

**JUDGES 19:10-30**  
**TRIBAL IMMORALITY!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to Judges chapter 19 as we continue our in-depth study of the book of Judges.

In our last study, as we looked at – *PERSONAL IMMORALITY*, we saw this Levite that was wandering around, no direction to his life and we are told that “**. . . He took for himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah.**” Judges 19:1.

In other words, this Levite was doing whatever his heart desire was and was not walking according to what the Lord desired of him.

And after a period of time, we don't know how long, but it probably was not that long, this concubine leaves this Levite and goes back to her father's house and has an affair or played the harlot!

Obviously, when you are not walking with the Lord, there is going to be trouble and we see that here.

But this Levite appears to love his concubine and goes after her but not right away. He waits four months before he travels to Bethlehem in Judah, to his concubine's father's house, to go and get his concubine!

And, as we are going to see this morning, this really was not a love relationship, not at all!

Now, instead of walking according to what the Lord desired of this Levite, he is doing his own thing and he is more interested in entertainment than he is in the Lord. He spends five days drinking with his father-in-law, having a grand old time. Yes, he did want to depart but he was enticed by his father-in-law to stay and he remained there in Bethlehem for five days before he is going to depart.

And let me say this. The study we are doing this morning is not for the faint of heart. This is just plain immorality, wickedness, ugliness, it is so wrong. And yet, when you move away from the Lord and you start to do your own thing, the Lord said that He would give you over to do these debased things. If you doubt that, then just read through Romans chapter 1.

Make no mistake about it, man knows that there is a God, there is no doubt when you look at life and the complexity of life! There is no way that it just happened by random chance, there is design to life, and you can't gain information if you have no information to begin with.

But man does not want to believe in God, he wants to do his own thing and thus, man suppresses the truth about God and ends up worshiping the creation rather than the Creator!

And the end result of that is God gives them over to all the ugliness of sin that they want and there is nothing that they won't do!

You doubt that! Just listen to what Paul wrote. He said this in Romans chapter 1,

**“Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves . . . For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”** Romans 1:24, 26-32.

That is what we will see here in Judges chapter 19, the wickedness, the vileness of man because they have turned from God and God has given them over to do what is in their heart, which is nothing more than wickedness.

And we see that in our nation and the world today. A world that rejects God will reflect what is in their hearts and it is not a good thing, not at all.

I have called our study this morning – ***TRIBAL IMMORALITY!***

And the reason for that is we will see the immorality of one tribe in Israel, how bad that they had gotten. The tribe of Benjamin!

I have broken these verses down into these main points. They are,

***THE JOURNEY HOME – JUDGES 19:10***

***STAYING WITH FAMILY – JUDGES 19:11-15***

***HOSPITALITY IN GIBEAH – JUDGES 19:16-21***

***IMMORALITY IN GIBEAH – JUDGES 19:22***

***THE WICKEDNESS OF THIS LEVITE – JUDGES 19:23-26***

***NO COMPASSION – JUDGES 19:27-30***

Again, this is not an easy topic to deal with because it is pretty gruesome, to say the least, when you look at what transpires in this chapter. In fact, some have a hard time even teaching this chapter of Judges because it is so gruesome. And, in saying that, you understand why we don't have children in the sanctuary.

I believe that these events are in the Bible to wake us up, to have us pay attention to what is going on around us, because what has happened in this chapter, is going on in our nation today!

So with that said, let's begin reading in Judges chapter 19, beginning in verse 10, and let's see what the Lord has for us as we look at this topic – ***TRIBAL IMMORALITY!***

**JUDGES 19****VERSE 10**

Keep in mind that this Levite has spent five days eating and drinking with his father-in-law and even at this point his father-in-law wants him to stay the night.

This is what he told this Levite in Judges 19:9, “**... ‘Look, the day is now drawing toward evening; please spend the night. See, the day is coming to an end; lodge here, that your heart may be merry. Tomorrow go your way early, so that you may get home.’**”

But this Levite wanted to get home, he did not want to spend any more time in Bethlehem and thus, he rose, and he departed.

