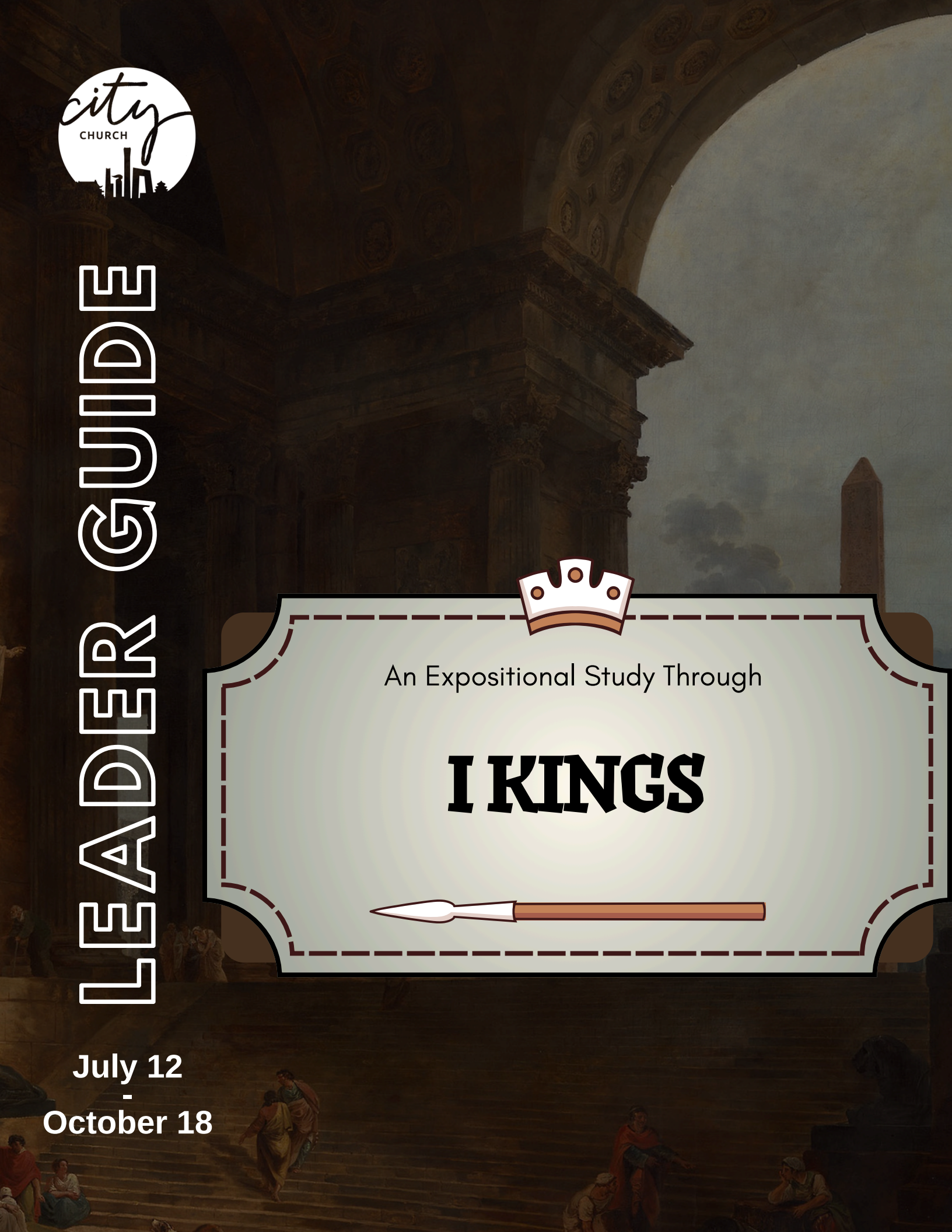

LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

I KINGS

July 12
-
October 18

AN EXPOSITIONAL STUDY THROUGH 1 KINGS

July 12 - October 18

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Written by TJ Johnson

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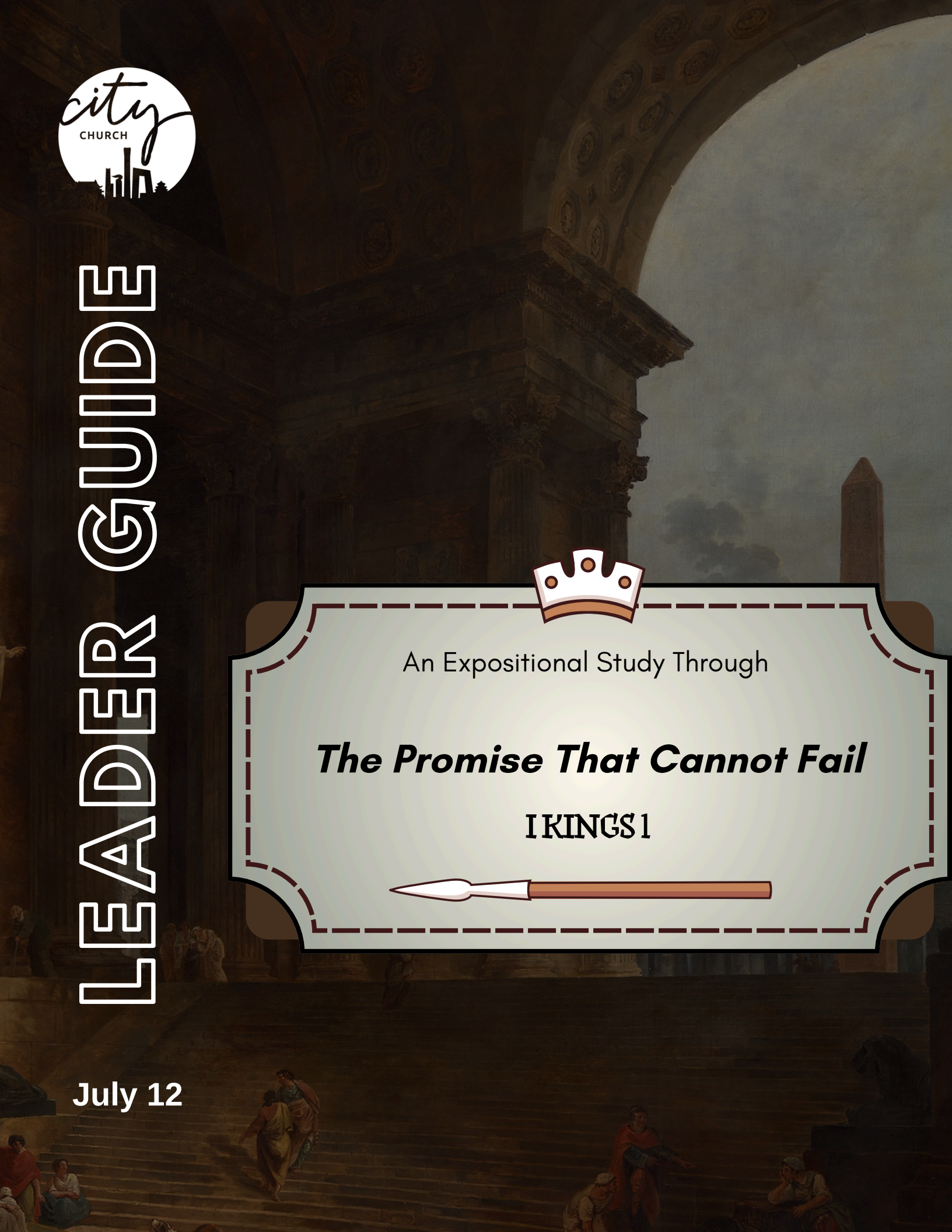


