

## **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**

## **“Where Is Your Confidence?” - 2 Kings 6:8-8:29**

**Sermon Summary:** This sermon from 2 Kings 6-8 explores how believers can maintain confidence in God regardless of their circumstances. Through the prophet Elisha's experiences, the message emphasizes that God's sovereignty extends beyond what we can physically see, and His spiritual reality is more substantial than our earthly struggles. Pastor Bryson teaches that true confidence comes from asking God to open our eyes to see what He is already doing, recognizing our desperation apart from Christ, and trusting in God's ultimate plan even when judgment and hopelessness seem imminent.

### **Key Points:**

- You can have confidence in God even when you don't know what to do by asking Him to open your eyes to see the spiritual reality beyond the physical
- We cannot solve spiritual problems with worldly wisdom; we must look upward to God rather than inward to ourselves
- You can have confidence in God when people are cynical by first recognizing your own desperation and need for Him
- Pride and self-reliance prevent us from trusting in God's deliverance and provision
- Believers cannot hold the good news of Jesus to themselves but must share it with others, regardless of how cynically it may be received
- You can have confidence in God when there seems to be no hope because while God must judge sin, He desires that none should perish
- Jesus took the judgment that our sin deserved, offering His righteousness in exchange for our sin

### **Scripture Reference:**

- 2 Kings 6:8-8:15 (primary focus)
- 2 Kings 6:15-17 (key passage about opening eyes to see God's army)
- Luke 19 (referenced regarding Jesus weeping over Jerusalem)
- 2 Corinthians 5:21 (Jesus becoming sin for us)

### **Stories:**

- The Aramean army surrounding Elisha and his servant in Dothan, with God's angelic army of horses and chariots of fire protecting them
- King Ben-Hadad laying siege to Samaria, causing severe famine and poverty
- Four lepers discovering the abandoned Aramean camp and sharing the good news with the city
- The cynical captain who doubted God's promise and died before enjoying the restoration
- Hazael killing King Ben-Hadad and becoming judgment upon Israel
- Personal illustration: High school basketball team down 19 points in the third quarter, with the coach confidently declaring they would win
- C.S. Lewis's "The Great Divorce" illustration about the solidity of heaven versus the ghostly nature of earthly things
- Netflix versus Blockbuster comparison regarding pride and failure to adapt

# Scripture Deep Dive

## Opening Question:

Think of a recent situation where you felt overwhelmed or unsure what to do. Looking back, what were you most consciously \*trusting in\* at that moment (your own ability, other people, circumstances, or God)?

## Point 1 – You can have confidence in God when you don't know what to do

1. **2 Kings 6:15–17** - Elisha's servant only sees the Aramean army, but after Elisha prays, he sees "the mountain...covered with horses and chariots of fire."
  - How does this scene show that the most decisive realities in our lives are often invisible (compare Ephesians 6:10–12; 2 Corinthians 4:16–18)?
  - Based on these verses, what specific shift in perspective should a believer make when facing intimidating circumstances?
2. **2 Kings 6:17–20** - Elisha doesn't ask God for more power or more warriors; he asks for opened eyes (v.17) and then for the enemy to be struck with blindness (v.18).
  - What does this teach about the relationship between \*spiritual vision\* and \*wise action\* (compare James 1:5–6; Psalm 119:18)?
  - In a concrete situation where you "don't know what to do," what would it practically look like to prioritize "open my eyes" over "give me a plan"?

## Point 2 – You can have confidence in God when people are cynical

3. **2 Kings 7:1–2** - The captain responds to God's promise through Elisha with, "Even if the Lord were to make windows in heaven, could this really happen?"
  - In what way is his statement not just doubt but arrogant unbelief (compare Numbers 14:11; Mark 6:5–6)?
  - How does Elisha's reply ("you will see it...but you won't eat any of it") show that unbelief not only questions God's power but also \*cuts us off\* from enjoying His provision?
4. **2 Kings 7:3–9** - The diseased men recognize their desperation, discover the abandoned Aramean camp, and then say, "What we're doing is not right...Today is a day of good news."
  - How does their desperation position them to experience God's provision in a way the powerful king and captain do not (compare Luke 7:47; James 4:6–10)?
  - In light of Romans 1:16 and 1 Peter 2:9, how does their decision to share the good news with the city expose the spiritual seriousness of Christians remaining silent about the gospel?

