

How to Use Sermon Resources

- READ AHEAD TOGETHER - MCG's should use the Devotional at the end of this resource as a reading plan for the week leading up to your meeting.
- SIT UNDER THE WORD - This resource is filled with scripture references. Read them aloud, together before you answer any questions.
- APPLY TRUTH - The goal is deep discussion and application, not necessarily to complete this resource. Don't squash a good discussion. If you get into something important along the way that's fine.

Small Group Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer [2 mins]

Use the Overview [5 mins]

- Cover any key points for people who missed parts or all of the sermon

Scripture Deep Dive [30-40 mins]

- Opening Question
- Read the scripture for each question then ask the question. Some have multiple scriptures.

Practical Applications [10 mins]

- This section is optional but there for you should you need a final thought or something to challenge your group with.

Close in Prayer

- In this extended prayer time, ask others to pray as they feel led, pray in a circle, pray over one another, pray to your left, or pray for someone specific. Whatever seems best.

Split Time (if applicable)

- Men with men, women with women
- Share in a circle. "What's one thing you want to celebrate? What do you need prayer and accountability for?"
- After everyone shares, pray in a circle for the person to your left/right.

SERMON OVERVIEW

“Two Bad Kingdoms, One Good God” - 1 Kings 14-16

Sermon Summary: This sermon examines the reigns of several kings in Israel and Judah, highlighting the cycle of sin and its consequences across generations. It emphasizes that all people are more sinful than they realize, and that sin has far-reaching impacts. However, the sermon also underscores God's incredible grace, exemplified through the provision of good kings like Asa and ultimately through Jesus Christ. The central message is that repentance is the only path to true peace and reconciliation with God.

Key Points:

- We are more sinful than we think
- Our sin is more impactful than we realize
- God is more gracious than we could ever imagine
- Repentance is the only path to peace
- Sin tends to worsen over generations without intervention
- Leaders have a responsibility to model repentance
- God's grace is evident even in times of widespread sin

Scripture Reference:

- - 1 Kings 14-16 (focusing on the reigns of various kings in Israel and Judah)

Stories:

- The narrative of King Asa leading Judah in repentance and reforms
- Personal anecdote about the speaker's father modeling repentance
- Brief mentions of popular stories (Star Wars, Lion King, Batman) to illustrate the concept of good vs. evil
- The overarching narrative of God's redemptive plan through the line of David, culminating in Jesus Christ

Scripture Deep Dive

Opening Question:

Reflect on a time in your life when you experienced a divide or conflict in relationships, similar to the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah. How did that situation affect your understanding of peace and reconciliation?

1. You are more sinful than you think.

1. **1 Kings 14:22, Romans 3:23** - How does the description of Judah's sins in 1 Kings 14:22 compare to the universal sin nature described in Romans 3:23? What does this tell us about the pervasive nature of sin in humanity and our own hearts?
2. **1 Kings 14:30, James 1:13-15** - In what ways do the conflicts between Rehoboam and Jeroboam highlight the progression of sin described in James 1:13-15? How does understanding this progression help in recognizing areas of potential sin in your own life?

2. Your sin is more impactful than you realize.

3. **1 Kings 15:3, Exodus 20:5-6** - Considering the generational impact of Abijam's sins, how does the warning in Exodus 20:5-6 about the consequences of sin affect your view of personal responsibility and its effects on future generations?
4. **1 Kings 15:26, Matthew 5:14-16** - How can the pattern of sin and its negative impact seen in King Nadab inform our understanding of the call to be "the light of the world" in Matthew 5:14-16? How can recognizing the impact of our sin motivate us to live out this calling?

3. Your God is more gracious than you could ever imagine.

5. **1 Kings 15:4, Ephesians 2:8-10** - What parallels can you find between God's grace towards Judah through King Asa and the grace described in Ephesians 2:8-10? How does this comparison deepen your appreciation for grace in your own life?
6. **1 Kings 15:11-14, 1 John 1:9** - King Asa led Judah in repentance and renewal; how does this align with the promise of forgiveness in 1 John 1:9? How does this understanding of repentance challenge or encourage your current spiritual practices?