city CHURCH

LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

The Promise That Cannot Fail

I KINGS 1

July 12

Sermon Series

July 12, 2026	1 Kings 1	The Promise That Cannot Fail
July 19, 2026	1 Kings 2	Peace through Judgment
July 26 2026	1 Kings 3-4, 10	Wisdom to Serve
August 2, 2026	1 Kings 5-8	God's House
August 9, 2026	1 Kings 9, 11	Forbidden Love
August 16, 2026	1 Kings 12; 14:21-31	Rehoboam’s Sin and God’s Sovereignty
August 23, 2026	1 Kings 11:29-39;12:25-33; 13:1-6, 33-34- 14; 14:1–20	Jeroboam: Worship as a means to me
August 30, 2026	1 Kings 13	Dangers of False Prophets
September 6, 2026	1 Kings 15-16; 22:51-53	Generational Sin
September 13, 2026	1 Kings 15:9-24	Asa: Reforming Culture to the Glory of God
September 20, 2026	1 Kings 17-18	Elijah: Courage to Confront
September 27, 2026	1 Kings 19	Elijah: When Man is Weak God is Strong
October 4, 2026	1 Kings 20	Ahab: When Empathy Becomes an Enemy
October 11, 2026	1 Kings 21-22	Ahab: God’s Mercy to the Chief of Sinners
October 18, 2026	1 Kings 22	Jehoshaphat: Making Deals with the Devil

Series Overview

As we begin a fifteen-week series through the book of 1 Kings, I hope you take time to read through the entire book to get a basic understanding of what's taking place within it. As you do, below are a few details to help you.

In 586 BC, the Babylonian army breached the outer walls of Jerusalem, pillaged the city, destroyed the Temple, murdered its citizens, and carried the survivors away to Babylon, where they would spend the next seventy years. The book of Kings was written during that exile, likely sometime in the mid-6th century BC. Many think Jeremiah—or a prophetic circle influenced by him—under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, collected the roughly 400-year history of the kings from David to Zedekiah as a means of explaining why the exile happened.

The events contained in 1 King take place nearly 500 years after the exodus from Egypt. Israel has conquered and settled in the land of promise; judges have repeatedly led a wayward nation back to God; and prophets and priests have mediated God to the people through the tabernacle, holy days, Sabbaths, and the Word of God. It was a God-given system meant to keep the people faithful to their covenant Lord. And yet, near the end of the Prophet Samuel's life, the people grow tired of this system and, in their desire to be like the other nations, they ask for a king. God warns Israel that a king would do more harm than good (1 Samuel 8), yet they reject God's counsel and demand their king anyway.

The first king was Saul—a tall, handsome man whom the people quickly embraced. After Saul foolishly offered a sacrifice in place of Samuel, disobeyed God's command to utterly destroy the Amalekites, and consulted a medium at Endor, God rejected him as king. In his place, God chose a lowly shepherd boy named David, the youngest son of Jesse—a man after God's own heart. David ruled over Israel for 40 years—7½ years over Judah in Hebron, and 33 years over all Israel from Jerusalem. During that time, he unified the nation, subdued their enemies, brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, and longed to build a house for the Lord.

1 Kings begins at the end of David's life, right as he passes the kingdom to his son, Solomon. And follows the succession of kings (northern and southern) up until the destruction of Jerusalem. What we will find in this book is the split and ultimate downfall of a nation. The kings were meant to rule according to God's laws, but they too often

Series Overview

failed to rule in righteousness. The hearts of the people turned away from God. As they forsook covenant, God brought upon them the covenant curses warned of in Deuteronomy.

While the book is arranged around the kings, in many ways it is a story about the prophets as well. In fact, in the Jewish Bible, it is listed among the Former Prophets. Kings is prophetic in that it centers attention on the words and works of God's prophets as they interact with the kings. For example, Nathan is faithful to remind David of Solomon's rightful role as future king. Ahijah informs Jeroboam that he is chosen to lead ten tribes. Micaiah prophesies Ahab's death. Isaiah is prophet during Hezekiah's reign. Huldah consults Josiah. There is the school of the prophets. And large swaths of the book cover Elijah and Elisha's interactions with various kings. Throughout Kings, we will find true and false prophets. How a king responds to a true prophet's words determines the rise or fall of his rule.