They travel only some five miles or so from Bethlehem to Jebus, which is Jerusalem.

Keep in mind that at this time Jebus was a Jebusite stronghold because the tribe of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites as we were told in Judges 1:21.

And here is the problem. It was getting late and it was dangerous to not only travel at night but to be out at night.

And, on – ***THE JOURNEY HOME*** there was no place to stay, no Motel 6 where their motto was “***We’ll keep the lights on!***”

And again, it was dangerous to travel back then, so what are they going to do? Where are they going to go? Jebus was not a safe place to go, but it is where they ended up. What are they going to do now?

Bad decisions on the part of this Levite for not leaving early in the morning or waiting until the next day to go home. But, apart from the Lord, man tries to do what is right in his own eyes and it leads to disaster as we will see.

But before disaster, look at what takes place, where they are going to stay. And, as we will see, they will be – *STAYING WITH FAMILY!*

### VERSES 11-15

Look At what is taking place here. They were in the area of Jebus but this Levite did not want to stay in Jebus because he was worried about this enemy and what they might do him if they found out he was of the children of Israel.

That makes sense, but keep in mind that it was getting late, the sun is going down and they needed to find a place to stay before it was dark. It was even more dangerous to travel at night, you could not see the enemy who was coming against you, but they were watching for you!

So instead of staying at Jebus, they push on another four miles to Gibeah. Now that might not seem too far for us because we would get in a car and drive that distance in no time.

But, obviously, they did not have a car, they had donkey's and it probably took them over an hour to travel that distance and that was a problem because it was getting late.

In fact, we are told, “**. . . and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin.**” Judges 19:14.

And, as you can see, the reason they pressed on those extra four miles was because this is where the tribe of Benjamin settled, this was family, and they felt much safer resting here for the night than with the enemy!

Now I have called these verses – *STAYING WITH FAMILY!*

But I guess you can put a question mark at the end of that because we really don't see the people of Gibeah being that hospitable! They really are not looking at this Levite as family, but just a stranger whom they are not willing to open their homes to.

Listen again to what transpired. We are told, **“They turned aside there to go in to lodge in Gibeah. And when he went in, he sat down in the open square of the city, for no one would take them into his house to spend the night.”** Judges 19:15.

As they come among their brethren there in Gibeah, as they arrive in Gibeah, look at the coldness of the people. No one opened their home for them.

Now, because of that they would have to sleep out in the streets.

Keep in mind that it was a common practice of hospitality back then to open up your home to strangers, but I think it is just an indication of how cold the hearts of the people were at this time, and they did not allow them in.

In fact, we are told in Leviticus 19:33-34 of what they were to do, **“And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”**

But they were not practicing this because they were not walking with God! (Leviticus 25:35, Matthew 25:35, Hebrews 13:2)

Now, as we read on, after our next point, we are going to see the moral depravity of this city and maybe the people are a little afraid to open their homes to anyone because of it.

Now how does that even apply to us today?

Are we afraid to open up to people, to let them into our lives and even, sometimes, our homes?

We should not be. Yes, we are to be wise in what we do, but look at the people of Gibeah, they all were afraid to let people into their homes, even a brother, a Levite!

Over the years many of you have opened up your homes, opened up your lives to people and there were times you got burned because of it.

Here's the thing. We have to be careful that we don't become cold and calloused towards others because of what some have done to us.

I do try to error on the side of grace and yes, I have been burned many times and I had to be careful because there were times I just wanted to build up a wall and hide behind it.

But that did not last long, not at all!

The Lord was clear that I need to be open and I will get burned, not might, when I try to help people, when I reach out to people.

A few months back, on a Thursday evening Bible study, after the study, you may remember, we had a gentleman named James and his wife in the church. He stood up after study and said that he needed some money, he needed some shoes, steel-toed shoes, and many in the church opened their pocket books to this man and his wife to help him out.

That was the last we saw of him.

I was not happy that he took advantage of many of you in the church, but the Lord showed me that He will bless those who gave because they gave out of a pure heart. They tried to help this man and his wife out and they took advantage of you.

