

The Dangers of Subtle Mediocrity

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[0 : 00] Alright, take your Bibles and turn to the book of Judges. In the book of Judges now, yeah! I mean, we were in it last week, but this time we're like really gonna start it.

Chapter 1, verse 1, starting there. Book of Judges, that black Bible in the chair in front of you if you need a Bible. Go to page 180, starting Genesis, first book.

And then go from there to page 180. You'll find the book of Judges. Judges chapter 1. We're gonna read Judges chapter 1, verse 1 through chapter 2, verse 5.

1-1 through chapter 2, verse 5. A long section, but it all goes together and you'll see why as we run through this, walk through this book.

Judges chapter 1, verse 1. Again, page 180 in that black Bible. I will read, and just so you know too, when you have these capitals of the Lord, capital L, capital O, capital R, capital D.

[1 : 11] I'll go back and forth from Yahweh to Lord. I'll go back and forth so you know, because that's actually Yahweh or Yahweh, whichever. That's his name. So I'll go back and forth as I'm reading.

Verse 1 of chapter 1. Now after the death of Joshua, the sons of Israel inquired of Yahweh, saying, Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites to fight against them?

And Yahweh said, Judah shall go up. Behold, I've given the land into his hand. Then Judah said to Simeon, his brother, Come up with me, and to the territory allotted me, that we may fight against the Canaanites, and I in turn will go with you into the territory allotted you.

So Simeon went with him. And Judah went up. And the Lord gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hands. And he defeated 10,000 men at Bezek. And they found Adonai Bezek and Bezek and fought against him.

And they defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. But Adonai Bezek fled. And they pursued him and caught him. And cut off his thumbs and big toes. And Adonai Bezek said, Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off, used to gather up under my table.

[2 : 24] As I have done, so God has repaid me. So they brought him to Jerusalem. And he died there. Verse 8, Then the sons of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it, and struck it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire.

And afterward the sons of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites living in the hill country, and in the Negev, and in the low land. So Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron.

And the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-Abra. And they struck Shishai and Achiman and Talmai. Verse 11, Then from there he went against the inhabitants of Debir.

Now, the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-Sefer. And Caleb said, The one who attacks Kiriath-Sefer and captures it, I will even give him my daughter Aksa for a wife.

And Othniel, the son of Kenes, Caleb's younger brother, captured it. So he gave him his daughter Aksa for a wife. And it came about when she came that she persuaded him to ask her father for a field.

[3 : 26] Then she alighted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, What do you want? And she said to him, Give me a blessing, since you have given me the land of the Negev. Give me also springs of water. So Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

Verse 16, And the descendants of the Canaanites, Moses' father-in-law, went up from the city of Palms with the sons of Judah to the wilderness of Judah, which is in the south of Arad.

And they went and lived with the people. Then Judah went to Simeon, with Simeon his brother. And they struck the Canaanites living in Zephath. And literally destroyed it.

So the name of the city was called Hormah. And Judah took Gaza with his territory. And Ashkelon with his territory. And Ekron with his territory. Now Yahweh was with Judah, and they took possession of the hill country, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had iron chariots.

Then they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had promised, and he drove out from there the three sons of Anak. But the sons of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem.

[4 : 28] The Jebusites have lived with the sons of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day. Verse 22, Likewise the house of Joseph went up against Bethel. And the Lord was with him. And the house of Joseph spied out Bethel.

Now the name of the city was formerly Lewis. The spies saw a man coming out of the city, and they said to him, Please show us the entrance to the city, and we'll treat you kindly. So he showed them the entrance to the city, and they struck the city with the edge of the sword.

But they let the man, all his family, go free. And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city named it, and named it Luz, which is its name to this day. But Manasseh did not take possession of Beth Shaan and his villages, or Ta'anach and his villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and his villages, or the inhabitants of Ibrahīm and his villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and his villages.

So the Canaanites persisted in living in that land. And it came about when Israel became strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but they did not drive them out completely.

Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who were living in Gezir, so the Canaanites lived in Gezir among them. Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol, so the Canaanites lived among them and became subject to forced labor.

[5 : 54] Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Akku, all the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Aflab, or of Akzib, or of Helba, or of Afik, or of Rehob.

So the Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for they did not drive them out. Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh, or the inhabitants of Beth Anath, but lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, and the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh, and Beth Anath became forced labor for them.