2 Kings ends in exile—the Temple destroyed, the kingship seemingly snuffed out. This is meant to be read in light of the everlasting covenant God made with David, promising that his throne would endure forever. As Kings comes to a close, the readers are left wondering how God will keep His promise when, by earthly standards, it seems as if David's line is dead. In many ways, it is a book anticipating a resurrection of sorts. The promise will ultimately be fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Son of David—crucified, dead, buried, and risen from the dead. As we read this book, it is meant to create a longing in our hearts for another King…the true Son of David, of whose Kingdom there will be no end.

Ps TJ Johnson

1 KINGS Overview

Sermon Outline

Title: The Promise That Cannot Fail
Text: 1 Kings 1
Proposition: God keeps His promises, even when it seems impossible! So trust His promises and faithfully walk in them.

1. The Promise (1 Kings 1:13, 17, 30).

2. The Problem (1 Kings 1:1-4; 6-10).

3. The People (1 Kings 1:7, 9).

4. The Promise Fulfilled (1 Kings 1:44-48).

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. Davidic Covenant & Jesus: As a group, trace the storyline of Jesus being the ultimate fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant and share what it means to you personally that “Jesus is King”.
The Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7) promised David an everlasting kingdom through his descendants, ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Jesus reigns as the eternal King, giving believers hope, salvation, and security. Personally, to know Jesus is King means we trust His sovereign rule and faithfully follow Him.

2. Old Age & Human Hope: As David, in his old age, experienced the limitations of the human body, in what ways have you experienced aging (yourself or others), and how does the gospel help you with these experiences?
Aging is inevitable, and no one can stop it. We have seen how age brings physical weakness and limitations. The gospel gives hope because Jesus promises eternal life and resurrection. At His return, believers will receive glorified bodies that will never suffer from aging, sickness, or death.

3. Parenting: Why do you think David never disciplined Adonijah? What are some unhealthy parenting practices you have observed today? How are you being intentional in training up the next generation?
Scripture does not explain why David failed to discipline Adonijah, though he may have been overly indulgent. Today, some parents avoid correction or set few boundaries. Believers should intentionally teach and model God's truth, whether as parents, mentors, or church members, helping the next generation follow the Lord.

4. Succession Planning: David had no plan for who would lead after him, and it nearly cost the kingdom. How can you intentionally prepare others to carry on your work—in your family, ministry, or workplace—when you are gone?
One way to prepare others is to work myself out of a job by intentionally mentoring future leaders. Through coaching, delegating responsibility, and encouraging those we train, we can help ensure that our family, ministry, or workplace continues to thrive after we are gone.

Discussion Questions

5. Outward Appearances: Adonijah was handsome and the obvious choice, but God chose Solomon. Where are you tempted to judge by outward appearance—in choosing leaders, friends, or even a spouse—rather than seeking God's heart?
People naturally judge by outward appearance, whether choosing leaders, friends, or a spouse. Yet God looks at the heart rather than external qualities (1 Samuel 16:7). We should seek God's wisdom and value godly character above appearance, recognizing that true leadership begins with a faithful heart.

6. Pride vs. Submission: Adonijah exalted himself and said, "I will be king." In what area of your life are you tempted to promote yourself rather than humbly accept God's will—even when His plan is not what you expected?
Note for leaders: i*nvite participants to prayerfully examine areas where they may seek control, recognition, or success apart from God's timing and direction. Encourage honesty, but remind the group that this is not a time for judgment. Ask them to consider: "Where do I need to surrender my desires and trust God's plan more fully?"*

7. Wise Counsel: Adonijah surrounded himself with people who told him what he wanted to hear. In what ways do we surround ourselves with one-sided council today? Who speaks honest, biblical truth into your life—even when it is difficult to hear?
It is easy to surround ourselves with people who think like us and agree with our opinions. However, this can create blind spots and make us reject correction. Godly people who speak biblical truth, even when difficult to hear, are more valuable than those who only tell us what we want.

8. Faith That Motivates Action: God chose to work through Nathan and Bathsheba in order to fulfill His promise regarding Solomon. What are some areas of your life where God is calling you to actively participate in fulfilling His promises?
Note to leaders. Remind your members that God fulfills His promises while graciously allowing His people to participate in His work. Encourage them to identify where God invites them to respond in faith through obedience, prayer, service, and action.

9. God's Mercy: Solomon showed mercy to Adonijah when he fled to the altar. How has God shown you mercy when you were on the wrong side of His will, and how should that past mercy shape your present life?
Sometimes we do not recognize when we are going against God's will. Yet God patiently shows mercy and gives us opportunities to repent. His grace should lead us to humility, gratitude, and a desire to obey Him more faithfully, extending the same mercy to others that we have received.

10. Trusting When It Seems Impossible: In what ways did it seem like God's promises wouldn't come to pass in 1 Kings 1? Share a time in your life when you doubted God's promises and what helped you remain faithful in your doubt.
In 1 Kings 1, God's promise about Solomon becoming king seemed threatened when Adonijah tried to take the throne. In life, circumstances may make God's promises seem impossible, but God remains faithful. Remembering His past faithfulness helps us trust Him and remain obedient even during seasons of doubt.

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

A Kingdom Firmly Established

I KINGS 2

July 19

Sermon Overview

Church Family,

We know and proclaim that Jesus is King. Our perfect savior is on the throne and ruling and reigning as he sees fit for his sheep. Yet, like Israel in the time of the Kings, we still live under the rule of imperfect and flawed rulers and governments. In the language of St. Augustine, we still dwell in a world of 2 Cities: The City of Man and The City of God.

In the biblical era of the Israelite Kings, what was the magistrate required to do in order to prosper? This coming Lord's Day we will continue our series in 1 Kings and explore King David's last recorded charge to his son, Solomon. We will also examine the steps David's son took to ensure the kingdom was firmly established and how his earthy kingdom pointed to that of the Greater Son, King Jesus.

Brothers and sisters, we are called as a visible covenant community to publicly worship the one, true and living God. On behalf of the Elders of City Church, I hope you will join us this coming Lord's Day.