### Point 3 – You can have confidence in God when it seems like there is no hope

5. **2 Kings 8:10–15** - Elisha weeps as he foresees the evil Hazael will do to Israel, yet he still announces God's word of coming judgment.
  - How do these verses show that God's judgment is both **necessary** (because of persistent sin) and **grievous** to His heart (compare Ezekiel 18:23, 32; Lamentations 3:31–33)?
  - What does this combination of truth and tears teach us about the attitude we should have when speaking about sin and judgment today?
6. **2 Kings 8:16–19** - Despite the ongoing wickedness of Judah's kings, verse 19 says, "the Lord was not willing to destroy Judah for the sake of his servant David, since he had promised to give a lamp to David and his sons forever."
  - How does this verse reveal that God's long-term purposes rest on His **covenant faithfulness** rather than human performance (compare 2 Samuel 7:12–16; Psalm 89:28–37)?
  - In light of Luke 1:32–33 and 2 Corinthians 5:21, how does God's faithfulness to the "lamp of David" (ultimately Jesus) provide solid hope for believers even when present circumstances feel spiritually hopeless?

## **5 Day Devotional**

### **Day 1 – Seeing What God Is Doing (When You Don’t Know What to Do)**

**Reading:** 2 Kings 6:8–23, Ephesians 6:10–12

**Devotional:** Elisha’s servant wakes up to a terrifying sight—an entire army surrounding the city. From his perspective, there is no way out. But Elisha is calm because he knows a greater unseen reality: “those who are with us outnumber those who are with them.” When God opens the servant’s eyes, he sees the hills filled with horses and chariots of fire. Scripture reminds us that life is not only physical; there is a real spiritual battle, and God’s resources are already at work even when we feel cornered.

**Reflection / Prayer:** Ask the Lord: “Open my eyes to see what You are doing, not just what I can see.” Where in your life right now are you only seeing the “army” and not the God who surrounds you with His presence and help?

### **Day 2 – Responding to Enemies with God’s Perspective**

**Reading:** 2 Kings 6:24–7:2, Romans 12:17–21

**Devotional:** After God previously spared the Aramean army and sent them away fed instead of destroyed, they return and lay siege to Samaria, producing horrifying levels of suffering. The king of Israel, frustrated and desperate, blames Elisha and wants him dead. Elisha, however, speaks a stunning promise from God: within 24 hours, extreme scarcity will turn into abundance. The captain responds with cynical disbelief, questioning whether even God could reverse the situation so dramatically. Faith takes God at His word even when circumstances make that word seem impossible.

**Reflection / Prayer:** Where might you be reacting to hardship with blame and cynicism instead of humble trust? Pray: “Lord, forgive my unbelief and help me to trust Your promises, even when all I can see is lack and pressure.”

### **Day 3 – From Desperation to Good News**

**Reading:** 2 Kings 7:3–20, Romans 1:16

**Devotional:** The diseased men outside the city know they are going to die if nothing changes, so they risk going to the enemy camp. To their surprise, God has already driven the Arameans away, leaving behind more food and riches than they could ever need. At first they start gathering for themselves, but then their conscience awakens: “What we’re doing is not right... Today is a day of good news.” Those who recognize their desperation are often the first to experience and then to share God’s provision. Likewise, those who trust God’s word (unlike the captain) participate in the joy of His salvation.

**Reflection / Prayer:** Ask God to remind you how spiritually desperate you were apart from Christ—and how generous His rescue has been. Who in your life needs to hear the “good news” you have found, and what is one concrete way you can share it this week?

#### **Day 4 – God’s Quiet, Ongoing Provision**

**Reading:** 2 Kings 8:1–6, Matthew 6:31–34

**Devotional:** The Shunammite woman, whose son Elisha had previously raised from the dead (2 Kings 4), now receives another mercy. Elisha warns her about a coming famine, and she obeys, so she and her household live as refugees for seven years. When she returns, her property has been taken—but at just the right moment, the king hears the story of her son’s resurrection and orders that everything be restored, along with the income from her land. God’s providence often works through “coincidences” and timing we could never arrange, silently caring for those who trust Him.

**Reflection / Prayer:** Think about a time when, in hindsight, you can see God’s hand in timing, protection, or provision. Thank Him specifically for those details, and ask Him to help you trust His unseen care in your current uncertainties.

#### **Day 5 – Judgment, Tears, and Unshakeable Hope**

**Reading:** 2 Kings 8:7–29, 2 Corinthians 5:21

**Devotional:** Elisha weeps as he foresees the brutal judgment that will come on Israel through Hazael. At the same time, the narrative records kings in both Israel and Judah continuing in idolatry and leading people further into sin. Yet in the middle of this moral collapse, verse 19 declares that the Lord will not destroy Judah “for the sake of his servant David,” because of His promise to give David a lasting “lamp.” This points forward to Jesus, the true Son of David, who would take the judgment we deserve so that God could be both just and merciful. Our hope is not rooted in human leaders or our performance, but in God’s faithfulness to His covenant through Christ.

**Reflection / Prayer:** Reflect on the fact that Jesus bore the judgment your sins deserved so that you could receive His righteousness. Pray: “Father, thank You that my ultimate hope rests not on what I have done, but on what Christ has done for me. Help me live today with confidence in Your faithfulness, even when everything around me looks dark.”