Then the Amorites forced the sons of Dan into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the valley. Yet the Amorites persisted in living in Mount Haraz, and Adjalan, and in Sha'albaim. But when the power of the house of Joseph grew strong, they became forced labor.

But the border of the Amorites ran from the ascents of Akribim, from Selah and upward. Now notice chapter 2. Now the angel of Yahweh came up from Gilgal to Bukim, and he said, I brought you up out of Egypt, and led you into the land, which I have sworn to your fathers, and I said, I will never make my covenant with you.

And as for you, you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land. You shall tear down their altars. You have not obeyed me. What is this you have done? Therefore I also said, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides, and their God shall be a snare to you.

[7 : 26] And it came about, and the angel of the Lord spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept. So they named that place Bukim, and there they sacrificed to Yahweh.

You ever had a project? A day? Maybe even a job? Maybe even a relationship? Where it started out okay, mediocre, but then it went from okay, to bad, then to worse, then to just totally horrible.

Take, for example, a project. You know, you had to do XYZ. Prepared, got this and that, blah, blah, blah. But then this happens, and then that happens, and then this, and then that.

Pretty soon a project that was supposed to take like 30 minutes, to maybe an hour, turns into three hours. You ever had that happen to you? And notice how subtle it is.

Just all of a sudden, just kind of creeps up on you. It seems it's going to be just fine, and then just, subtleness. It reminds me of a, I saw this video of this snake subtly going after its prey, and just didn't know it.

[8 : 58] Just, you know, this little rodent is sitting there, and just suddenly just goes after it, and slowly comes and starts swallowing it. And, you know, it gets away, and suddenly comes in, starts swallowing it, and eventually overpowers it.

When we're seeing this theme of God's overwhelming, never-ending, relentless love for His people as the theme of the book of Judges, we start here with something that's very subtle.

And it's actually dangerous for us as Christians. So I titled this first chapter into the first five verses of chapter two, The Dangers of Subtle Mediocrity.

The Dangers of Subtle Mediocrity. It's subtle. You put up with it. But it's very dangerous.

I'll put in a statement for you. This is actually where we'll be going in this whole chapter with five verses. Oh, I wanted to put that up there. He wants us to solely want Him. Remember, that's the subtitle in the book of Judges.

[10 : 18] He wants us to solely want Him. Here's in chapter one. Here, we're gonna see eight gospel truths to learn from Israel to make us attentive and aware of the dangers of subtle mediocrity in our love for Christ.

In this chapter, the beginning of the book of Judges, it's gonna give us eight gospel truths to learn from Israel. As Paul told us in 1 Corinthians chapter 10, these have been written as an example for us to make us attentive, to make us aware of the dangers of subtle mediocrity in our love, in our passion, in our desire for our Savior.

Eight gospel truths to learn. A little bit more about Judges. It shows the sequel. You know, like, the movie, the first movie, and then you have the sequel to the second movie, part two.

This is the second movie from the book of Joshua, the conquest of Canaan. But you know what? Some sequels are just really bad. This is a really bad sequel. It's really bad.

I mean, Joshua's like a really great movie. And then you come to Judges, like, oh, that's a really bad sequel. It is. Chapter one emphasizes Israel occupying the land.