Sincerely,
Elder Grant Jones

Sermon Outline

Title: A Kingdom Firmly Established
Text: 1 Kings 2
Proposition: God is always faithful to the promises in his Word. His Kingdom is firmly established under the Lordship of Jesus and it will not be moved.

1. David's Instructions to His Son (v. 1 - 12)

2. Solomon's Response (v. 13 - 46)
- **a. Punishment for Wickedness (v. 13 - 25)**
- **b. Mercy for Humility (v. 26 - 27)**
- **c. Blood for Peace (v. 28 - 35)**
- **d. Curses for Blessing (v. 36 - 46)**

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. What it means to be a man can mean different things in different countries, cultures, and times (if you have time, feel free to discuss those stereotypes). David exercised a duty as a father to call his son (and future king) to prove himself a man. What was David's principal charge? Read 1 Kings 2:3. Note that David still presents this call to Solomon even though David himself was imperfect. **Do David's words to Solomon have any implications for parents' chief desire for their children? And further, how have you neglected and/or sought to practice this as parents? Children and Youth: Are there times when you wanted to go your own way, even though your parents were trying to call you to be faithful to God's commands?**

David's greatest charge was for Solomon to walk faithfully in God's ways (1 Kings 2:3). As a small group leader, encourage parents to consider whether their strongest desire is their children's faithfulness to Christ. Invite children and youth to reflect on trusting God's commands, even when they conflict with their own desires.

2. Antinomian is a word not commonly used in our day-to-day speech. Nevertheless, it's a term that describes a belief that once a person is a professing Christian, they are no longer under any obligation to obey the moral law of God. I hope most of us would disagree. However, in our lives, we can go through seasons reducing our obligation to God's law or, even worse, justifying active disobedience by thoughts of "Well, ultimately Jesus will forgive me, so my current disobedience is just fine". This mindset has the spirit of the antinomian position. **Do David's words to Solomon in 1 Kings 2:3 have any implications for the antinomian position? Discuss a season in your life where you justified a sin and ran away from calls of repentance (or were tempted to do so)?**

David's charge shows that God's people are called to ongoing obedience, not lawlessness (1 Kings 2:3). Encourage honest reflection without condemnation. Help the group distinguish between struggling with sin and justifying it. Emphasize that God's grace leads to repentance and faithful obedience, not an excuse for continued sin.

Discussion Questions

3. In 1 Kings 2:13-46, Solomon, as the magistrate, was executing his authority of the sword to punish crimes with a penalty of death. Many countries today have abolished the death penalty, and still many more individuals believe it should be abolished. **Do you ever wonder how to navigate the anti-death penalty opinion with God's righteous Law requiring the death penalty for more than a few crimes? Discuss (humbly) your views on the death penalty. OT civil law was specifically for the ethnically national Israel and was not binding on other nations. However, does the general principle (Example: Gen. 9:6) support civil magistrates today in outlining crimes requiring the death penalty?**

**Scan the QR code to read the article with 1 simple example and summary of a pro-death penalty view*

Encourage a humble, Scripture-centered discussion, recognizing that faithful Christians hold different views on capital punishment. Distinguish Israel's civil laws from principles that may apply today. Focus on God's justice, the value of human life, and the government's God-given responsibility to uphold justice (Gen. 9:6; Rom. 13:1–4).

4. From our perspective, we often can feel urgency to see crimes punished, and in many ways this is right and proper. However, as sinners, we may also be tempted to think delayed punishment justifies our current rebellion. Think of Joab; he is punished for former sins by Solomon, but his characterizing sin was unrighteous bloodshed that occurred under David's reign. Our God is not bound by time and yet is always perfectly just. From our vantage point, justice may seem delayed, but true justice always occurs consistently with the will of God. **Discuss any struggles you have had with a perceived delay in God's justice. From a human perspective, what are the dangers of delaying punishment (to varying degrees) and, conversely, of being too hasty to hand down punishment? (Examples: Parenting, Workplace, Civil Crimes, and Church).**

Encourage participants to reflect honestly on times they questioned God's timing. Discuss the wisdom of balancing patience with timely justice in parenting, church, and society. Remind the group that God's justice is never forgotten or delayed beyond His perfect wisdom, even when it seems slow from our perspective.

Discussion Questions

5. Elders are not the civil magistrates. However, the rule of ethnic/national Israel in the Book of Kings has general implications for leadership in many spheres of life that have authority structures. As we have recently studied at City Church, local congregations should be ruled by Elders. To be clear, the passage in 1 Kings 2 is NOT commanding Elders in the local Church to bear the sword. Elders are shepherds. One of the duties shepherds are charged with is church discipline. **Do Solomon's actions towards the sins of Adonijah, Abiathar, Joab, and Shimei have any implications on how Elders handle sin within the visible church they have been charged to oversee? Think about Solomon's specific words towards each of those 4 men. Can you see mercy, wisdom, patience, justice, and/or punishment in Solomon's dealings with any or all of the 4 cases mentioned?**

Encourage the group to compare Solomon's responses to each individual, noting both justice and mercy. Discuss how elders should exercise wisdom, patience, restoration, and, when necessary, church discipline. Emphasize that the goal of biblical discipline is God's glory, the church's purity, and the sinner's repentance.

6. Discuss ways you were convicted or challenged by the text, sermon, or small group questions. What are some things you should change, or that you should be encouraged to continue doing, moving forward in the coming weeks?

