

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

"Your Theology Impacts Your Biography" - 1 Kings 21-22

Sermon Summary:

This sermon examines the contrasting lives of Naboth and King Ahab from 1 Kings 21-22, exploring how what we believe about God (our theology) directly impacts how we live our lives (our biography). The sermon challenges believers to examine the gaps between their stated beliefs about God and their actual daily practices, calling for authentic faith that demonstrates costly obedience rather than convenient compromise.

Key Points:

- Your theology (what you believe about God) directly impacts your biography (how you live and the legacy you leave)
- Naboth viewed God's word as the final authority in his life and the foundation of his identity, refusing to compromise even when it cost him his life
- Ahab had a "form of godliness" by consulting 400 prophets, but denied its power by ignoring the true prophet and doing what he wanted anyway
- There are often gaps between what we say we believe about God and how we actually live our lives
- Examples of gaps include: claiming we're made in God's image while tearing ourselves or others down; believing in forgiveness while holding bitterness; acknowledging sin's seriousness while not fighting against it; believing the church should share the gospel while never telling anyone about Jesus

Scripture Reference:

- 1 Kings 21:1-29, 1 Kings 22:1-40 (Micaiah's prophecy and Ahab's death)
- Leviticus 25:23 (The land belongs to God)
- Numbers 36:7 (Inheritance not to transfer between tribes)
- 1 Peter 1:3-4 (Our inheritance through Christ)
- Genesis 12 (God's promise of the land)

Stories:

- The illustration of Corrie Ten Boom and her family hiding Jews during the Holocaust, demonstrating faith as "signing your name at the bottom of a blank sheet and letting God fill it in"
- Personal anecdote about calling mom from the movie lobby to ask permission while already watching the movie, illustrating the pattern of seeking approval for what we've already decided to do

Scripture Deep Dive

Opening Question

Reflect on a moment in your life when you had to make a difficult choice that involved standing firm in your beliefs. How did your faith influence your decision-making process?

Discussion Questions

1: Naboth's Theology - God's Word as the Final Authority

- **1 Kings 21:1-3:** What does Naboth's refusal to sell his vineyard reveal about his understanding of God's promises and commands regarding ancestral land? Reflect on Leviticus 25:23 and Numbers 36:7 for additional context about the importance of land inheritance in Israelite culture.

2. Ahab's Theology - Disregard for God's Authority

- **1 Kings 21:25-26:** What does Ahab's willingness to use deceit and violence to obtain Naboth's vineyard indicate about his relationship with God's commands? Compare this with Proverbs 14:12 and discuss the consequences of following one's desires over God's directions.
- **James 1:14-15:** How do these verses help us understand the progression of Ahab's sinful desires leading to action? Discuss the dangers of unchecked desires and how they can impact our relationship with God.

3. The Impact of Theology on Biography

- **1 Kings 22:29-34:** Analyze how Ahab's willingness to disguise himself in battle further demonstrates his tendency to act against God's will. Discuss how his decisions ultimately align with Proverbs 16:18, which says, "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."
- **Matthew 7:24-27:** How do these verses illustrate the consequences of building one's life on different foundations? Compare how Naboth and Ahab's actions reflect their respective foundations and the outcomes of those choices.

4. The Value of Inheritance from God

- **1 Peter 1:3-4:** How does the inheritance promised to us as believers through Jesus Christ compare to the land inheritance Naboth received?
- **Colossians 3:1-4:** In what ways should our eternal inheritance shape our priorities and decisions?

5. Recognizing and Closing the Gaps

- **1 John 1:6-7:** How do these verses address the gap between professed beliefs and actions? Discuss how walking in the light can help close these gaps.
- **James 2:14-17:** In what ways do these verses challenge us to examine the authenticity of our faith through our works? Reflect on practical steps to ensure that your stated beliefs and daily actions are congruent.

Practical Applications:

1. How can Naboth's commitment to God's word as seen in 1 Kings 21 serve as an example for us in dealing with modern-day ethical dilemmas?

Suggested Answer: Naboth's unwavering stance on keeping his God-given inheritance teaches us to prioritize our values and convictions over societal pressures or material gain. In modern-day situations, whether it's at work, school, or home, we can apply this lesson by standing firm in our beliefs even when faced with tempting offers or unethical practices.