And I can tell you that I was so blessed to see you open your hearts to this family, a family you did not know but you tried to help out.

We have not seen him again, even though he said he was coming back. He lied to us. And again, I was not happy, and my prayer was something like this for this man and this situation.

***“Lord, I thank you for the generosity of the people of this church and how they freely gave to help this couple out. And Lord, it seems like they were just taking advantage of them. Thus, I pray for them. I pray Lord that you would bring them to saving faith and as they go out to take advantage of others, that you would expose what they are doing. Bring them down so that they may look up and come to saving faith!”***

And, I have to admit, if I saw James again, I would call him over and pray the same prayer for him so that he may come to saving faith!

Now some would hear that prayer and they may not think it is right, but that is the best I can do for him, to pray that all that he is doing comes to nothing and that he is faced with looking up to God, the One whom he was ripping off because when you take advantage of God’s people, you are taking advantage of God, and He will not let that continue on. And hopefully, he does come to saving faith.

For us, we must be careful that our hearts don’t become cold towards others, like we see here with these people in Gibeah.

Let me share this with you to show you how easy it is to become cold, heartless to those who are in need.

We are told,

Patricia L. Miller, a former hospital staff person, writes:

While at work in the emergency room, I learned to stop crying at the pain around me.

Each day it seemed I was becoming more insensitive to people and their real needs. Five years of emergency-room exposure had taken its toll.

Then God intervened.

I was taking information for registering a young woman who had overdosed on drugs and had attempted suicide. Her mother sat before me as I typed the information into the computer. The mother was unkempt and bleary eyed. She had been awakened in the middle of the night by the police to come to the hospital. She could only speak to me in a whisper.

Hurry up, I said to myself, as she slowly gave me the information. My impatience was raw as I finished the report and jumped to the machine to copy the medical cards. That's when God stopped me - at the copy machine. He spoke to my heart so clearly: You didn't even look at her. He repeated it gently: You didn't even look at her.

I felt his grief for her and for her daughter, and I bowed my head. I'm sorry, Lord. I am so sorry.

I sat down in front of the distraught woman and covered her hands with mine. I looked into her eyes with all the love that God could flood through me and said, "I care. Don't give up."

She wept and wept. She poured her heart out to me about her years of dealing with a rebellious daughter as a single mom. Finally, she looked up and thanked me. Me . . . the coldhearted one with no feelings.

My attitude changed that night. My Jesus came right into the workplace in spite of rules that tried to keep him out. He came in to set me free to care again. He gave himself to that woman through me. My God, who so loved the world, broke that self-imposed barrier around my heart. Now he could reach out, not only to me in my pain, but to a lost and hurting woman.

- More Perfect Illustrations for Every Topic and Occasion

I remember when I first started working in the Intensive Care Unit as a new Registered Nurse.

One of the seasoned nurses said to me something like this. ***“You can’t get involved with your patients. Just do what you have to do and don’t let emotions get in the way.”***

I agree, we can’t let our emotions get in the way of caring for critically ill patients or, for that matter, any patients.

But what I saw in her, and she was a brilliant nurse, was this cold heart towards the pain of others. Not only her patients but the patient’s family members. That is what she meant!

For me, I did not want that to be seen in my life. As much as I was amazed at her nursing knowledge, compassion is a big part of nursing, and she lacked that compassion.

And thus, my heart went out to my patients and their families. Was it hard? Yes, it was! Did it hurt at times? You bet it did. I made a lot of friends, and when they passed on, it hurt. I even cried with family members.

And here’s the thing. They knew that this was more than a job for me. I cared for them, I was concerned for them and through it all, they saw the love of Christ.

When there was a difficult patient, one who was nasty to the nurses, who fought with the nurses, was abusive to the nurses, they called me to care for them because they knew I would reach out to them, show them compassion and it would cause them to calm down.

Please, please, please, I know you will get burned when you reach out to people, give your heart to them, care for them, but don’t let your heart become cold and hard towards them because of it. Let the Lord comfort you and encourage you to go on, to keep your heart soft and open to others!