Practical Applications:

1. How can understanding that "repentance is the only path to peace" influence the way you approach conflicts in your daily life, whether with family, friends, or coworkers?

Suggested Answer: Recognizing that true peace comes from reconciliation with God and others can prompt individuals to prioritize confession and forgiveness in conflicts. Practically, this means being quick to apologize, seeking to understand others' perspectives, and making amends where possible.

2. In what ways can acknowledging that "you are more sinful than you think" impact your daily habits and interactions with others?**

Suggested Answer: This awareness can lead to greater humility and reliance on God's grace, affecting decisions, conversations, and attitudes. It can prompt individuals to be more mindful of their thoughts and actions, helping them to avoid judgment and show grace to others.

3. Considering that "your sin is more impactful than you realize," how might this understanding change the way you view and manage your responsibilities at work or at home?

Suggested Answer: By realizing the broader impact of personal sin, individuals might be more intentional in modeling integrity and encouraging positive behavior, knowing their actions set precedents. This can lead to being more deliberate in upholding values like honesty, patience, and kindness.

4. How does recognizing God's immense grace encourage you to respond differently to your personal failures or shortcomings?**

Suggested Answer: It can transform guilt into gratitude, leading one to embrace redemption rather than wallow in shame. Practically, this means focusing on growth and progress instead of perfection, and leaning into God's forgiveness and transformation.

5. What steps can you take this week to practice leading in "repentance," as exemplified by King Asa, in your personal life or community?**

Suggested Answer: Individuals could set aside time for self-reflection and prayer, identifying areas needing repentance. They might also initiate conversations to ask forgiveness from others and work actively on correcting behaviors, thereby fostering a culture of openness and healing.

5 Day Devotional

Day 1 Reading : 1 Kings 14:21-24, 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

Devotional: In these verses, we see Judah descending into sin under King Rehoboam's rule. They were engaging in idolatry and other detestable practices, rejecting God's commandments. Similarly, the Apostle Paul warns the Corinthians to be vigilant, for sin can easily entrap us. God provides a way to endure temptation and urges us to actively seek Him for strength.

Reflection Question: Consider an area in your life where you might be prone to temptation. How can you rely on God's strength to overcome it this week?

Day 2 Reading: 1 Kings 15:1-5, Romans 2:4

Devotional: King Abijam followed in the sinful footsteps of his father, yet God remained faithful because of His covenant with David. God's kindness, as Paul explains, is meant to lead us to repentance. This kindness is a reminder of His persistent faithfulness, even when we are not.

Prayer Suggestion: Thank God for His unwavering faithfulness, and ask Him to lead your heart towards genuine repentance in areas where you may have strayed.

Day 3 Reading: 1 Kings 15:9-15, 2 Timothy 2:22**

Devotional: King Asa was different from his predecessors, choosing to do what was right in God's sight and leading Judah in repentance. Paul encourages Timothy to flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness. Just as Asa turned away from idolatry, we too are called to actively pursue godly living.

Reflection Question: What steps can you take to remove distractions or idols in your life that keep you from wholeheartedly following God?

Day 4 Reading: 1 Kings 15:25-34, James 1:14-15

Devotional: The kings of Israel repeatedly did evil in the Lord's sight, leading the nation into further sin. James warns that unchecked desires give birth to sin, which ultimately leads to death. Recognizing the destructive path of sin helps us understand the importance of timely repentance.

Prayer Suggestion: Ask God to reveal any sin you may be nurturing and seek His help in turning away from it before it takes root.

Day 5: 1 Kings 16:25-30; New Testament Companion: Romans 5:8**

Devotional Message: Despite the continued evil practices under Kings Omri and Ahab, God's grace remains overwhelmingly evident. Paul reminds us that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. The grace and mercy of God are far more profound than the depth of human sinfulness.

Reflection Question: How does understanding the extent of God's grace influence your view of His love and your response to His calling in your life?