



Week of May 27, 2019: Judges Series: Shamgar (Judges 3:31)

Discussion Questions Set #1

“After Ehud came Shamgar son of Anath, who struck down six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad. He too saved Israel.” (Judges 3:31)

In sermon, we suggested that sometimes we mistake brevity for importance as we approach scripture – we assume that short, off-hand accounts cannot carry the weight of more lengthy and detailed passages. While we must be careful not to read too much into a short text, it is a key biblical study principle to consider all verses, accounts, and passages as important for interpretation and study.

1. Why do you think we tend to associate brevity with unimportance?
2. What happens to our study of Scripture when we read in this way? What happens specifically to the story of Shamgar if we read in this way?
3. This also highlights another key component of Bible study – the use of other resources. When we encounter a brief account, other sources can give great insight into these brief accounts we might stumble across. As you read Scripture, what other resources do you find helpful?

Discussion Questions Set #2

“God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.” (1 Corinthians 1:27)

“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the LORD Almighty.” (Zechariah 4:6)

In sermon, we learned a couple of interesting things about Shamgar. The first was that he was likely non-Israelite, coming directly from the pagan culture of Canaan. It seems that he was a man delivered from a culture to deliver others from that same culture. The second was that his use of an oxgoad for a weapon likely suggests that he was a simple farmer, rather than a skilled and trained soldier. It’s amazing to consider that one so ill-equipped was able to dispatch 600 highly trained warriors. The third was that his tactics were more likely a “death by a thousand cuts” methodology rather than a “one fell swoop” methodology – his actions were numerous and small, rather than singular and massive.

1. Why is the fact that Shamgar was likely non-Israelite of importance? What does this communicate to us about who God might call/use to help create/cultivate culture in 2019?
2. Why might we be reluctant to engage the Shamgars of our world in culture creation within the church? What do we fear? What prejudices or biases might we hold?
3. Why is Shamgar’s suspected profession of importance to our story? What do his simple origins teach us about his eventual successes?
4. What might it mean for us to be a people who operate “not by might nor by power, but by God’s Spirit”? What does this look like practically? What activities or behaviours might it require?
5. Shamgar’s continued defiance of pagan culture through small yet mounting actions reveals to us what a microshift pattern to cultural change looks like. What sort of change do we generally gravitate towards – massive and rapid change or slow, methodical and microshift change? What might it look like for us to employ a microshift methodology to engaging culture as a church?
6. Think of your own life, what microshift might Christ be calling you to undertake?
7. To use this sort of microshift strategy, what kinds of things must we be prepared for? What things might have to change in the way we envision cultural change/creation?



Discussion Questions Set #3

“In [Christ] you have been enriched in every way ... therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift” (1 Corinthians 1:5,7).

1. Do you believe that God has equipped the church in every way necessary to overcome the oppositional culture around us? Explain.
2. In sermon, I suggested that it would seem that more often than not, our issue in seeing the effective creation and cultivation of godly culture is not that we are ill-equipped, but that we fail to see how God has already equipped us to accomplish His will. Discuss this statement.
3. Think of your life right now. What do you “hold in your hand” right now that might be used to create or cultivate godly culture? How might you utilize this to create culture?
4. A microshift methodology requires firm commitment and a passion to an end. What kinds of things are you passionate about in your faith? Where do you find your interests drawn in ministry?
5. In sermon, I suggested that “we will see the immense creation and cultivation of God pleasing culture, when we begin seeing lots of new believers sitting in our chairs”. Discuss this quote. Why might a passion to see people come to know Christ in increasing numbers be important for the creation and cultivation of godly culture?