Now as much as this Levite was family, as much as they should have opened up their homes to them, we are going to see someone do that, but no a person from Gibeah. And that is our next point – ***HOSPITALITY IN GIBEAH!***

### VERSES 16-21

No one in Gibeah would open up their home to this Levite even though he was not going to need anything from them except a place to stay.

You see, this Levite had all his supplies, food, straw for the animals, drink, but was missing only a place to lay down, someone's home that would be opened up to him for shelter.

What is interesting here is that there is one man who comes to help, and old man. But he is not from Gibeah, but his is from the mountains of Ephraim, like this Levite was!

And as he sees this man and his concubine, as well as others who may have traveled with him, out in the open square, he has compassion on them and reaches out to them and opens his home to them!

They were to be safe and secure in this man's home, they were to take shelter under his roof.

I think this old man understood the dangers that were out there, the dangers of sleeping out in the open, especially in this city, as we will see.

As Christians, we should do even more than this man did. But, at times, it can be very difficult, especially when people are coming against us, being mean to us.

Look at all that is going on today and we are having a hard time loving those who come against us, and, at times, even Christians who come against us.

But let me ask you this.

How much has Jesus forgiven you?

He has forgiven us of all our sins, there is no record of them any longer, they are cast as far as the east is from the west! And now, with all that He has forgiven us, He wants us to forgive others the same way, to love them with that Agape love or that unconditional love that can only come from Him.

That does not mean we accept or condone their sin, but we love them, reach out to them, care for them.

Let me show you what I mean. We are told,

It was only a three-minute escape. Listening to my name being chanted over and over, louder and louder, with greater urgency, along with pounding on the door, you might imagine me to be a rock star.

But in reality, I'm the mother of a toddler who has decided he is only content when he is in my arms. My escape was merely a trip to the bathroom in which I took a deep breath behind the locked door before re-entering my world of diapers, blocks, and Daniel Tiger. And even though I love this little guy with all my heart, at times he can definitely be a difficult person to keep showing love to, especially in the midst of tantrums and tears.

It probably isn't hard for you to think of a difficult person in your own life. In our broken, sin-filled world, they are everywhere.

The coworker who is willing to do anything to get ahead, including taking credit for your ideas.

The in-laws who always seem to be peering over your shoulder, critiquing your parenting skills, and offering "suggestions" for improvement.

The child who knows exactly how to push your buttons to leave you exasperated and flustered again.

The person in your ministry who is constantly complaining about your leadership, who thinks he has better ideas and communicates them with a sharp and biting tongue.

The passive-aggressive friend who is kind one moment and gives you the cold shoulder the next.

The list can go on and on.

So, what do we do with these people? With constant strained relationships? Our natural tendency is to want to run the other way, to avoid them as much as possible. But is that what honors God in these hard situations?

Moses was no stranger to leading a group of difficult people. Even after rescuing them out of slavery and leading them safely away from the Egyptians, the Israelites were not happy with him. Instead of being grateful for their new freedom and provision from God, they were shedding tears over the menu (Numbers 11:4-6), grumbling about not having water (Numbers 20:2-3), wishing they had died in Egypt and could choose another leader (Numbers 14:2-4). Even Moses's own siblings were jealous of his leadership (Numbers 12:2) and complained to God about their brother and his Cushite wife.

Yet what amazes me about Moses is that he didn't retaliate against this annoying group of people. He didn't even defend himself against the harsh accusations. Instead, he demonstrated amazing humility and compassion on those he led, repeatedly interceding for them.

Moses pled with God to heal Miriam's leprosy (Numbers 12:13). He begged God to forgive Israel's unbelief when it was time to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 14:19). He lay prostrate before God, fasting forty days and nights after Aaron and the Israelites had made the golden calf to worship (Deuteronomy 9:13-18).

Admittedly, there were moments when the Israelites' constant complaints drove Moses to the brink of despair (Exodus 5:22; Numbers 11:14-15), yet by God's grace he persevered. And even at the very end of his life, he was still lovingly leading the disobedient Israelites.

