**Micah’s Mess (Judges 17-18)**

Judges ends with two stories set in the third generation of the judges. They show how quickly Israel goes astray. In Micah’s story, we find how God’s people get embroiled in a mess of idolatry. We think about the lessons we can take from this for building healthy churches, institutions, and movements.

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1. **The Structure of Judges**
   1. The two appendices: idolatry and sexual sin
   2. There was no king: Judges 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25
   3. How they go astray in the third generation
      1. Judges 2:7; 18:30; 20:28
      2. Moses and Aaron associated with idolatry and sexual immorality
      3. Links and contrasts with book of Ruth
2. **Everything is messed up, like today!**
   1. Words and actions at odds (17:1-6, 7-13)
      1. 17:1-6 a blessing which is a curse
      2. 17:7-13 a ‘father’ who is more like a ‘son’
   2. ‘Bigger is better’ (18:1-20)
   3. ‘Might is right’ (18:21-26, 27-31)
      1. Both sides are bad
3. **Lessons for building healthy movements and organisations**
   1. Be careful about doctrine
      1. Pressure for syncretism in every age
   2. See through pious words
   3. Avoid hidden power structures
   4. Who’s paying for this?
   5. What are my personal ambitions? What are our corporate ambitions?
   6. Be wary of alignment with power
4. **The way of Christ**