

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

"Faith, Fear and the Word of God" - 1 Kings 12:1-14:20

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the consequences of living by fear rather than faith, using the story of Jeroboam's reign over Israel as a cautionary tale. It highlights how Jeroboam's fear-driven decisions led him to abandon God's commands, create false idols, and manipulate his people. The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting God's promises, seeking His guidance, and obeying His word, even when faced with challenging circumstances.

Key Points:

- Jeroboam chose fear over faith, leading to disastrous consequences
- Seeking God's counsel is crucial when making decisions
- Attempting to control situations rather than trusting God often leads to sin
- Lying to protect oneself or one's interests reveals misplaced priorities
- There are three potential responses to God's word: obey, reject, or reduce its authority
- Christians must examine areas in their lives where fear may be leading instead of faith

Scripture Reference:

- 1 Kings 12-14

Stories:

- The division of Israel into two kingdoms under Rehoboam and Jeroboam
- Jeroboam's creation of golden calves as alternative worship sites
- The prophecy and death of the man of God from Judah
- The illness and death of Jeroboam's son
- Modern analogy of New Coke's launch and failure compared to Jeroboam's actions

Scripture Deep Dive

Opening Question:

Consider 1 Kings 12:28-30: Have you ever faced a situation where something was presented as more convenient than remaining faithful to a previous commitment? How did you decide which path to take, and what was the outcome?

A Picture of Fear Over Faith

Jeroboam's Lack of Seeking God - 1 Kings 12:26-28

1. In 1 Kings 12:26-28, Jeroboam sought counsel for his fears rather than turning to God. Compare this with Proverbs 3:5-6. What might Jeroboam have done differently if he truly trusted in the Lord?
2. Considering Philippians 4:6-7, how might prayer and thanksgiving have changed Jeroboam's approach, and how can this practice help us face our fears today?

Control and Manipulation - 1 Kings 12:31-33

3. Looking at 1 Kings 12:31-33 and Genesis 3:1-6, how do acts of control and manipulation often lead to sin? What lessons can we learn from these two examples?
4. Using James 4:13-15, discuss how Jeroboam's actions contrast with the biblical teaching on making plans. Why is it crucial to surrender control to God according to this passage?

Lies to Protect - 1 Kings 14:9

5. In 1 Kings 14:9, Jeroboam is accused of creating false gods. Reflect on Ephesians 4:25. How do lies distort not only our relationship with others but also with God?
6. Referencing Psalm 101:7, discuss how habitual lying affects leadership and community. How does this apply to both Jeroboam's time and today's society?

Potential Responses to God's Word

Obedying God's Word (1 Kings 13:1-10)

7. Read 1 Kings 13:1-10 - Compare the Judean man of God's obedience to Luke 11:28. Why is obedience to God a recurring theme, and what are the promised blessings of obedience?
8. Read 1 Samuel 15:22 - Reflect on how the outcome for the man of God might have been different if he had adhered to this verse. How does this perspective challenge our understanding of sacrifices versus obedience?

Rejecting God's Word (1 Kings 13:4-6)

9. Read 1 Kings 13:4-6 - Jeroboam rejects the prophetic warning. Compare his reaction to Matthew 13:13-15. Why might some people choose to reject clear warnings from God?
10. Using Hebrews 3:12-15, analyze the consequences of a hardened heart. How can we safeguard our hearts against this tendency?

Reducing God's Word (1 Kings 13:18-19)

11. Review 1 Kings 13:18-19 alongside Galatians 1:6-9. How does altering God's message pose a danger to one's faith, and what does Paul warn the Galatians about in relation to the gospel?
12. Discuss 2 Timothy 4:3-4 in light of the man of God's decision to believe the lie. How should we discern and remain faithful to the true teachings of the Bible in a world full of contrary voices?

Practical Applications:

1. **Question:** The sermon discusses the concept of "fear over faith." Can you think of a time in your life when you acted out of fear instead of trusting in faith? What was the outcome, and how might it have been different if you had trusted in God?

