

# Judges 14-16

## Discussion Guide: Judges 14–16

**Theme:** *Strength Without Surrender — The Tragedy of a Divided Heart*

### Big Idea

God may still use us in our strength, but a life driven by self instead of surrender will ultimately collapse.

### Opening Icebreaker

- Why do you think people can be gifted, strong, or successful—and still make destructive choices?

## Discussion Questions

### 1. What is the first thing Samson wants in 14:1–3, and why is it concerning?

**Leader Notes:**

- A Philistine woman
- “Get her for me...”
- Driven by desire, not discernment
- Directly against God’s design

### 2. What does 14:4 mean when it says this was “from the Lord”?

**Leader Notes:**

- God is sovereign even over Samson’s flawed choices
- This does NOT mean God approves of sin
- God works through broken decisions to accomplish His purposes

### 3. What pattern begins to emerge in Samson’s life in chapter 14?

**Leader Notes:**

- Impulsiveness
- Self-centered decisions
- Treating serious things casually (Nazirite boundaries, relationships)

#### **4. How does Samson handle conflict throughout chapter 14?**

**Leader Notes:**

- Anger-driven reactions
- Revenge escalates quickly
- No restraint or wisdom

#### **5. In chapter 15, what motivates Samson's actions against the Philistines?**

**Leader Notes:**

- Personal revenge, not God's glory
- "As they did to me, so I have done to them"
- Cycle of retaliation

#### **6. How does God still work through Samson in chapter 15? What tension does this create?**

**Leader Notes:**

- God empowers him (Spirit comes upon him)
- Victory still comes
- Tension: God uses him, but Samson is not walking faithfully

#### **7. What do we learn about Samson's relationship with God in 15:18–19?**

**Leader Notes:**

- He cries out to God in need
- Knows where help comes from
- But this dependence seems situational, not consistent

#### **8. In chapter 16, what patterns continue or worsen in Samson's life?**

**Leader Notes:**

- Sexual immorality
- Arrogance ("I will go out as at other times...")
- Playing with danger
- Overconfidence in his strength

#### **9. What makes Samson's relationship with Delilah so dangerous?**

**Leader Notes:**

- Repeated compromise

- Ignoring clear warning signs
- Gradual surrender of what set him apart

## **10. What is the turning point in 16:20—and why is it so tragic?**

### **Leader Notes:**

- “He did not know that the Lord had left him”
- Spiritual blindness
- Assumed God’s presence without relationship
- This is the collapse moment

## **11. What happens at the end of Samson’s life (16:28–30)? What is redeemed—and what is not?**

### **Leader Notes:**

- Final act of dependence on God
- God grants strength one last time
- More enemies defeated in death than life
- Redemption, but still tragic

## **12. What does Samson’s life ultimately teach us about strength, calling, and surrender?**

### **Leader Notes:**

- Strength without surrender is dangerous
- Calling without obedience leads to collapse
- God can still work—but the cost is high

## **Closing Application**

- Where might you be relying on your strengths instead of walking in surrender?
- Are there areas where you are “playing with sin” or slowly compromising?
- Do you assume God’s presence... or are you actively walking with Him?

## **Gospel Connection (Leader Emphasis)**

- Samson is strong but undisciplined
- He is used by God—but ultimately undone by his own desires

### **Point to Jesus:**

- Jesus is the true and better Samson
- He uses His strength not for Himself, but to save others

- His death brings true and lasting victory—not just temporary deliverance

A strong line:

“Samson’s strength was used for himself until the very end. Jesus’ strength was always used for others—and that’s what makes Him the Savior we actually need.”

## **Leader Tip**

This week is powerful if you help people feel:

- The danger of drifting slowly
- The illusion of “I’m fine” while compromising
- The weight of wasted potential

But don’t leave them there—point clearly to:

- Grace that restores
- A Savior who never drifts