- [11 : 49] Now you have to understand something. As you come to the book of Judges, Joshua's about conquering or possessing. Judges was about occupying. There's a difference. And you'll see how the nation would prove to be faithless in disobeying God's command to occupy. And you see it. It's very subtle. It's just like, oh, this is okay. It looks good. It's fine. It's very subtle. It was now time for the tribes to nail things down and settle into their assigned territories. Now, I do want to bring this up, which I think is important, a vital side note. The moral problem of the conquest because you come to this part and you're talking about Israel occupying this land. Yahweh had commanded Israel to obliterate these Canaanite nations.
- [12 : 57] They were not to be forced laborers. They were not to be forced laborers. And you will see at the end of chapter one, what did they end up becoming? Forced laborers. They were not to do that. Now, in our culture, you read this about occupying, and that's a big no-no. You're not supposed to be doing that, right? In our culture. But you have to understand something. Yahweh, through Moses, had insisted that he did not give Israel this land and this job, so to speak, to obliterate these nations because Israel was so awesome, cool, righteous, just, and they're some morally pure people. They weren't. Whereas these Canaanites were so grossly wicked and evil. Deuteronomy 9, verse 4 through 6, it's very clear. The Lord says, it's not because you guys are better. You're no better than them. As you'll see in the book of Judges. The conquest, we have to understand, keep this in mind, the conquest here was an act of justice, God's justice.
- [14 : 08] Israel was God's just instrument upon this corrupt, perverted, evil people. It wasn't Israel because Israel was all that. That was their failure. They thought they were all that. Yahweh had simply decided to love Israel who was corrupt and perverted too. Plus, we know Yahweh, God, He would use this nation, Israel, to be His trophy case. His people to be the trophy case to the world so that the world would see how truly great He was. it wasn't about Israel. It was about God. It was about seeing how awesome and great and gracious and loving God is. And eventually, salvation could come to the Gentiles. You know, in spite of the great failure of Israel, our God did not fail to bring Messiah. He still brought Him. He still brought Him. Because God's faithful. He has this perfect plan. So as we're walking through Judges, keep those things in mind.
- [15 : 23] Okay? Something else I want to make mention before we jump into these eight gospel truths. There's a lot of geography we could cover. This is not a geography class. You want to go to a geography class, you can go somewhere else. It's not a geography class. This city's here. This piece of land's over there. Blah, blah, blah. But at certain times, I will direct this to it when it proves pertinent. But overall, we will grab the key principles about which Paul told us to learn from Israel. 1 Corinthians chapter 10. There are examples. It is written for us as examples to us to learn from them. This true history, learn from Israel. And right here at the get-go, in this first chapter, and the first five verses of chapter 2, you get these eight gospel truths. to be aware of the dangers of subtle mediocrity. Notice the first one. Ain't gospel truths to learn from Israel? Follow leaders, number one. Follow leaders, but in the end, we follow Christ. Follow leaders, but in the end, we follow Christ. Chapter 1, verse 1.

[16 : 34] Here's what happened after Joshua died. And it goes in my mind. The book delineates the historical crisis after Joshua's death.

And it would progress from manageable to bad to worse than to discipline from the Lord. There's a lesson to be learned here.

We can't put our hope in leaders, pastors, or teachers because at the end of the day, what counts is our own faithfulness to love, want, and adore Christ.

And I understand. You might say, what about Hebrews 13, 17? Obey your leaders and submit to them. I understand. I know. Leaders come and go.

At the end of the day, I'm not going to trust Jesus for you. You understand that, right? I don't trust Jesus for you. You need to trust Christ.

[17 : 42] You need to follow Jesus. I don't do that for you. I encourage you. Go ahead and follow Jesus. Yeah. I encourage you to do that, but I can't make you do that.

I can't force you to do that. Nor can I do that for you. You need to follow Jesus. You need to want God more.

Jesus is no one like you. You sang it. Did you mean it? At the end of the day, we follow Christ. Not pastors, not leaders.

Number two and number three actually go together. I'm putting these two together, so be mindful of that. The second and the third. Number two, pursue extraordinary love for Christ, not mediocrity.

Number three, be faithful and obey Jesus, even in the small things. All things. And that's really from chapter one, verse two, all the way to verse 36. I'm going to give you some highlights here.

[18 : 50] Do you want to point out, you're writing those things down. I want to point out to Judah. It starts out here in verse one and into verse two about Judah. Judah was the most numerous and most powerful tribe from which Jesus Messiah would come.

And yet even they would slowly digress. Notice, you see here in verse one and verse two, at first you see Yahweh's guidance and his assurance to his people.

And you see, it seems to be in a positive direction. It would quickly lead to his accusation and his threat. So you see God's direction, his assurance, his power, verse four.

How they take over Bezek, Simeon with him. You see his presence with them. I'll be with you. I've given this land to you. It seems to be in the positive direction, sort of.

I do also want to point out, it shows the benefit of Israel acting in unity. Do you see that? Judah tells the city, hey, you come with me and then we'll come with you. You see that unity happening.

[19 : 59] When they did acting in unity, as they together collectively obeyed the Lord, Yahweh would bless them. Later, in the book, we'll see not only their lack of disobedience, lack of obedience and their disobedience to the Lord, but we'll see what will happen is as they're disobeying the Lord, it will break down their unity.