Suggested Answer: Individuals may share personal stories where fear led them to make decisions such as avoiding a challenge or opportunity due to uncertainty. Discussing outcomes might include missed opportunities or increased stress. Highlight how trusting in God could have brought peace or led to better decisions.

2. **Question:** The sermon highlights the importance of seeking God's guidance rather than solely relying on self or others. What practical ways can we ensure we seek God first in decision-making processes?

Suggested Answer: Some practical steps include regular prayer and Bible study to understand God's will, seeking counsel from spiritually mature individuals, and pausing to reflect before making decisions to allow space for God's guidance.

3. **Question:** Based on the story of Jeroboam, what are some contemporary "golden calves" or false securities we might be tempted to place our trust in instead of God?

Suggested Answer: Discussing this might include things like material wealth, career success, social approval, or technology. Encourage identifying personal "golden calves" to address them directly in their spiritual life.

4. **Question:** How can we recognize when we're trying to control or manipulate situations in our lives? What steps can we take to surrender control to God instead?

Suggested Answer: Signs of trying to control might include anxiety, frustration when things don't go as planned, or a failure to delegate. Steps to surrender include prayerfully inviting God into situations, practicing trust by letting go of outcomes, and reminding oneself of God's faithfulness.

5. **Question:** Reflecting on the sermon, what are some potential responses we can have to God's Word, and how can we ensure our response is one of obedience rather than rejection or reduction?

Suggested Answer: Responses might include partial obedience, ignoring scriptural commands, or rationalizing disobedience. Ensuring a response of obedience involves accountability in a faith community, daily application of scripture, and openness to conviction and repentance.

5 Day Devotional

Day 1: 1 Kings 12:1-15, Proverbs 11:14

Devotional: Rehoboam's failure to heed wise counsel led to the division of the kingdom. His choice to listen to youthful peers rather than experienced elders serves as a reminder of the importance of seeking and valuing wisdom. Proverbs 11:14 underscores the need for guidance, teaching us that decisions made in isolation or based on hasty, foolish advice can lead to significant consequences.

Reflection Question: Reflect on a time when you faced a critical decision. Did you seek wise counsel, and how did that impact the outcome?

Day 2: 1 Kings 12:16-24, Romans 12:18

Devotional: The kingdom's division reflects the strife that can arise when leadership fails to prioritize peace and unity. Romans 12:18 encourages us to live at peace with everyone, as far as it depends on us. While the division in Israel was part of God's sovereign plan, we are called to be peacemakers, seeking harmony in our spheres of influence.

Prayer Suggestion: Pray for God to reveal areas in your life where you can pursue peace and unity, asking for His guidance to mend any broken relationships.

Day 3: 1 Kings 12:25-33, Galatians 1:6-9

Devotional: Jeroboam introduced false worship to secure his reign, turning people away from true worship in Jerusalem. Galatians 1:6-9 warns against distortion of the Gospel, emphasizing the danger of altering divine truths for personal gain or convenience. This reminds us to guard against anything that might compromise our devotion to God's original teachings.

Reflection Question: Consider ways you may have compromised your faith for convenience. How can you realign your worship and life with God's truth?

Day 4: 1 Kings 13:1-34, James 1:22

Devotional: The story of the man of God who disobeyed God's direct command serves as a sobering reminder of the importance of obedience. James 1:22 calls us to be doers of the Word, not just hearers. Committing to God's instructions, even when challenged, is crucial for living a faith-filled life.

Reflection Question: Identify an area in your life where you need to act upon God's Word more faithfully. What steps will you take to ensure obedience?

Day 5: 1 Kings 14:1-20, Matthew 7:24-27

Devotional: The tragic end of Jeroboam's reign illustrates the consequences of a foundation built on disobedience and idolatry. Matthew 7:24-27 contrasts the wise builder, who builds his life on obedience to Christ's words, with the foolish one who does not. A foundation in Christ sustains us through life's storms; therefore, we must strive to base our lives on His teachings.

Prayer Suggestion: Ask God to help you build every aspect of your life on the firm foundation of His Word, ensuring that your decisions and actions reflect His will.