Moses remained steadfast to his last days and made sure God had another leader in place to take over. He didn't want his wandering sheep to be without a shepherd (Numbers 27:16-17). Moses never stopped loving them, even at their worst.

By God's grace, we too can keep loving the difficult people God has placed in our lives. The easy thing is to cut the troublesome person out of your life when possible, or just avoid them at best. . . .

So, when that child has you on the brink of tears, or you've just received a harsh and critical email about your ministry, or you're confronted with that extended family member who drives you up the wall, ask God for grace not to run away, but to keep engaging that hard-to-love person in love.

God will be honored and our hearts will find deeper satisfaction as we seek to love people just as Christ loved us when we were his enemies.

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In other words, we should ***“Ask God for grace not to run away, but to keep engaging in love that hard-to-love person.”***

Make no mistake about it, we are to behave like Christians and Paul makes that very clear as he tells us in Romans 12:9-21, **“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

This is not a suggestion or if you feel like it. This is what we are to be like, or our love, the love we say we have is fake, it is hypocrisy. Move away from evil, cling to that which is good and let the love of Christ not only flow into your life but through your life touching the lives of others!

God will right the wrongs that have been done to you. You pray for the person, you love them, and if that person gets right with the Lord, isn't that what you want?

Of course it is or it should be. If not, check your heart once again!

And as you look at the evil in this world, in this nation, all that is going on, heed the words of Paul as he said, **“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

So we have seen the – *HOSPITALITY IN GIBEAH* and from there we are going to see the – *IMMORALITY IN GIBEAH!*

And this is not good, and it will get even worse as we will see.

### VERSE 22

If you are not familiar with this story, you are now, and you are probably not happy to hear it because it is so disturbing.

Think about this for a minute. These were God's people, a holy people, a special people that were to shine the love of God to a world that was in darkness. And now this? What in the world is going on here? What were these men from the tribe of Benjamin thinking?

The ones who were to be a light to the world are now living in darkness.

We see here that wicked men of the city came, and they beat on the door of this man's house and the Hebrew indicates that their beating on that door got louder and louder.

They were impatient. They wanted to get into this house. And what was the request of these men?

Listen carefully to how wicked these men were. They were beating down that door so that they could enter in and they could have sexual relations with this Levite man that was in the house!

Does that sound familiar?

It should, because it is what the men of Sodom were saying in Genesis 19:5.

Thus, during the time of the Judges the people of God were as bad as the people of Sodom!

Now I think we are outraged at the behavior of these men in Gibeah. They should have known better. They should not have been involved in that kind of activity. This Levite man came to his own people thinking he would be safe and yet, as we are going to see and have seen, he is not! He would have been better off staying in Jebus, I mean, it could not have been any worse!

Now it is easy to point our finger at these people and wonder what in the world they are doing but are we any different today?

Look the number of Christian denominations that are embracing homosexuality as a normal lifestyle! We are not different!

One article put it like this,

Hudson, a United Church of Christ minister who pastors one of the largest homosexual congregations in America, said God created her as a homosexual and thus being in a same-sex relationship is “wholly and completely” natural.

“I have a wonderful, living, dynamic relationship with God,” Hudson said. “And I know, in the core of my being, that the most natural way for me to be is exactly who I am.”

Sullivan, an openly homosexual Catholic, accused evangelicals of forcing their own interpretation upon Scripture to prove the sinfulness of homosexuality. He pointed out that the Old Testament prescribes the death penalty for homosexuals.

“I say the Scripture is clear and Scripture says that I should be put to death,” Sullivan said. “The very verse that says that ‘[You] shall not lie with another man as one does with a woman,’ says that I should face the death penalty. That’s clear. . . . Why is that not taken seriously?”

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And then there is Pope Francis, the representative of Christ on this earth according to the Roman Catholic Church and now the first Pope to endorse homosexuality. And please understand that homosexuality among priests is beyond what you would think. And keep in mind that some Popes embraced the homosexual lifestyle in the past, but the church never endorsed it. But now they have!