It will deteriorate. Even to the point where you get to chapters 20 and 21 of the book of Judges and they practically almost wiped out Benjamin.

Nice. What is the matter with you guys? Notice the contrast. You see the contrast? Between, here chapter one, Judah's like, hey, come on, hey, yeah, okay, unity, it's like seems to be going in the right direction, versus chapter 21, they practically almost wiped out the tribe of Benjamin.

You see that? Part of obeying God's commands as his people is working together in unity and fellowship.

It's one way we can experience God's strength and power to sustain us as his people. Not that it's simply about unity. No, we obey God together in unity.

[21 : 21] Collectively, we obey God together and then we can move forward in unity as his church, as his people. Truth is central. To sacrifice truth for the sake of unity is detrimental.

True unity among God's people will only happen as we pursue extraordinary love for Christ. And we obey Jesus even in the small things. I want to point out as well, verses 5 through 7, Adonai Bezek, he faced the repercussions of his own actions against the other kings.

Notice how it gives us a vivid example of Israel used by God in judgment. I want to point out to you as well, look at verse 9. Afterward, the sons of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites living in the hill country, in the Negev, and in the lowland.

Notice the three central areas. This is important. Put a mental note for yourself in this. The hill country is the mountainous region. The Negev was the dry ground, the southern sections.

The lowland was between the mountainous and the coastal plain. Now time and time again, the Canaanite nations and others, they would force Israel into the hills or the Negev, driving them out of the lowland areas because more resources obviously would be available in the lowland areas.

[22 : 43] Obviously, they understood that. And then I also want to point out, which is kind of nice, a little beautiful, wonderful story of chivalry, verse 11 to 15.

And it's there on purpose because Othniel will come up later. Caleb would have been very old by this time. Most likely, he would come, as he's going to come up as just Othniel, he's most likely one of those who stood out from the ones in chapter 2, verse 10, which we'll see that next week.

It kind of ran in his blood. Othniel, his passion to obey. So you see these things happening, right? And it seems like things will be going well until you get to verse 19.

Notice. The Lord was with Judah to visit the hill country. But notice what happens. But they could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had iron chariots.

Hmm. Notice verse 21. The sons of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem. You see the subtly? It's subtly going down the tubes.

[23 : 52] And then, obviously, notice, verse 27. Manasseh did not take possession. Verse 29. Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites.

Verse 30. Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants. Verse 31. Asher did not drive out the inhabitants. Verse 33. Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants. See the digression? It was very subtle.

It started out manageable and okay. The situation began to deteriorate because Israel allowed Canaanite nations to live among them making some kind of covenant with them which we'll look at a little bit more later.

So what's the point? Don't settle for mediocrity. Pursue an extraordinary love for Christ and be faithful to obey our Lord even in the small things.

Their lack of pursuing Yahweh and their faithlessness in these small things will be revealed to be detrimental to them. Don't settle for mediocrity.

[24 : 56] It's dangerous. Don't settle for just whatever. Pursue Christ. Pursue your love for the Lord. Be faithful to obey Jesus even in those small things.

Don't just push them aside. That's what we can learn from Israel. And notice it actually leads to the fourth lesson that we see. Subtle toleration easily leads to sinful desertion.

Subtle toleration easily leads to sinful desertion. That's what you see.

It's just slow. As you're walking through you just oh man it just starts going downhill. And that toleration it led to their desertion of the Lord.

Here's some sub points for you underneath number four. Don't underestimate the subtle influence of evil in your life. Don't underestimate the subtle influence of evil in your life.

[26 : 09] Whereas Paul's saying 1 Corinthians chapter 5 a little leaven leavens the whole lump. Another be mindful of syncretism.

It's okay I mean putting it together it's alright. That's what Israel did. Because notice verse 33 Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh.

You know what Beth Shemesh means? House of the sun. You know what they possibly did here? They possibly worshipped the sun god. Notice the next part.

Or the inhabitants of Beth Anath. Anath is the Canaanite goddess of war. She was the companion as well as the sister of the god Baal.

Oh. Syncretism. You see this? This is what's going to happen. When Israel grew strong they could have expelled these people but instead they put them as forced laborers violating God's command.

[27 : 25] Did not drive them out completely. Verse 28 they put the Canaanite to forced labor. Verse 30 they became subject to forced labor.

The end of verse 32 for they did not drive them out. The end of verse 33 became forced labor for them. They did exactly what the Lord told them not to do.

