to sleep on her lap, she called for someone to shave off the seven braids of his hair, and so began to subdue him. And his strength left him.

Then she called, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!”

He awoke from his sleep and thought, “I’ll go out as before and shake myself free.” But he did not know that the Lord had left him.

Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding grain in the prison.

Judges 16:1-6; 15-21

Samson was blind to God’s grace and sin’s impact before he was blinded by the Philistines.