Listen to what we are told,

Pope Francis endorsed same-sex civil unions for the first time as pontiff while being interviewed for the feature-length documentary “Francesco,” which premiered Wednesday at the Rome Film Festival.

The papal thumbs-up came midway through the film that delves into issues Francis cares about most, including the environment, poverty, migration, racial and income inequality, and the people most affected by discrimination.

“Homosexual people have the right to be in a family. They are children of God,” Francis said in one of his sit-down interviews for the film. “You can’t kick someone out of a family, nor make their life miserable for this. What we have to have is a civil union law; that way they are legally covered.”

The Jesuit priest who has been at the forefront in seeking to build bridges with gays in the church, the Rev. James Martin, praised the pope’s comments as “a major step forward in the church’s support for LGBT people.”

“The Pope’s speaking positively about civil unions also sends a strong message to places where the church has opposed such laws,” Martin said in a statement.

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Now some can be mad at me, they can say that this is unloving and hateful, and you can feel that way, but you are wrong.

It is unloving and hateful not to expose sin and let that person continue on in sin believing that they are saved. And one day, when they stand before the Lord, they will hear those awful words, ***“I never knew you!”***

Dr. Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, points out the impossibility of finding middle ground on the issue of gay marriage. He writes, ***“There is no third way on this issue. . . . The issue is binary. A church will recognize same-sex relationships, or it will not. A congregation will teach a biblical position on the sinfulness of same-sex acts, or it will affirm same-sex behaviors as morally acceptable. Ministers will perform same-sex ceremonies, or they will not”*** (“There Is No ‘Third Way’—Southern Baptists Face a Moment of Decision (and so will you),” AlbertMohler.com, June 2, 2014).

And it is not only homosexuality, but we have churches and Christians who endorse abortion, and I can’t understand that. I can’t believe you can say you are a Christian and endorse these abominations! Sorry, but that is just the way it is.

And that list can go on and on at the atrocities that the church is endorsing today, and it is not something that God accepts, never has and He will never accept our sin.

And if you think this is bad, listen to what takes place now in Gibeah!

We are going from the ***IMMORALITY OF GIBEAH*** to ***THE WICKEDNESS OF THIS LEVITE!***

VERSES 23-26

God does not hide the wickedness of man, He just tells it like it is, and as we can see here, it is not pretty.

Yes, the men of Gibeah were wicked, but so too was this man and this Levite!

Yes, there is so much that is wrong here.

Now there are some who feel that this was the right thing to do. I am sorry, are you nuts!

But let me explain their take on this.

Some say that this man who opened his home to the Levite was just following the law of the day regarding the safety of people that are in his home.

But what about this man's concubine and then his own daughter, he was willing to let these men abuse them sexually to protect this man.

I don't care what the rules of hospitality were, this was wrong.

Notice they did not put themselves in harm's way, but this man put his daughter and this Levite's concubine. Not a problem if they abused them, just not us!

And then it does not end there; this Levite just gives to these evil men his concubine to do what they want. And all night long they abuse her till morning and then they let her go!

This is nothing more than a gang rape on this poor woman!

Do you see how a people who have turned from God, who are in spiritual apostasy will end up being morally bankrupt and they will do whatever they feel is right in their own eyes.

That is what we see here and that is what we are seeing in our own nation!

One writer put it this way. He said, ***“Don't ever take lightly the evil results of sexual perversion and homosexuality, terrible acts of violence and sadism go hand in hand with these same forms of immorality within our own loose and indulgent society.”***

We see this in our society today and yet, like in Gibeah, it is just ignored!

Now this is a tough part of Scripture to swallow and some don't even want to read it.

Listen to what we are told,

In our church, one of the men is asked to read the biblical passage that is the Scripture text for the sermon. I've done this for years. As I've mentioned elsewhere, the text for this lesson is the only biblical text anyone has ever declined to read, due to the violence and sexual perversion it depicts. Actually, three men, as I recall, declined to read it. The brave soul who finally agreed to read the text commented first, "I know we normally read the Scripture text and then pray, but if you don't mind, I'd like to pray before I read."

