

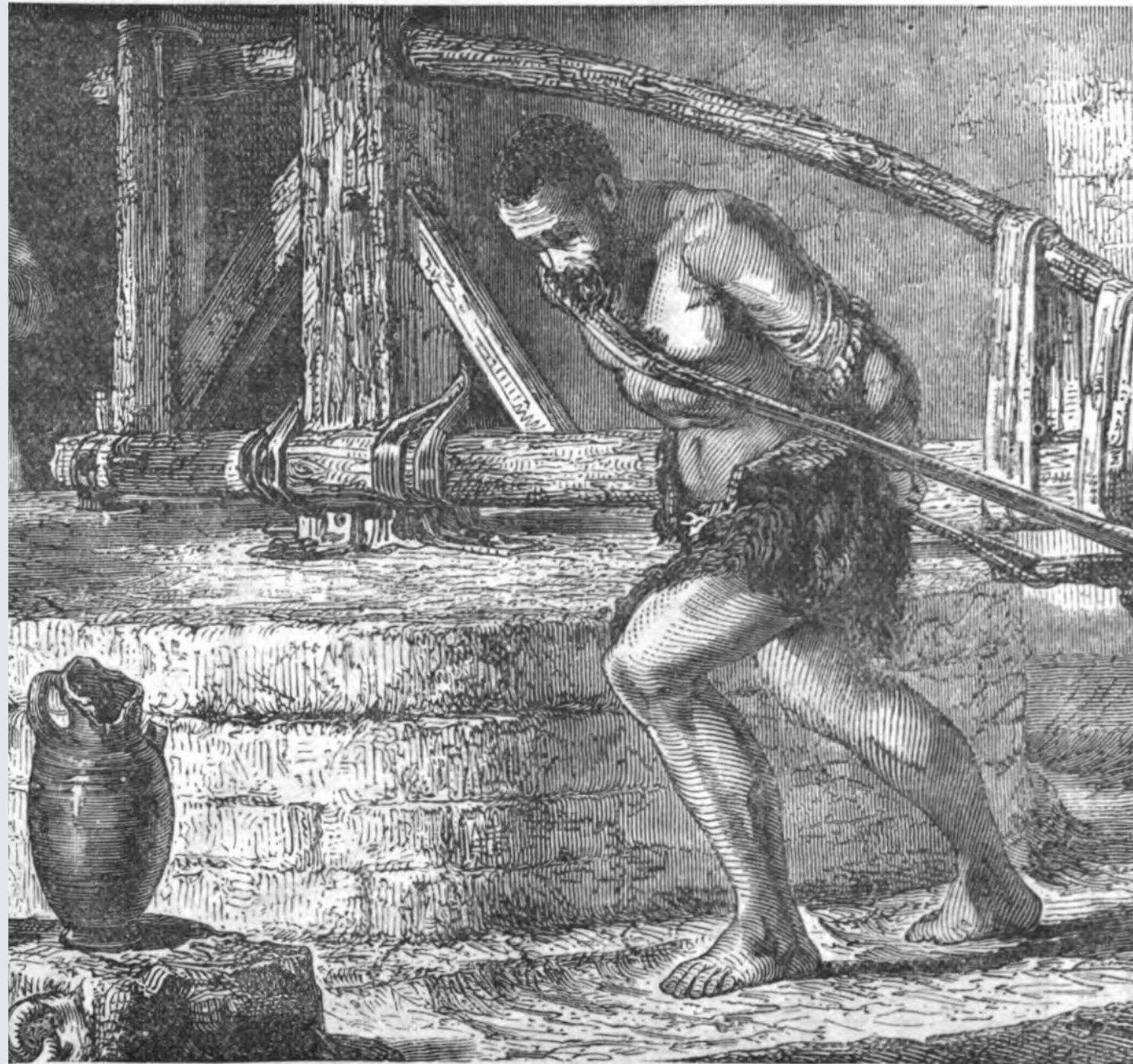
When Life Comes To A Grinding Halt

Redemptive Recovery From An Ethical Failure

Presented By

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“If...”