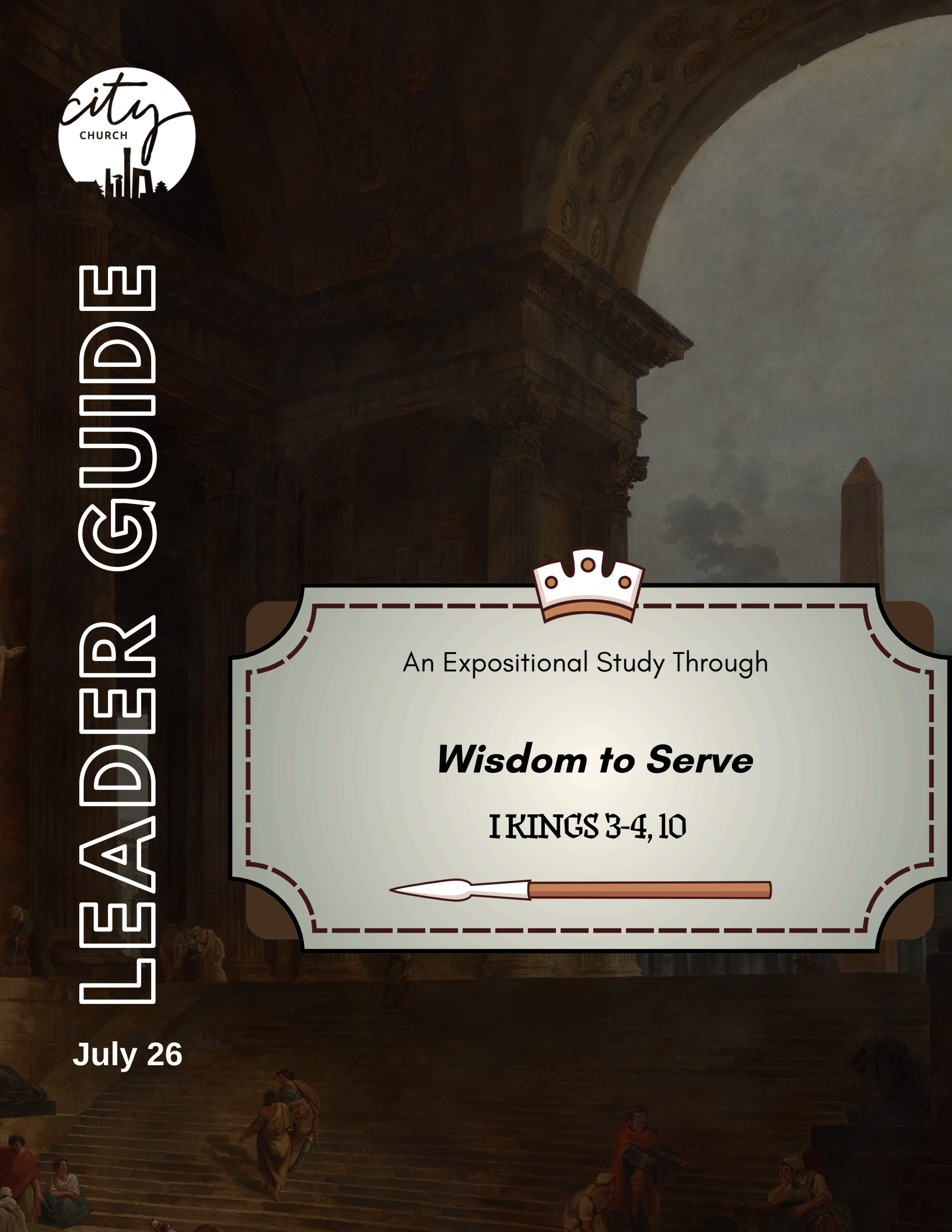
Encourage everyone to identify one specific conviction and one practical step of obedience. Keep the discussion application-focused rather than theoretical. Give participants time to share how they can pray for and encourage one another to faithfully apply God's Word in the coming week.

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports



city CHURCH

LEADER GUIDE

July 26

An Expositional Study Through

Wisdom to Serve

I KINGS 3-4, 10

Sermon Overview

Wisdom is a key theme in the Bible. Wisdom was the object of Satan's temptation of Adam and Eve. Wisdom was the thing that placed Joseph second in command of all Egypt. Wisdom was the criteria for appointing leaders to assist Moses with caring for Israel. Wisdom is sought after in Proverbs. Wisdom is sung about in the Psalms. Wisdom (wise men) sought out the Messiah. I could go on, but I hope you get the point…wisdom is quite important for the Christian. This week we will study Solomon's encounter with wisdom and hopefully learn how to live wisely so that God is honored and others are blessed.

Seeking Wisdom with You,

Elder TJ Johnson

Sermon Outline

Title: Wisdom to Serve
Text: 1 Kings 3-4; 10
Proposition: Ask for God's grace to grant you wisdom in your life for the good of man and the glory of God.

1. Wisdom is Wrought by Grace (1 Kings 3:1-5).

2. Wisdom is Infinite in Worth (1 Kings 3:5-14).

3. Wisdom is Substantiated through Action (1 Kings 3:16-28).

4. Wisdom is Edifying to Many (1 Kings 3:28; 10:1, 24).

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. Define Biblical wisdom and share examples of wisdom in action.
Biblical wisdom is the ability to make moral and ethical decisions according to God's righteous will. True wisdom comes from God, not human understanding. Examples include Joseph storing grain for the famine in Egypt, Joshua leading Israel by God's guidance, and Solomon governing with justice. Wisdom is applied truth in action.

2. Read Proverbs 3:14–15. What makes wisdom so valuable and desirable? Are there things you pursue more eagerly than wisdom—things that may be lesser in importance? Explain.
According to Proverbs 3:14–15, wisdom is more valuable than silver, gold, or precious jewels because it guides every area of life. While we often pursue wealth, success, or comfort, biblical wisdom should come first. It provides the foundation for making godly decisions and using every other blessing faithfully.

3. How does one gain wisdom?
True wisdom comes from God alone. We gain it by fearing the Lord, studying His Word, and asking Him to give it generously. James 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God... and it will be given him." Wisdom is God's gift to those who seek Him humbly.

4. Where do you need wisdom most right now, and what would applying it actually look like in that situation?
Note to the leader: encourage members to identify one specific area of life where they need God's wisdom (e.g., family, work, relationships, ministry, or a difficult decision). Help them move beyond general answers by discussing one practical step of obedience they can take this week to apply biblical wisdom in that situation.