If this text is difficult to read, it is even more difficult to preach. The preacher has to deal with at least two decisions.

The first is this: ***"How explicit should one be in describing the sins that are depicted in this text, especially with children present?"***

In preaching this sermon, I requested that the public Scripture reading end at verse 21 of chapter 19. I then attempted to deal with the more violent and offensive details of the text by using language that was a little less graphic, assuming that my adult audience would be familiar with the gruesome details. I hoped that the younger listeners might not fully grasp all that took place in the text and thus not become troubled by the particulars of the text.

In print I will be more specific, convinced that if this text shocks us, that is precisely what the Spirit of God intended when He inspired it.

***Second, in some parts of the world, preaching this passage would probably be against the law (since it condemns homosexuality as sin), and I fear that it will not be long before that will be the case in the United States of America.***

For the first time in my ministry, I sense the risk that every preacher of God's Word takes when speaking the truth of the Bible to a world that does not want to hear it (and may soon use governmental power to oppose it).

- <https://bit.ly/2Hmp8AD>

I am not going to ignore this portion of Scripture, nor glorify it, but just teach it as God intended it to be taught. If it shocks us, that is good, because it is intended to shock us. It is here to awaken us out of our spiritual sleep so that we can see the evil that comes from hearts that are far from God and a warning not to go down that path because you will not like where you end up!

Listen to how The Amplified Bible puts Judges 19:25, **“But they wouldn't listen to him. Then the girl's husband pushed her out to them, and they abused her all night, taking turns raping her until morning. Finally, just at dawn, they let her go.”**

This is not pretty, not at all. In fact, when describing the full meaning of the original Hebrew, Adam Clarke, due to modesty, did not translate the meaning into English. He left it in Latin so only the learned could understand the full implications of the wickedness and perversion of the men of Gibeah.

George Williams makes this observation regarding what has taken place here. He wrote, ***“It would have been better for the Levite to have spent the night with the heathen than with the professed children of God, for the latter had already become viler than the former.”***

What a sad state of affairs this is, and it is not over yet!

When they were done abusing this woman, this Levites concubine, as the day was dawning, having been gang raped all night long, she came to the threshold of the door, where her master was staying, and fell down!

And what happens next, it just makes me angry. I am sorry, but when I read this, I see the coldness, the insensitivity of this Levite towards his concubine and that brings us to our last point – ***NO COMPASSION!***

#### VERSES 27-30

Do you really think this Levite loved his concubine?

I don't! Look at how heartless he is.

First of all, notice what it says here in verse 27 of Judges chapter 19. We are told, "**When her master arose in the morning and opened the doors of the house and went out to go his way . . .**"

When I read that I see that this Levite got a good night's sleep and awoke in the morning to go on his way. He had no trouble sleeping knowing that his concubine, this woman that he supposedly loved, was being gang raped all night long!

I think I can safely say that he had ***NO COMPASSION*** for her. He did not even think twice about what she went through.

Not only that, in knowing that these men have abused her all night, she is lying on the ground and he walks by her and tells her to "***Get up it is time to go!***"

Come on, how heartless people can become when they turn from God!

And it does not end there.

When he sees that she is dead he takes her home and cuts her into 12 pieces and sends her 12 pieces to the 12 tribes in Israel!

And keep in mind, he was a Levite and maybe a priest and he knew how to cut up the sacrifices and that is what he is doing with his concubine.

He wanted the other tribes to get this message of what took place, but you would think there should have been a better way. And there was.

He could have gone to Shiloh, where the Tabernacle was located and he could have consulted with the High Priest on what could be done to rectify this atrocity and then it could have been handled according to the Law!

But, as we will see next time, as we move into chapter 20 of Judges, we are going to see that Civil War is going to break out because of what took place with this man's concubine.

But again, why wasn't anything done before this all transpired. These men did this before, it was not the first time and yet nothing was done and as this was going on in Gibeah, I believe it was going on in some of the other tribes also!

