

Sunday morning
teaching plan

Date: 22nd June

TITLE:	Samson :
THEME:	Samson was gifted with strength but struggled to make good choices
AIM:	YPs to understand God gives us all gifts and we must use them wisely

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Samson was a remarkable yet complicated judge. He is known for his extraordinary strength and yet plagued by his own weaknesses. As we explore his life, we will discover important lessons about God-given gifts, the dangers of making poor choices, the snares of the enemy, and the amazing grace and mercy of God. Samson is renowned for his exceptional physical strength given to him by God. However, despite his divine gifts, Samson often grappled with rebelliousness and moral compromise. He frequently went against God's commandments, giving in to temptations, eventually resulting in his downfall.

WARM UP

Thumb war... Explain thumb war. Find a partner to play with. Start..." 1234 I declare a thumb war!"

Winner pairs up with another winner until a single winner is declared!

Alternatively ... do the same with Rock, paper, scissors

MAIN TEACHING

Activity 1: What do you know about the story of Samson? What do you think it can teach us?

Watch Youth for Christ video: <https://youtu.be/K2K1AXFxug0>

Story is too long to read... but here are the highlights (see PPT)

1. What do you notice about Samson in the story? Did he make good choices?
2. What are the things that we have to make choices about in our daily lives?

Key teaching point: Samson was not perfect, he had weaknesses and made poor decisions. Despite his divine calling and supernatural strength, Samson provides an example of making poor choices and disobedience to God. He flouted God's commands by marrying a Philistine woman (Judges 14:1-3), visiting a prostitute (Judges 16:1), and allowing his enemies to ensnare him through his misplaced trust in Delilah (Judges 16:4-20).

We face many daily temptations that try to make us compromise our faith. Things like viewing unsuitable content online, watching inappropriate TV, or participating in risky behaviour. Peer pressure can compel us to align with popular trends rather than standing firm in what we believe is right or wrong.

We must stay alert, follow scripture's commands, and prioritize our relationship with God above all.

It is not always easy!

Activity 2: God's gifts are unique and have a purpose.

1. If you had a super power what would it be? Why did you choose it?
2. We all have gifts and talents. God gives special gifts to those who believe in Him and sometimes enhances our natural gifting. What could be your gifting? (see PPT for ideas and create a discussion around what could my gifting be?)
3. How did Samson misuse his gifting and talents?

Key teaching point: God wants us to use our natural abilities and talents and the gifts he gives us to bring Him glory and honour. It is important to recognise our talents and not be embarrassed by them. We must be confident in them and learn how to use them for God's glory. Samson used his strength for his own ends. He became arrogant and showed off. We must strive to remain humble and focussed on serving God.

Activity 3: Look out for Satan's traps! Read Judges 16:4-21 OR watch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcTgzQAeuZo>

1. How was Samson tricked into giving away his secret?
2. What are the things that can trick us into making poor choices?

Key teaching point: Delilah was a crafty and deceptive person who tricked Samson. She asked him three times about his strength's secret, employing different manipulative strategies each time, like feeding his ego or implying it was a trust test. When all else failed, she played on his feelings. Eventually, Samson fell for her tricks. The Bible warns us that our enemy, Satan, is always trying to trip us up and lure us into sin. He uses fear, deceit, and lies to twist our thoughts, emotions and actions, drawing us away from God's commands. His ultimate aim is to make us turn our backs on God and choose a sinful path. 1 Peter 5:8 tells us, "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."

We should always be on guard against three forces: the devil, our own sinful nature (the flesh), and the world around us. These forces aim to distract us from God and His plans for our lives. Like Samson, we can easily fall for these traps, so we must be vigilant and rooted in our faith.

TAKEAWAY

The God of second chances

Read Judges 16:23-31

God gave Samson a second chance to bring glory and honour to God, even though Samson had made so many mistakes! He ends up a hero, doing as God intended from the beginning! He is not the only one in the Bible to get a second chance ... Jonah, David, Peter, Paul...

You too can have a second chance. God is always ready to forgive. Lamentations 3:22-23, ***"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."***

The story of Samson reminds us that God has a plan for us, from even before we are born. Even though we might fail Him and be disobedient, God is willing to forgive us. We must learn to use the gifts He has given responsibly and for His glory. We must stay alert and avoid the traps set for us by those who would see us fail in our faith!