5. How have you benefited from the wisdom of others? Is there someone in your life right now who could benefit from the wisdom God has given you?
Proverbs 12:15 teaches that wise people listen to counsel rather than trusting only their own understanding. We benefit from the wisdom of others through godly advice, experience, and correction. In the same way, God can use the wisdom He has given us to encourage, guide, and support others who need help.

Discussion Questions

6. Read 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30. How does knowing that Jesus Himself is the wisdom of God change the way you understand, pursue, and apply wisdom?
Since Jesus is the wisdom of God, true wisdom is found in knowing, trusting, and following Him. As we study His Word and grow in His character, we learn to think, speak, and live like Christ. Pursuing wisdom is ultimately pursuing a deeper relationship with Jesus and becoming more like Him.

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

God's House

I KINGS 5-8

August 2

Sermon Overview

One of the most fascinating studies in biblical theology is the Temple. It begins in Eden—the first Temple, with Adam serving as its priest—and culminates in the new heaven and earth, where Jesus Himself is the Temple. In other words, the Old Testament Temple was a shadow pointing to something greater. That substance is Jesus Christ. This is why Jesus says in Matthew 12:6, “Something greater than the temple is here.”

This Sunday, as we explore Solomon’s Temple, I hope to unearth a few hidden treasures from Scripture as they relate to Jesus—and then leave you with the challenge to keep digging and discover even more. Please take time to read 1 Kings 5–8. Begin by asking what this text meant to its original hearers—those in exile after the Temple’s destruction, many of whom had never even seen it. Only then should you read it in light of the New Testament’s revelation of the Temple’s true meaning: that Christ and His Church are now the Temple.

In Him,

Elder TJ Johnson

Sermon Outline

Title: God's House
Text: 1 Kings 5-8
Proposition: Solomon's Temple was a shadow pointing to the true temple—Christ and His Church. Therefore, let us enter boldly into the Father's presence, through the perfect work of the Son, and by the enabling power of the Spirit, worshiping in holy reverence the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

1. Rest (1 Kings 5:3-4)
2. Effort (1 Kings 5:13-18; 6:38)
3. Dwelling (1 Kings 6:11-13; 8:13)
4. Beauty (1 Kings 6:15-32)
5. Guards God's Divine Presence (1 Kings 6:23-28)
6. Furniture (1 Kings 7:48-50)
7. Obedience (1 Kings 6:11-13)
8. Sacrifice (1 Kings 8:46)
9. Prayer (1 Kings 8:28-30)
10. Glory (1 Kings 8:10)

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways does 1 Kings 5-8 foreshadow Jesus as the true Temple?
Look for the sermon's outline to see as an example.

2. Which of these is the most meaningful to you and why?
One example to consider is 1 Kings 8:10–11: God's glory filled the temple so powerfully that the priests could not remain inside. Jesus is the true Temple, the Word made flesh who dwelt among us (John 1:14). In Christ, God's presence is no longer confined to a building but has come to dwell among His people.

3. In what ways does 1 Kings 5-8 foreshadow the church as the true Temple?
Look for the sermon's outline to see as an example.

4. Which of these is the most meaningful to you and why?
The temple foreshadows the church because God now dwells among His people through the Holy Spirit rather than in a building. Like the temple, the church is set apart for worship, holiness, and God's glory. Most meaningful is that God's presence now lives within His people, forming one spiritual family.

5. Read Revelation 21:22-27. What is this future vision meant to do in our lives today?
Revelation 21:22–27 reminds us that our future is to dwell forever in God's presence. This hope encourages us to pursue holiness, persevere through trials, and live with an eternal perspective. Knowing Christ will fully restore all things motivates us to worship Him faithfully and invest in what will last forever.

6. How has reading and studying 1 Kings 5-8 made your love for Jesus grow?
Jesus by showing that He is the true and greater Temple where God's presence dwells. Solomon's temple pointed forward to Christ, who fulfilled God's plan perfectly. Through Jesus, we have direct access to God and the hope of His eternal kingdom.

7. What questions do you have from 1 Kings 5-8 or the sermon?

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

city CHURCH

LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

Forbidden Love

I KINGS 9, 11

August 9

Sermon Overview

Dear City Church Family,

Many of us know the story of Solomon - his wisdom, his wealth, and the glory of the Lord coming at his dedication of the temple. But do we know the end of his story? 1 Kings tells us clearly that Solomon did not end well - he turned away from the Lord and began to worship other gods.

How could this happen to someone so wise and who had such powerful experiences with the Lord? This week we will look at Solomon's drift away from the Lord, his downfall, and the discipline that the Lord gave as a result. This story is a tragic reminder of the necessity to cling to the Lord above all else.

Clinging to Christ with you,

Elder Ben Whitmore

Sermon Outline

Title: Forbidden Love
Text: 1 Kings 9, 11
Proposition: Solomon's downfall gives us a sobering warning of the potential we all have to drift away from the Lord, and challenges us to cling to Him more than wealth, power, and relationships.

1. **Solomon's Drift**
    a. **Misaligned Desire (9:1, 9:11, 9:19)**
    b. **Mismanaged Stewardship (9:10 - 14)**
    c. **Mistaking Ritual For Obedience (9:25; 10:28; 9:14; 9:28; 11:3)**
2. **Solomon's Downfall**
    a. **The importance of being equally yoked**
    b. **The importance of stewarding our sexual desires**
3. **Solomon's Discipline**
    a. **The Lord raised up adversaries**
        i. **Hadad from the South (11:14 - 22)**
        ii. **Rezon from the North (11:23 - 25)**
        iii. **Jeroboam from within (11:26 - 39)**
    b. **Solomon's resistance to the Lord's discipline (11:40)**

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. In the sermon, we saw three signs of drift in Solomon:

- **Misaligned desire: his ambitions and plans were more self-oriented than God-oriented.**
- **Mismanaged stewardship: he treated what belonged to God as if it belonged to him.**
- **Mistaking ritual for obedience: he continued worshipping the Lord while not living in full obedience to His word.**

Which of these three do you think is the greatest danger for you?