Why?

Because there was no king and everyone did what was right in their own eyes!

Now, as ugly as this was and is, what can we glean from this?

Let me explain it like this. We are told,

Up until April 3, 1977, few people knew anything about a place called Tenerife. In fact, most of us probably were not very sure of the location of the Canary Islands. But, on that day, at a little airport, two 747s collided on the runway.

That accident left 575 people dead, thousands mourning, and Tenerife at the focal point of world attention.

There are some questions about that tragedy which will never be answered, although the chief facts are clear. . . It was a foggy day, and the two pilots could not see one another, but, for some inexplicable reason the Dutch pilot began his takeoff without clearance from the control tower.

Obviously, he thought he was doing the right thing, but he was not.

The other plane was in the way, and he was unable to avoid it. As a result, hundreds of people were killed.

Every pilot is taught one very basic lesson at the beginning of his training. ***In an air traffic control zone, you do not do what seems best in your eyes: you do what the control tower tells you to do.***

That is always true, but it is especially true when the visibility is bad. The reason is, of course, very simple. The controller knows things that you do not know. He has better information and a better perspective to guide a pilot safely to his destination.

To act on your own causes disasters. That is an obvious principle of aviation, but it is also an important principle of life.

We live at a time when a thick moral fog has settled upon our society. The old moral landmarks have been obliterated, and no one seems to know the difference between right and wrong.

Ethically and morally, the visibility is nil, and people are groping for anything that will help them find their directions.

It is very tempting, at such a time to fly by the seat of your pants, living by your own standards, doing whatever is right in your own eyes. The passage of Scripture . . . gives us a vivid picture of what happens when we follow that method. The other alternative is to be guided by Someone who can see what we cannot see and who knows what we do not know.

The great promise of god's Word is that, if we commit ourselves to doing what is right in God's eyes, we will be directed safely through the moral fog. The Lord is not a controller who makes mistakes. He is the omniscient, loving Father who wants only the best for His children.

Hopefully you were shocked today by the depths of depravity exhibited in a society that has lost its moral compass. ***“Righteousness exalts a nation; but sin is a disgrace to any people”*** (Proverbs 14:34).

Hosea 9:9 – this event became infamous in the history of Israel as an example of her unrestrained depravity: ***“They have gone deep in depravity as in the days of Gibeah”***

Compromise always paves the way for moral decline - Common Courtesy reflected in biblical mandates like Hospitality and how we treat others must be restored - We cannot become Calloused to the wickedness around us - The graphic nature of Communications has intensified greatly in our media driven culture.

How does God want us to live in such a culture? Phil. 2:15 ***“as children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life”***

We cannot afford to choose to do whatever seems right in our own eyes; we must be focused in on the instructions from our control tower since God has the best perspective to guide our lives and protect us from moral catastrophe.

How true that is and as I close, I want to share a few Scriptures with you.

First of all, listen to what we are told in Jeremiah 10:23, **“It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.”**

I think that is important for us to understand. We are not wise enough to guide our own steps but the Lord knows the beginning from the end and thus, He can direct our steps because He knows what is best for us, the best road to take!

Thus, in Psalm 143:8 we are told, **“Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, For in You do I trust; Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, For I lift up my soul to You.”**

We must look to the Lord and allow Him to guide our steps. Start you day in fellowship with Him, be in His Word, be in prayer and then walk accordingly, as He leads you!

Also, in Psalm 48:14 we are told, **“For this is God, Our God forever and ever; He will be our guide Even to death.”**

I like that. He is going to guide us all the days of our life or **“Even to death.”**

But if we refuse, we see what can happen as Solomon tells us in Proverbs 14:12, **“There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”**

We think we know what we are doing, but, like this Levite found out, it is the way of death!

May we follow the Lord as we are told in Exodus 15:13, **“You in Your mercy have led forth The people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them in Your strength To Your holy habitation.”**

God is guiding us home, and it is a journey, but with our Great Shepherd leading us, He will see us safely home!