2. What are some practical ways you can identify and address gaps between your stated beliefs and daily actions, as discussed regarding Ahab's life choices?

Suggested Answer: Regular self-reflection and accountability can help bridge these gaps. This might involve journaling to track actions and decisions, seeking feedback from trusted friends or family, and setting tangible goals to align actions more closely with beliefs. Prayer and meditation on scripture can also provide clarity and conviction.

3. In what ways can we avoid the mistakes of Ahab when it comes to seeking advice from others and ensuring it aligns with God's will?

Suggested Answer: Before seeking advice, it's important to pray for discernment and seek guidance directly from God through prayer and scripture. When receiving advice, weigh it against biblical principles and consider its alignment with God's character.

4. Reflecting on Jezebel's actions in securing the vineyard, how can unchecked desires lead to justifying unethical behavior, and what steps can we take to guard against this in our own lives?

Suggested Answer: Unchecked desires can skew our moral compass, leading us to rationalize wrong actions for perceived gain. To guard against this, it's crucial to practice contentment and gratitude, regularly examine our motives, and establish boundaries that help keep our desires in check. Regular accountability with a trusted friend can also provide an additional layer of protection.

5. What lessons can we learn from Micaiah's example about the importance of speaking God's truth in a world that often prefers comforting lies? How can we apply this in our daily interactions?

Suggested Answer: Micaiah teaches us the value of courage in speaking truth, even when it's unpopular or risky. In daily life, we can apply this by being honest and transparent, encouraging healthy discussions rather than avoiding uncomfortable truths. This also involves listening actively to others and sharing God's truth with love and respect, ensuring our words align with gospel values.

5 Day Devotional

Day 1: Ahab's Request and Naboth's Refusal

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 21:1-4, Proverbs 19:21

Devotional: Naboth's refusal to give up his vineyard to Ahab highlights his deep reverence for God's promises. Despite Ahab's authority and offer of wealth, Naboth remains steadfast in his faithfulness. Remember that true contentment comes from honoring God above earthly possessions or power.

Reflection/Prayer: Ask God for the strength to prioritize His word over worldly temptations, and reflect on an area of your life where you may need to adopt Naboth's commitment.

Day 2: Jezebel's Scheme

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 21:5-16, James 4:1-3

Devotional: Jezebel's manipulation and deceit fulfill Ahab's desires but directly oppose God's righteousness. This act serves as a warning about the destructive potential of envy and the pursuit of selfish gain. Often, unchecked desires can lead us to justify wrong actions.

Reflection/Prayer: Pray for discernment to recognize when desires conflict with God's will, and ask for the courage to act justly in challenging situations.

Day 3: Elijah's Prophecy Against Ahab

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 21:17-29, Galatians 6:7-8

Devotional: Elijah delivers a stern prophecy to Ahab, underscoring the principle that our actions have consequences. While Ahab's temporary repentance delays his judgment, it does not erase the sin's impact. This passage is a powerful reminder of God's justice—His patience and forgiveness are profound, yet unrepented sin bears fruit.

Reflection/Prayer: Reflect on areas in your life where you need genuine repentance and ask God for the humility to change and align more closely with His will.

Day 4: The False Prophets and Micaiah's Courage

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 22:1-28, 2 Timothy 4:3-4

Devotional: Micaiah's lone voice of truth among the false prophets exemplifies courageous faith. He stands firm in delivering God's message, despite its unpopularity, highlighting the importance of integrity in the face of opposition. Always seek and speak the truth, even when it is uncomfortable.

Reflection/Prayer: Pray for the strength to be a voice for truth in your community, and reflect on situations where you might need to stand firm in your beliefs.

Day 5: Ahab's Demise

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 22:29-40, Matthew 7:26-27

Devotional: Ahab's downfall culminates in a seemingly random arrow, a vivid demonstration of God's sovereignty and fulfillment of prophecy. His life, built on disobedience and deceit, serves as a cautionary tale about the foundations on which we build our lives. Ultimately, the security of our plans depends on alignment with God's will.

Reflection/Prayer: Reflect on the foundation of your life choices, and ask God for wisdom and guidance to build your life upon His word and truth. Pray for insight into any changes you may need to make.