Note to leaders: Encourage members to answer honestly and personally rather than choosing the "right" answer. Invite them to reflect on areas where their desires, resources, or spiritual practices may have drifted from wholehearted obedience to God. Remind the group that the goal is not guilt, but repentance, growth, and dependence on God's grace

2. Why does the Bible forbid a believer from marrying a non-believer (2 Corinthians 6:14 - 18), and how might Solomon's story help us understand the danger?

The Bible warns believers not to marry unbelievers because marriage is a covenant relationship that deeply shapes our worship, values, and direction in life. 2 Corinthians 6:14 calls believers not to be unequally yoked. Solomon's story shows the danger clearly: his foreign wives turned his heart away from the Lord and led him toward idolatry. The Old Testament command against intermarriage was not about ethnicity but about protecting God's people from turning away from Him. In the same way, Christians are called to marry "only in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 7:39) so they can pursue Christ together and raise their families in faith.

3. Many people struggle to find a suitable spouse in the church, and they feel pressure to compromise and date non-believers. How can we as a church love and encourage our members who feel that pressure? *As a church, we should respond with compassion rather than pressure or judgment. We should remind singles that their identity and fulfillment are found in Christ, not marriage. We should support them in trusting God's timing while helping them pursue relationships that honor God and strengthen their faith.*

Discussion Questions

4. We know that David also sinned grievously against the Lord (2 Samuel 11), and yet 1 Kings 11:4 says that Solomon's "heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father." What did David do differently from Solomon that showed his heart was true to the Lord?

David repented, but Solomon continued in sin. We see evidence of David's repentance in the way he accepted the consequences of his sin - the death of his child, Absalom's rebellion, etc. Solomon, on the other hand, resisted the Lord's discipline and tried to murder Jeroboam when the Lord said that he would reign over 10 tribes (1 Kings 11:40).

5. Many people only know about Solomon's wisdom and the fact that he built the temple to the Lord, but they don't know about his fall into idolatry. Why do you think this is?

It is uncomfortable to know that the wisest man in the world fell into sin. We feel much better just focusing on the blessings and riches, but Scripture wants to warn us of the danger we all face of drifting from the Lord.

6. Does reading about Solomon's fall make it difficult to trust other writings in Scripture attributed to Solomon (Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes)? Ultimately, the authority of Scripture rests in God, and not in the person that God used to write. God used Solomon to record many true and beautiful things, even though he himself did not ultimately live by them.

Ultimately, the authority of Scripture rests in God, and not in the person that God used to write. God used Solomon to record many true and beautiful things, even though he himself did not ultimately live by them.

7. What does the Lord's discipline look like in your life?

See Hebrews 12:3 - 11 if you need a fuller picture of the Lord's discipline.

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

Rehoboam's Sin and God's Sovereignty

1 Kings 12; 14:21-31

August 16

Sermon Overview

This week we find that Rehoboam's sin causes civil war among God's covenant people, and Jeroboam's sin causes the worship of pagan gods. Behind these evil acts is a good God who not only allowed these events to take place but, in some mysterious way, was using them to bring about His good purposes. These are real people who experienced real suffering as a result of their sin, and yet our text says, "it was a turn of affairs brought about by the Lord."

God's providence—or, more commonly referred to today as God's sovereignty—means that nothing takes Him by surprise, nothing happens without His allowance, and nothing is permitted except by His ordering of the events of history. As Psalm 115:3 reminds us: "Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases."

As we live in a world filled with sin and suffering, sometimes it might feel as if evil is going unchecked, that God is unable to overcome the works of the Evil One. But a proper understanding of His providence is meant to strengthen our weak knees so that when suffering comes to us, our faith will not falter. Rather, we can look back and say, "What you meant for evil, God meant for good." I pray each of us is granted a God-sized vision of God this Sunday as we study 1 Kings 12 and 14:21–31, and that this vision moves us into deeper love for Him.

Trusting with you,

Elder TJ Johnson

Sermon Outline

Title: Rehoboam's Sin and God's Sovereignty
Text: 1 Kings 12; 14:21-31
Proposition: While evil exists, it does not exist outside the sovereign reign and overarching plan of God; therefore, when suffering and evil come to us, we must trust God in the midst of our suffering, as we cling to the cross and await Christ's return, when He will fully and finally do away with all evil and sin and suffering.

1. The Lord Allows Evil (1 Kings 12:8).

2. The Lord Limits Evil (1 Kings 12:21-24).

3. The Lord Ordains Evil (1 Kings 12:15, 1 Kings 12:24)

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. What evil has God allowed in your life, and how have you reconciled that with God's goodness?

Note to leaders: Help members reflect on how they have wrestled with suffering while holding onto God's goodness, sovereignty, and faithfulness.

2. What are some unbiblical ways Christians have tried to reconcile evil and God's goodness?

Some unbiblical responses include saying that God is not truly in control, that evil does not really matter, or that suffering is always punishment for personal sin. Others may believe we can understand every reason God allows evil. Scripture teaches us to trust God's goodness and sovereignty, even when we do not understand His purposes.

3. What are the dangers of not coming to a proper understanding that God allows suffering into our lives (over-realized eschatology)?

When we believe Christians should be free from suffering, we may become disappointed with God when difficulties come. We may think suffering means we lack faith or that God has abandoned us. This can lead to discouragement, false teaching, and shallow faith. Understanding God's purposes helps us trust Him faithfully through suffering.

4. Share a time when you have seen God limit evil—in the Bible, in your own life, or in the world around you. How does this grow your love for God?

One example is how God protected Joseph despite the evil intentions of his brothers. What they meant for evil, God used for good (Genesis 50:20). Seeing how God can limit evil and bring good from difficult circumstances reminds us that He is sovereign, faithful, and worthy of my trust, even when I do not understand His ways.

5. Can you share with the group ways God's grace has limited evil in our own heart?

Discussion Questions

6. Choose two or more texts where God's sovereignty over evil and human responsibility for evil are mentioned together, and explain them to the group.
We can see it in Genesis 50:20, Acts 2:23, or Acts 4:27–28. The Bible does not fully explain how God's sovereignty and human responsibility work together, but it clearly teaches both. We can trust God's goodness and justice even when we cannot understand everything.

