

Judges 19:1-30
Unspeakable Violations
Sermon Outline

Introduction: Judges 19 documents the frightful violence and callousness that rise to the surface when a people abandon their first love for God. If we push God away it is only a matter of time before we push people away—and worse.

I) The deepest crime of Judges 19

A) The whole chapter is about hospitality—good and bad

What makes Gibeah's crime so horrific is the contrasting behavior in the rest of the chapter

- 1) The welcome of the concubine's father

- 2) The welcome of the old man in Gibeah
 - Sodom revisited

- 3) The heart of Gibeah's crime

B) Why is poor hospitality such a bad thing?

C) The greatest villain of the piece

- Cowardly
- Callous

II) The meaning of the story for us

A) Be more hospitable

B) Receive God

C) The compelling reason for receiving God

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) What shocks us in this story is the gang rape of the young woman. What shocks Israel, and quite possibly the narrator, is the violation of the rules of hospitality. List the evidence pointing to breach of hospitality as the deeper crime. Note especially the host's plea in vv. 23-24.
- 2) Compare the behavior of the concubine's father, and then the behavior of the old man, to the behavior of the people of Gibeah. What are the differences? How does the comparison make vivid the seriousness of Gibeah's crime?
- 3) Compare the story in Judges 19 to the story in Genesis 19:1-29. How are they similar and how are they different. How does the comparison make vivid the extremity of the wickedness in Gibeah?
- 4) Reflect on the following as an explanation for why the writer seems to believe that breach of hospitality is the worst of all the crimes in Judges 19: "We can refrain, or be prevented—from rape; but we might still hate or spurn or abuse in other ways. But if we are truly hospitable—eager to receive each other, to refresh each other, to protect each other, to extend our time with each other, to share what we have with each other, to make each other's hearts glad—then rape will be unthinkable (it won't even cross our minds), nor will any other social crime."
- 5) Why might we rightly call the Levite the greatest villain in the story?
- 6) The deep message of judges 19 in its context is this: "If we push God away, it is only a matter of time before we start pushing each other away." Why is this so?
- 7) Compare the priest in this story to Jesus our faithful high-priest. The one threw his bride to the mob. The other left his bride safely inside while he faced the brutality. Thank Jesus.