

5. Why do you think Jephthah made the vow that he did?
 - A. Was it out of desperation because he was afraid of defeat in the battle?
 - B. Was it out of pride, wanting to impress God with his willingness to offer anything in his life?
 - C. Was it out of arrogance, believing that because he was God's chosen instrument, God would make sure that the item to be offered wasn't that precious to him?
 - D. Was it out of unbelief, not believing that he would actually win the battle and therefore wouldn't need to sacrifice it?
6. What should the motivation for our vow be, if indeed we should make one?
7. Why do you think God demands that we keep the vows we have made to him?

KTFK: vow to / choose to / do not / for speaking / him please / big backlash. / without thinking / hard can / If you / be rash, / cause a

Song: "O For a Closer Walk with God"

Prayer: "Lord God, I feel the need to be more devoted to you and to test myself in this. But I do not want to speak rashly or to fail to understand the fullness of committing myself to a period of higher dedication. Walk me to a proper understanding of these things and a proper way to test myself and more fully glorify you. Amen."

Tuesday, August 24

1. Read James 4:13-17.
2. What principle is given here that also bears on any vows we might make to the Lord?
3. Where does Paul follow this exact advice in the passage from Acts 18?
4. Why is it important to recognize that humility (even with regard to our control of the future) is central to any vows we might make?
5. What is the connection between this kind of humility and the greater devotion that we would seek to foster?
6. What is the connection between dependency on God and any vows we might consider?
7. How would this also restrict the content of our vows to things that we know to be God's will for us?

KTFK: to him / him we / If we / that upon / who is / must recognize / to make / are dependent. / a vow / transcendent, we / should choose

Song: "Be Unto Your Name"

Prayer: "Lord, forgive me for ever thinking that anything I might vow to you would be something I could do without you. Help me to consider how my devotion to you can move toward greater dependence on you rather than less. Amen."

Wednesday, August 25

1. Read Numbers 6:1-8.
2. Why do you think one of the restrictions for those who had taken a vow to the Lord was that they were not to have any wine, strong drink, or any fruit from the vine?
 - A. What do those things represent?
 - B. How might they serve as a distraction from the special devotion to the Lord that this period of time was intended to be focused upon?
3. How might staying away from these things help those who had taken a vow to keep their focus on the Lord?
4. What kinds of similar things might we want to stay away from today if we were to enter a time of special devotion to the Lord?
5. How does this underscore for us the truth that just because we have the freedom in Christ to do certain things, it doesn't mean that it is good for us to do those things?

KTFK: joy, but / things to / also keep / employ. / these can / hearts with / given many / fill our / us from / He has / the good / we should

Song: "Give Me Jesus"

Prayer: "Lord God, truly you have given us so many things for our enjoyment and fullness. Yet I confess it is so easy to allow those things to draw our hearts away from you rather than toward you. Help me to put these things aside as much as is needed to bind my heart more fervently to you. Amen."

Thursday, August 26

1. Read Numbers 6:1-8.
2. Why do you think God included the provision that they were not to shave their heads, but allow their hair to continue to grow longer and longer?
3. How might this visible sign of their vow have helped them from day to day?
4. How might it have testified to others?
5. Read Matthew 6:1-18.
 - A. What is the danger in having some visible sign of what you are doing for the Lord?
6. Do you think it could be appropriate to have some kind of visible reminder to yourself of the vow you have entered into?
7. What might that visible reminder be?

KTFK: things that / target for / always guard / the cause. / longing for / use the / stay on / help us / applause, yet / against the / We must

Song: "Jesus, Draw Me Close"

Prayer: "Lord, I don't want to make my pursuit of a growing devotion to you a show. Still, I know that I could be helped by having some visible reminder of who I am and what I have committed myself to. Help me to balance these things, that I may be in the best possible position to fulfill my vows, whatever they may be. Amen."

Friday, August 27

1. Read Numbers 6:13-21.
2. Why do you think God prescribed offerings to be given at the end of the period of the vow? Wasn't the period of the vow an offering of its own?
3. Though it might sound strange, would you say that our offerings to God should be accompanied by offerings to God?
 - A. How do we sometimes seek to do this in our worship services?
 - B. How is this connected to God's desire that we be cheerful givers?
4. What would the Nazirite be showing to God by presenting these offerings to him at the conclusion of this special time of devotion?
5. How does this show that while these special times of devotion have required our effort, they are only done by the grace and through the power of God?

KTFK: us, so / give to / gift to / but his / bring him / him is / let us / thus. / recognize it / offerings which / Everything we

Song: "We Are an Offering"

Prayer: "Lord, this is a new thought for me, but how true it is that even our offerings should be presented to you with offerings. All things are gifts from you, even our gifts of devotion and love. Help us to recognize at all times that all the things we seek to do for you are possible only because of your ongoing love and gifts to us. May you receive all glory and honor and praise for anything that I am able to do as an expression of love to you. Amen."

Saturday, August 28

Read the entire passage again and review the key thoughts from each day. Which did you find most important for you this week?

Aug 23 - If you / choose to / vow to / him please / do not / be rash, / for speaking / without thinking / hard can / cause a / big backlash.
Aug 24 - If we / should choose / to make / a vow / to him / who is / transcendent, we / must recognize / that upon / him we / are dependent.
Aug 25 - He has / given many / things to / fill our / hearts with / joy, but / these can / also keep / us from / the good / we should / employ.
Aug 26 - We must / always guard / against the / longing for / applause, yet / use the / things that / help us / stay on / target for / the cause.
Aug 27 - Everything we / give to / him is / but his / gift to / us, so / let us / bring him / offerings which / recognize it / thus.

Family Worship 2021

August 23-28

Acts 18:18-23

Kids and Parents: See if you can unscramble the daily KTFK - Key Thought for Kids (Answers on back page)

¹⁸ After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow. ¹⁹ And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰ When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. ²¹ But on taking leave of them he said, "I will return to you if God wills," and he set sail from Ephesus.

²² When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch. ²³ After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

A couple of weeks ago, we looked at this passage and found in it the surprising and powerful fact that Paul had voluntarily taken the Vow of the Nazirite for a defined period of special devotion to God. Though we do not know the specific reason for this, the fact that Paul did it, and the fact that he prioritized proper completion of his vow ahead of the ongoing work of the gospel both in Corinth and Ephesus, reminded us of the priority of personal devotion – that anything we do for God must flow from a heart of love and devotion to him. It also caused us to reflect on the level of our devotion to God and whether it might be time for us to similarly take a vow.

Before we should even consider this, however, there are a number of other things for us to consider, which we will do this week.

Monday, August 23

1. Read Judges 11:29-40.
2. How does the story of Jephthah show us how serious it is to make a vow to the Lord?
3. How is this vow different than the vow of the Nazirite?
 - A. In what way was this vow more of a deal that Jephthah made with God?
4. How might this story still affect the way we might go about considering whether to make a vow to the Lord?