(By Rudyard Kipling, 1909)

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build them up with worn out tools;

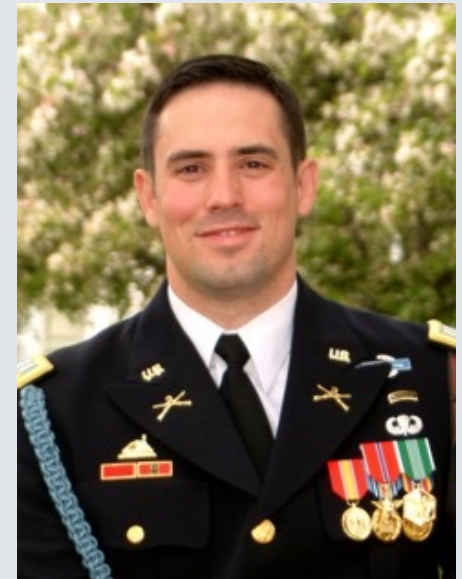
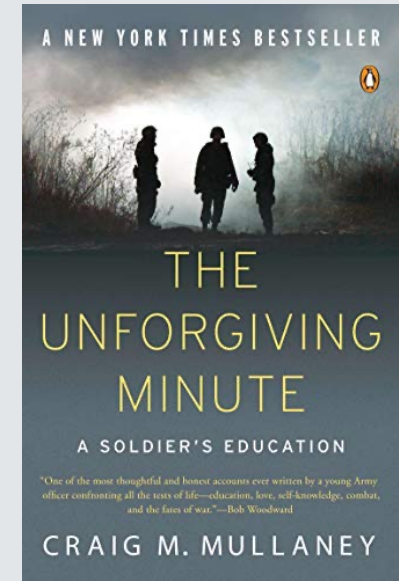
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;

If you can fill **the unforgiving minute**

With sixty seconds' worth of distance run—
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

The Unforgiving Minute

- When the call came to lead his platoon into battle and earn his soldiers' salutes, was he as ready as he had hoped to be?
- Had his education been sufficient for the unforgiving minute/s he would face?
- **Validated** in 2003, when CPT Craig Mullaney (USMA, '00) and his platoon were caught in a deadly firefight with Al Qaeda fighters on Losano Ridge near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border



The Unforgiving Minute Too Often Results in An Ethical Failure

- ❖ **Commander suspended over alleged misconduct**
- ❖ **Two junior officers relieved of duty over sexual harassment case**
- ❖ **Commander relieved over “derogatory comments” on Facebook**
- ❖ **Officer fired for bullying staff and subordinates**
- ❖ **Commander fired due to poor command climate/loss of trust**
- ❖ **Officer fired after allegations of improper relationship**

Description of an Ethical Failure

And the Philistines seized (Samson) and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison.

--Judges 16:21

Samson Had A Divine Calling From the LORD

And the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. Therefore, be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines." Judges 13:3-5, ESV

Samson Disregarded His Ethical Boundaries

1) He ate honey out of the body of a dead lion. (Jud. 14:9)

 **Eat nothing unclean**

2) He prepared a drunken bachelor's party. (Jud. 14:10)

 **Drink no wine or strong drink**

1) He allowed his head to be shaved. (Jud. 16:17)

 **No razor shall come upon your head**

Bottom Line:

Samson did what was right in his own eyes (Jud. 14:3,7)

Signs When Leaders Are in Trouble*

- 1) Failure to address glaring character flaws**
- 2) Counts on deception to safeguard yourself**
- 3) Acts impulsively or on a whim**
- 4) Overcome by a weak area**
- 5) Misuse of God-given gifts**

*Source: *"Samson and the Law of Solid Ground"*, The Maxwell Leadership Bible, 294-295.

God's Mercy Prevails Over Our Ethical Failures

"But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved." --Judges 16:22

Other examples:

--Balaam's donkey (Num. 22:21-39)

--Nathan to David (2 Sam. 12)

--Peter (Luke 22:31-32)

--Warnings from the OT (1 Cor. 10:1-11)

*"For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment."
--James 2:13, ESV*

Samson's Unforgiving Minute?

Then Samson called to the LORD and said, "O Lord GOD, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes." -- Judges 16: 28

Samson's Prayer

- O LORD God. (Jehovah Elohim)
- Remember me (my Divine call as Your judge)
- Strengthen me one more time
- Avenge my eyes (for Your Great Name)

"And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. And Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines." Then he bowed with all his strength, and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life. Then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had judged Israel twenty years."

--Judges 16:29-31

Questions For Discussion

- Think about one of your biggest ethical failures or moral lapses. What warning signs did God provide beforehand to avoid them?
- How do ethical failures affect our relationship with Jesus Christ? Others?
- Why is it so important to show repentance instead of remorse when you have an ethical failure?
- How have your past ethical failures affected your future ministry opportunities?
- How have you seen God accomplish His redemptive purposes in your life in spite of your ethical failures?