**WSU Christian Challenge Study Guide**

**An Ironic Conclusion**

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The long conclusion to the Book of Judges is incredibly disorienting. You would be hard pressed to find *anything* good in the conclusion. At virtually every turn, every character and group of people demonstrates a flippant disregard for God’s Law. By the end of the book, the sensitive reader will likely be asking himself or herself: “Why did the author even write these terrible things down? Did I *really* need to know this? What is the point?”

But there is most certainly a point being made in the conclusion. Read Judges 17:6, 18:1, 19:1, and 21:25.

* What point is the author trying to make in the conclusion?
* According to the author, what is the source of Israel’s problem?
* What is the connection between not having a king and not having a shared moral and spiritual perspective?

Read Ruth 4:18-22.

* What is significant about this genealogy?
* How does the conclusion of Ruth offer a hopeful alternative to the conclusion of Judges?

Under the reign of King David, God would redeem Israel from the social, moral, and religious pit they’d fallen into during time of the judges. But, ultimately, David’s kingdom did not endure. In the end, David would fall. He would not be able to save himself and he would not able to save Israel. God’s people *did* need a king, but they needed a king even greater than David. And God would eventually provide a Greater David in His Son, Jesus.

Read Mark 1:15.

* What is significant about the phrase “The time is fulfilled…”?
* What is significant about the phrase “…the kingdom of God is at hand…”?
* What does it mean to “…repent and believe in the gospel…”?
* In what ways did Jesus prove Himself to be the King of the world?
* In what ways did Jesus prove Himself to be greater than David?

Read John 3:36. John says that *either* we believe in and obey Jesus, the Great King, and have eternal life *or* we don’t believe in and obey Jesus, the Great King, and the wrath of God remains on us.

* In what way does the Kingship of Jesus *confront* us?
* In what way does the Kingship of Jesus *comfort* us?

Read Galatians 5:16-25. Shocker fans all wear black and yellow, chant the same chants, cheer the same cheers, and raise the same hand signals. They have a shared ethic because they have a shared allegiance. They do what they do because it’s who they are; their ethic flows out of their allegiance. And so does ours. Paul says: “If Christ is truly your King, then your life will reflect that reality. If Christ is your King, you will act like His servant; you will wear His colors, cheer what He cheers, and boo what He boos. You will watch Him, respond to Him, and praise Him.” You won’t do it perfectly, but you should have a consistent and settled direction in pursuit of Christ and His way of life.

* How does Jesus provide the solution to the problem noted by the author of Judges: “In those days there was no king…Every man did what was right in his own eyes…”?
* Who or what is on the throne of your heart?
* Does your ethic consistently reflect your allegiance to Christ?
* What step do you need to take to center the crown of your life atop Jesus’ head?