They were more about pragmatic success instead of seeing that this would lead to spiritual failure as well as wicked influence. See Israel was content.

They were okay. Toleration. To partition a land between them and the Canaanites who were left the leftovers from the conquest. This was bad. One writer says this quote living with Canaanites led to worshipping with Canaanites.

Tolerate Baal's people and sooner or later you bow at Baal's altar. A subtle toleration leads to sinful desertion.

[28 : 32] This is a lesson for us. Lesson for us to be faithful in the little things and not to tolerate the idols or the small sin in our own lives.

But cut it out. Don't condone it. Don't put up with it. So you see this progression in chapter one of Israel's lack of occupying the land.

Or rather not dispossessing the surrounding nations. Samuel wrote this and seven times he accused Israel they did not drive out or they did not dispossess these nations.

Oh but wait a second I mean you would think if Yahweh was with them why could they not occupy? I thought it said Yahweh was with them right? Did you see that? I saw that. It was there.

Verse 19 He said He was with them why could they not do that? Well you find that out in chapter 2 verse 1 through 5 which we'll look at in just a moment. Yahweh wanted Israel to drive out these nations because of the spiritual influence they would have upon Israel.

[29 : 39] they would be a fatal trap for Israel. It wasn't so much a military threat that wasn't the issue it would be a spiritual cancer. You get diagnosed with cancer the doctor comes to you after your surgery and says we got like 50% of it.

I'm sorry doctor what did you say? We got 50% but the other 50% it'll be fine. It's okay. but I thought you said this was an aggressive cancer in my body.

Well yeah but you know we don't want to be radical. Would you say that would you be okay with that with your doctor?

You'd probably slap him at that point. What's the matter with you? They were called to be faithful to God's command to love him first and foremost and they would show this love by dispossessing these evil wicked nations.

Oh man that's laid waste that's kind of harsh. Keep in mind they were the means of God's judgment not because they were all that but because Yahweh wanted to be done.

[31 : 00] Yahweh called them to faithfulness and the small lack of faith would lead to dire consequences. Look if you would maybe a page or two over in your Bible look at chapter 3 verse 5 chapter 3 verse 5 look at this chapter 3 verse 5 and the sons of Israel lived among the Canaanites the Hittites the Amorites the Perizzites the Hivites and the Jebusites this is a summary of chapter 1 verse 1 to chapter 2 verse 5 this is a summary of what happened the nations lived among the people this is what the Lord had told them not to do but they did it anyways a subtle toleration will lead to a sinful desertion and that's what you're going to see chapter 2 verse 1 to 5 you see how

Israel's failure in chapter 1 was so serious instead of listening to Yahweh again and again they would just tolerate and this subtle toleration it led to their desertion of the Lord so that you have in chapter 2 verse 1 to 5 the angel of Yahweh comes and says what have you done now I want to point this out by the way before we get to chapter 2 which we'll get to the next principle of verse 5 this angel of Yahweh is the pre-incarnate Christ you understand that right this was the pre-incarnate Christ the second person of the trinity the Lord Jesus himself he said what was the real cause of the failure to occupy the land from Yahweh faithless disobedience and he called them to repent he was calling them to repent so chapter 2 verse 1 to 5 is really a call to repentance which leads to the fifth gospel truth that we see here fifth gospel truth that we can learn true repentance remembers God's love in

Christ true repentance remembers God's love in Christ look at chapter 2 verse 1 now the angel of Yahweh came from Gilgal to Bochim and he said I brought you up from the land of Egypt I led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers and I said I will never break my covenant with you he delivered them he gave them this land he made a covenant with them he be faithful to them he redeemed them he saved them he chose them he loved them he gave to them this is God's grace to them friends when we see sinner lives the first aspect we need to remember is God redeeming us in his son the first way that you see where there's going to be true repentance is you remember that he loves us in Christ Jesus we remember that our idolatry has been forgiven in Christ alone his blood paid the ransom he showed you grace he redeemed you for himself you belong to him it's reminding yourself of the gospel true repentance remembers the gospel remembers

