

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.

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

Return: Nahum

Sermon Summary:

Drawing from the often-overlooked book of Nahum, this sermon explores what the fall of Nineveh reveals about the character of God and the spiritual condition of his people. Pastor Matt presents three core truths: God is powerful, God is just, and God is faithful. The sermon challenges believers to examine whether they are positioned as those whom God is for or against, grounding the answer not in life circumstances but in faith in the completed work of Jesus Christ.

Key Points:

- God is powerful: God's authority over nations is absolute.
- God is just: Though it may appear that the wicked prosper, God's judgment is certain and precise.
- God is faithful: God cares for those who take refuge in him.
- God is for those who place their faith in Christ
- Spiritual drift is gradual: Nineveh's return to wickedness over four generations illustrates how revival can erode without intentional pursuit of God.
- Four causes of spiritual drift: Busyness, cultural compromise, self-absorption, counterfeit substitutes replace God as the source of meaning, purpose, and value.

Scripture Reference:

- Nahum 1-3
- Romans 8:31-39 -- affirms that God is for those who belong to him
- Hebrews 2:1 -- warns believers to pay attention to what they have heard so they do not drift away

Stories:

- Jonah and the Ninevites: God called Jonah to preach to Nineveh and they repented. Roughly one hundred years later, Nineveh had returned to its former wickedness.
- The destruction of Nineveh: Historically, Nineveh was destroyed by Babylon and Medes-- fulfilling Nahum's prophecy approximately fifty years after it was written.
- The living funeral service: Used to illustrate how Nahum's third chapter functions as a funeral proclamation over Nineveh before its fall had even begun.
- The Cape Hatteras Lighthouse: Originally built a half mile from the shore, the lighthouse had to be relocated in 1999 because coastal erosion had brought the water dangerously close. This illustrated how cultural compromise gradually erodes the foundation of a believer's faith.
- Little Rascals film reference: A humorous scene in which a character interprets a sudden rainstorm as God expressing hatred toward him was used to illustrate how people often judge God's posture toward them based on negative circumstances rather than faith.
- The Carolina Hurricanes Stanley Cup celebration: A crowd of over 150,000 people in downtown Raleigh was used as a backdrop to pose the question of whether people see themselves as those whom God is for or against, noting that outward celebration can mask deep personal pain and spiritual confusion.

Scripture Deep Dive

Opening Question

1. Read Nahum 1:7, Psalm 46:1–3 and Proverbs 18:10 – “The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.”

How have you practically experienced God as a “stronghold” in a specific season of trouble in your life, and what made you consciously choose (or fail to choose) to take refuge in him rather than in something else?

Point 1 – God is powerful

2. Read Nahum 1:3–4, Jonah 1:4–17

In what ways does God’s “great power” in creation and history confront any tendency in you to see your weekly problems as bigger than God’s ability to act?

3. Read Nahum 1:2–3, 2 Peter 3:9 and Psalm 73:16–20

How does holding together both God’s patience and his power change the way you think about delayed answers to prayer or long-standing injustice—does it move you more toward trust or frustration, and why?

Point 2 – God is just

4. Read Nahum 1:8; 3:1–3, Romans 2:4–6

How does Nahum’s picture of God’s judgment against Nineveh help you sort out the tension between God’s mercy and his justice, especially when wickedness seems to prosper for a long time?

5. Nahum 1:3; Romans 3:23–26 – Nahum says the Lord “will by no means clear the guilty,” yet Paul says God is “just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”

How do these passages together clarify the difference between God “letting sin slide” and God justly dealing with sin at the cross, and what does that mean for how seriously you take sin in your own life? (Consider also Isaiah 53:4–6.)

Point 3 – Warning about drift from God

6. Read Hebrews 2:1; Nahum 1 –contrast with Jonah 3:5–10

How do the four drift factors named in the sermon—busyness, cultural compromise, self-absorption, and counterfeit substitutes—currently show up in your own rhythms, and what is one concrete change you need to make this week to “pay attention” so that what is now ordinary with God does not become unwanted in the next generation?