

## Judges 10:17-11:28

### Outline for the Congregation

Jephthah is not a “flat” character, but a real (and complex) person – a hero whose identity is clouded by rejection (v2, 7)

#### 1. The Rejected Hoodlum (vv1-11)

- Jephthah is a mighty warrior, “but” ... (vv1-3)
- his biography says a lot about the society he was born into and who he is
- we learn of God’s dealings with messy people in difficult times

#### 2. The Rejected Negotiation (vv12-28)

- Jephthah makes a convincing argument to avert an attack and keep peace
- his attempt to speak truth and make peace is rejected
- the people of Israel had not walked faithfully with God and now when they need Him are confused

#### 3. The Rejected Righteous One

- Jesus and his circumstances are very different from Jephthah, yet his experience is similar
- the one real hero in the Bible is the one whom we are to trust – who alone offers acceptance and hope

### Questions for Reflection

1. How has your background (family, early experiences, etc.) shaped who you are and with whom you associate? How do you view people who have difficult backgrounds and who behave in unacceptable ways (social interactions, criminal behavior, etc.)?

2. What determines your identity, actions, choices? How heavily does your past influence these things? How should a new identity, shaped and defined by God, change the course of your life?

3. Do you consistently walk with God, seeking to know God and His ways more deeply, and trying to honor Him at all times? Do you only think of God and call on Him when you are desperate? Is your speaking to God characterized by venting anger and disappointment because you tried to walk with Him but things aren’t turning out as you expected?

4. How can you come to have the kind of knowledge of and connection to God that will ready you for the challenges of life? How do you persevere faithfully when others come against you even if you have been upright in your actions?

5. While Jesus was upright in every way, he experienced ridicule and rejection. How can he be a help to you in light of both his excellence and his having suffered in ways that you may suffer? How can the fact that he was rejected by us in order that we would be accepted by God change the way you understand yourself and the choices you make?