God's love for us in Christ learn this grasp a hold of this the sixth principle was again another aspect of true repentance number six true repentance results in loving obedience notice chapter two verse two and as for you you shall not excuse me you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land you shall tear down their altars but you've not obeyed me what is this you have done you shall make no covenant with the nations implication they made some covenant with the nations where is that in the text it's not there but the angel of the Lord the pre-incarnate Christ Jesus he knew what was going on he knew they made some type of covenant with these people he disobeyed friends true repentance results in love and obedience when we repent our lives change we're broken we put off sin we put on truth we put on Christ we're saved to reflect the very image of

Jesus himself so another truth for us to remember to be attentive of the dangers the subtleness of mediocrity true repentance results in loving obedience Lord Jesus I love you and you have my life I'll obey you notice point number seven principle number seven God disciplines his children look at verse three therefore I also said I will not drive them out before you but they shall become thorns in your sides and their God shall be a snare to you they would face his disciplining hand and have to endure it God loves his people too much to allow them to love others more than him he is the one and only true God listen he loves you too much to allow you to love others or other things more than him and he'll discipline you to get you to that point

[37 : 02] God loves say it to yourself God loves me too much to allow me to love others or to love other things more than him what or who do you love more than him he loves you too much now it may not necessarily mean that you are in sin like Israel was in this passage that's pretty obvious but the principle remains the same God disciplines us to love him first he will discipline you so you will love him first and foremost and then the last principle that we see here in verse four and five the eighth gospel truth is this pursuit for repentance not merely emotions or rituals did

Israel actually repent nope look at their response came up when the angel of Yahweh spoke these words all the sons Israel lifted up their voices and wept they cried they wept notice they offered sacrifices and then nothing they shed tears all over the place they were offered sacrifices but look at how the text leaves you hanging don't you think it's weird I do look at and there they sacrifice the Lord when Joshua had dismissed the people the sons wait a minute whoa whoa whoa whoa back up wait a second what just happened what did you just do it's like the text just goes what happened nothing already notice

Israel thought that rituals would do the trick and that sacrifices rituals that's what Yahweh wanted cry a lot and give more money and then we're good okay okay okay no friends the Lord doesn't necessarily want your sacrifice he wants your heart he wants all of you is that not the gospel where you turn away from sin and you put your trust in Jesus you realize God should judge you he should condemn you to hell and yet he's merciful compassionate and gracious and kind he says repent and come to me and trust me because Jesus died on your behalf he wants you to want him it's not about checking off a box he wants your heart he wants all of you all this did was stir their affections sacrifices no change our response to God and his word should be more than simply that stirs our affections it should stir our wills to love and want him and it's great

I mean there's a song and it just impacts you right you know hey emotionally it might impact you but true repentance results in a change of our wills because true repentance is a change of direction repentance you're going this way you're going this way that's repentance having emotions and doing the rituals checking off the box I went to church today check it off your box that's not necessarily how God is calling us to respond he wants true repentance resulting in a changed life that loves that wants him you want him it was interesting I pointed this out earlier just about chapter 2 verse 6 it begins again with

Joshua's death but this time the review of the period is now seen from the true perspective from the right perspective or rather maybe we should say from the disobedient perspective God's overwhelming never ending relentless love for his people he wants us to want him solely and he'll discipline us to make that happen and here if you would learn eight gospel truths to learn from Israel may you make you attentive and aware of the dangers of subtle mediocrity in our love for Christ follow leaders in the end we follow Christ pursue extraordinary love for Christ not mediocrity be faithful and obey

[43 : 04] Jesus even in the small things subtle toleration easily leads to sinful desertion true repentance remembers God's love in Christ true repentance results in love and obedience God disciplines his children and eight pursue true repentance not merely emotions or rituals else let's pray thank you father for your love for your people thank you father for your love for us as your children we do not take that lightly we ask and we pray that you spirit would bring this these gospel truths to bear upon our hearts minds and lives may it affect and infect not simply our emotions and our minds but our wills that we would be a people who want more of you may we learn this from

Israel how dangerous it is of this subtle mediocrity that is so prevalent a part of our culture help us as a church we pray I want to encourage you I want to take a few moments just some silence I want to encourage you to take these gospel truths and let your mind be filled with truth maybe you might want to take this time to pray maybe you might want to take this time to just read the scripture again just a few moments and we'll sing a couple songs we'll pray it's good for us to just stop and to ponder to think let your mind dwell upon these truths that we've seen from God's word let your mind think of these things do that now please if you would do that what those

Thank you.

Thank you.