

- a. A foster care child whose parents weren't able to care for them
- b. Seniors without any family members – living in a facility that has been in lock down for 14 months – isolated from any human connections
- c. An adult who is not able to read a street sign, a job application, a book to their child.

After discussing each of these briefly, decide on one group above that all of you feel more passionate about. There's no right or wrong answer. But whichever group you pick, think about ways you could help strengthen a person or group in this situation by something you could do for them. This lent, make a decision in your small group to do something for this group of people in need. If you need help with ways you can make your plan happen, contact Julie Walker at jwalker@kirkinthehills.org . Here at the Kirk, we work with homeless shelters, help distribute food to families with food insecurities, help supply needed items to foster care kids, distribute care packages to seniors, and we're connecting people to a program to help with adult literacy.

1. Spend some time sharing prayer requests and praying for each other.



Small Groups – Sermon Notes Week of March 7, 2021

Judges 16:23-30

Samson's Death

Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon, and to rejoice; for they said, 'Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand.' When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said, 'Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us.' And when their hearts were merry, they said, 'Call Samson, and let him entertain us.' So they called Samson out of the prison, and he performed for them. They made him stand between the pillars; and Samson said to the attendant who held him by the hand, 'Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, so that I may lean against them.' Now the house was full of men and women; all the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about three thousand men and women, who looked on while Samson performed.

Then Samson called to the Lord and said, 'Lord God, remember me and strengthen me only this once, O God, so that with this one act of revenge I may pay back the Philistines for my two eyes.' And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. Then Samson said, 'Let me die with the Philistines.' He strained with all his might; and the house fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So those he killed at his death were more than those he had killed during his life.

Fill in the Blanks

1. You used to be able to _____ people in general.
2. We can translate this as servant, or boy, or attendant, but I think it's just the closest thing that the Hebrew has to the word "_____".
3. In fact, we have a _____. Unlike Samson, most of us still get to _____ who will take us by the hand - most of us get to _____ who we will count on, who we will allow to _____ our lives.
4. Because when you're looking for someone to take you by their good hands, someone to _____, someone to _____ your life - look for the ones relentless in their crawl to _____.
5. There was one _____ in first century Palestine...He didn't care about _____ the way that everyone else did. He tried to get everyone to be a _____, encourage everyone to reach out and be counted on by the _____ among them.

General Questions:

1. What stood out to you in the sermon?
2. What is something new you didn't know before?
3. Is there a question that the sermon prompted for/in you?
4. How do you feel called to respond to the sermon?

Discussion Questions

1. Pastor Nate mentions the Gallup poll in his sermon: "A recent Gallup poll shows that American's average life satisfaction has dropped from 62% in 2001 to 53% before the pandemic ... all the way to 39% now." Does this surprise you? What are your thoughts on the poll?

2. In what ways can you relate to Samson and his predicament in this text? Have you ever experienced feeling stuck or trapped as a result of making bad choices/decisions? Who helped you to get unstuck? How were you "touched" by Jesus at those times?

Pastor Nate talks about Jesus as the "village wimp" – why? Were you ever the "village wimp" to someone?

3. Pastor Nate asks in his sermon, "Who can we count on to be like that waitress - to have the kind of hands that make life taste better? Who gets to influence your life? Do they have good hands? We all need good hands ...to make life taste better ... to make us grow and to help us heal ... to show us the way ... to lead us forward." Discuss your answers. Have the hands of influence changed in your life over the years? If so, how and why? What influences and what are you influenced by?

Beyond Questions

2. To whom can you be the "village wimp" this week? Who are the Samson figures in your life and in our world today? Discuss this question and come up with ways to be the "village wimp" to them this week.
3. In discussing #1, keep the mission challenge in mind: Discuss briefly each of these five groups of people below and what challenges they would have when facing the world?
 - d. Homeless Person out on the street or in a shelter
 - e. A Mother with kids without money to pay for food and heat at the same time