



Overcoming a Corrupt Heart (Micah) Judges 17-18

Watch for 3 signs of spiritual decay:

1. Corruption in unbiblical use of finances. Judges 17:1-6

- **A greedy attitude of taking what is not his.** Judges 17:1-2
"He said to his mother, 'The eleven hundred pieces of silver which were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse in my hearing, behold, the silver is with me; I took it.'" (v.2)
Malachi 3:8-12
- **Acts as if he is dedicated to the Lord when he is keeping his possessions for temporal desires, instead of investing in eternal purposes.** Judges 17:3-6
"He then returned the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother, and his mother said, 'I wholly dedicate the silver from my hand to the LORD for my son to make a graven image and a molten image; now therefore, I will return them to you.'" (v.3)
Matthew 6:19-21, I Timothy 6:7-10, 17-19

2. Corruption in unbiblical spiritual leadership. Judges 17:6-13

- **Lacks a clear call and commitment for God's work.**
"Then the man departed from the city, from Bethlehem in Judah, to stay wherever he might find a place..." (v.8)
- **Motivated by pride to accommodate the desires of people rather than God.** Judges 17:6-10, 19-20
"Micah then said to him, 'Dwell with me and be a father and a priest to me, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, a suit of clothes, and your maintenance.' So the Levite went in." (v.10)
Malachi 2:7-9; Deuteronomy 18:5-7
- **Fails to confront obvious sin and hold God's people accountable.** Judges 17:13, 24
"Then Micah said, 'Now I know that the LORD will prosper me, seeing I have a Levite as priest'... He said, 'You have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and have gone away, and what do I have besides?'" (v. 13, 24)
Deuteronomy 13:6-11; II Timothy 4:2-4

3. Corruption in the unbiblical values and lifestyle of God's people. Judges 17:14-31

- **Live by the moral relativism of society's values rather than the absolute truth of God's Word.** Judges 17:6, 18:1
"In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes." (v.6)
I Timothy 1:1-7
- **Develop own individual spiritual journey rather than anchored in God's ordained community of the church.**
Judges 18:4-20
"Now the five men who went to spy out the land went up and entered there, and took the graven image and the ephod and household idols...So they set up for themselves Micah's graven image which he had made, all the time that the house of God was at Shiloh." (v.17, 31)
Ephesians 4:11-16
- **Assimilate into the world's lifestyle rather than living in God's holiness.** Judges 18:21-31
"The sons of Dan set up for themselves the graven image; and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, (Moses) he and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land." (v.30)
II Thessalonians 2:5-7

For Reflection:

I John 5:4-5 says, *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”* Do you believe in Jesus to overcome any of these three areas? Do you need to grow in the area of financial stewardship, spiritual leadership or living a holy life not compromised by the world’s values? Which ones? What next steps are you willing to take to truly overcome the challenges of this world? Check out the opportunities we offer such as discipleship, LifeGroups for encouragement, Bible studies to understand God’s Word, and Discovery Classes to learn how you can serve the Lord. calvarylife.org/grow

Digging Deeper:

A repeated verse in Judges 17:6 is, *“In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes.”* We may think we are living in the most corrupt times, and there is certainly plenty of evil in our world. But, the times of Judges ranks at the top in wicked ways. And the primary reason is that each person determined what is right and wrong, or true and false based on their own relativistic standards. They had rejected God’s absolute truth and as a result, life was quite miserable for so many. Judges 17 and 18 summarizes the spiritual climate of those days between 1400-1000 BC. In these chapters we identify three signs of corruption which we need to be alert to in our own lives and church.

LifeGroup Discussion and Questions:

The first sign of corruption was the misuse of finances and possessions. Judges 17:1-6

Micah had stolen a huge sum of money from his mother. He confessed his sin after he heard his mother curse the thief. Micah returned the money to his mother, but she gave some back under the pretense of being dedicated to the Lord. But, she really gave it back to themselves to build an idol in their home. So the money remained in their possession for their own pleasure even though they pretended it was for God and religious experiences. They violated God’s Word in Exodus 20:4-5. Application for us: How easy to say we give to the Lord, but in fact, we view all our possessions as our own, for our own purposes and pleasures, which is what Micah and his mother did. How we use our money is a barometer on our spiritual condition.

Read and reflect on the following passages.

From Jesus Matthew 6:21 - What does the use of your “treasure” reveal about the condition and priorities of your “heart?”

From King David I Chronicles 29:11-13

- Vs. 11 - Who really owns our finances?
- Vs. 12 - Who really gives you your wealth and strength?
- Vs. 13 - Who should receive the honor for how we use our finances? How is He honored with our finances?

From Malachi in Malachi 3:8-12

- How does God view our failure to not give all we should to Him?
- What does He call us to do with our finances?

From Paul in I Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19

- Vs. 6-7 - What are we to be content with?
- Vs. 9 - What happens to those that “want to get rich?”
- Vs. 10 - What happens to those that “love money?”
- Vs. 11 - Therefore, what are we to do?
- Vs. 17 - Why is it dangerous to put our hope in our wealth?
- Vs. 18 - What are we to do with our wealth?
- Vs. 19 - What is the reward for those that use their wealth according to God’s Word?
- How are you using whatever wealth you have for the Lord’s work?

A second sign of corruption was in the humanistic relativism and failure to live by God’s Word.

According to Paul in II Timothy 4:1-4, what warning does he give us about God’s truth? What are we to do with God’s Word according to II Timothy 2:15? How are you doing that? What benefits come from knowing and doing God’s Word according to II Timothy 3:16-17? Where have you seen those benefits in your life?

Next Steps:

1. **Join a LifeGroup for encouragement and accountability.** LifeGroups are ongoing small group communities that gather together throughout the week to CONNECT in a smaller setting, GROW together in our faith, and REACH out together to our community. LifeGroups meet on Calvary’s campus and in homes across Orange County. calvarylife.org/lifegroups
2. **Attend the upcoming ‘Discover Calvary’ class on Sunday, April 12 from 12:15 – 3:45 pm in Fireside.** Learn everything you wanted to know about Calvary Church. Come experience this class where you can learn about Calvary’s beliefs, purpose, history, ministries and how to become a member. This is the first part of our Discover series. calvarylife.org/discover