7. What and who has helped you most during times of great suffering?

8. What questions do you have regarding God's sovereignty and evil?

9. Share your thoughts on Heidelberg Catechism 27 or Westminster Confession of Faith 5.4. "*The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God do so far manifest themselves in his providence, that it extends even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and people. Such do not happen by a bare permission, but are joined with a most wise and powerful bounding, ordering and governing of them, in various dispensations, for his own holy purposes, yet so that the sinfulness of them comes only from the creature, and not from God, who, being most holy and righteous, is not nor can be the author or approver of sin."*

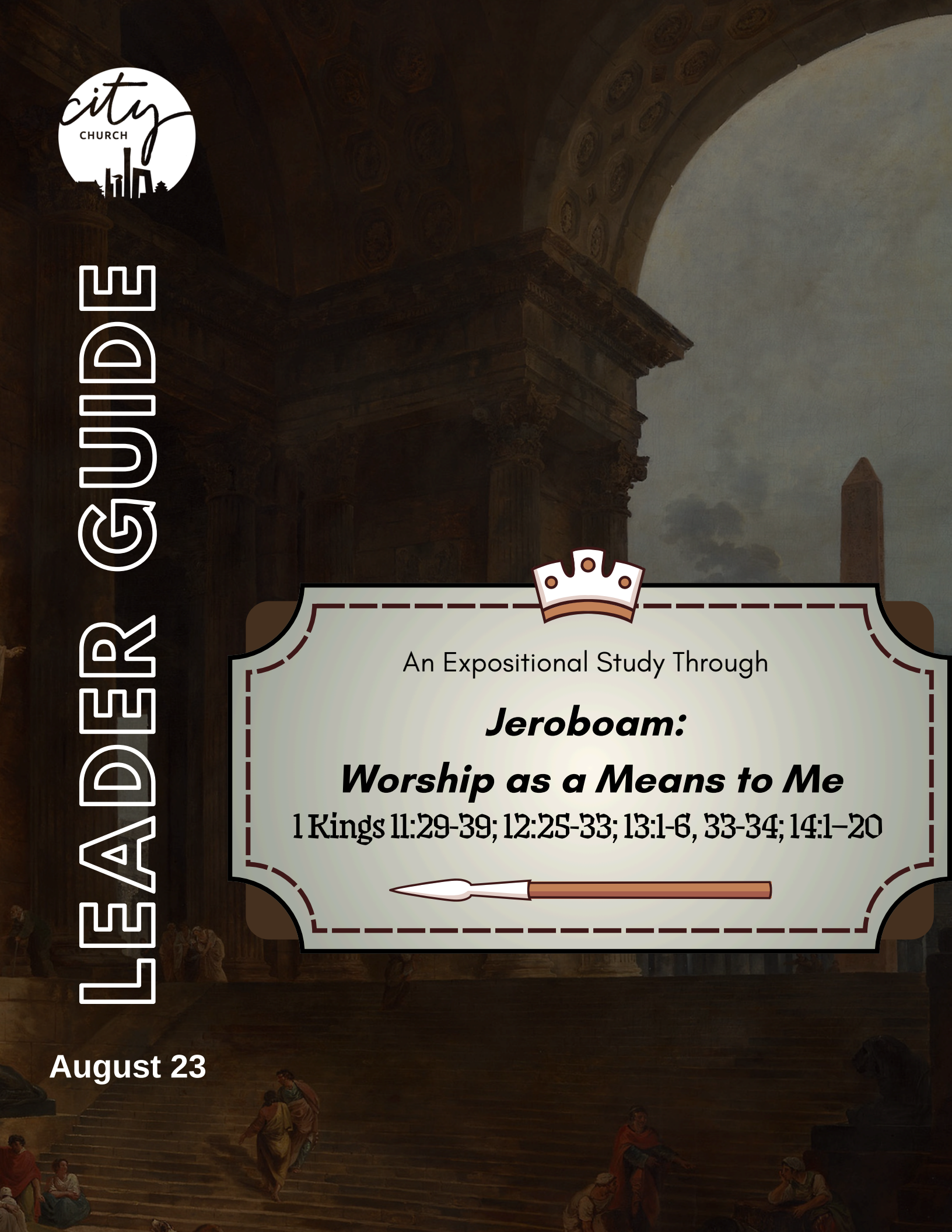
10. Share how Jesus allowed, limited, and ordained His own suffering, and how this can help you in your own suffering and your ever-increasing love for Him?
Jesus willingly accepted suffering and death according to the Father's plan. As He went through the cross, at every moment He could have stopped it, but He chose not to. He allowed Himself to suffer for our salvation. This reminds me of His deep love and strengthens my trust in Him during my own suffering.

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports



LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

Jeroboam:

Worship as a Means to Me

1 Kings 11:29-39; 12:25-33; 13:1-6, 33-34; 14:1–20

August 23

Sermon Overview

This week we continue our study in 1 Kings by looking at the life of Jeroboam. Jeroboam's story is a tragic reminder that not all worship is created equal. It's possible for a person to come to church week after week and sing loudly, pray passionately, and listen intently, but in the eyes of God still be guilty of false worship.

True worship is not about what we want or what we feel. True worship is not shaped by our desires, convenience, or preferences. True worship is directed to the true God—not God as we would have Him, but as He is revealed in Scripture. True worship is regulated by God as revealed in His Word.

This Sunday, we'll consider how Jeroboam's false worship exposes our own hearts and points us to Jesus, who is both the center and fulfillment of true worship.

Worshiping with you,

Elder TJ Johnson

Sermon Outline

Title: Jeroboam: Worship as a Means to Me

Text: 1 Kings 11:29-39; 12:25-33; 13:1-6, 33-34; 14:1–20

Proposition: True worship must be directed to and dictated by God alone, therefore we must reject all forms of man-made worship that we have created for our own purposes.

1. False Religion is a Religion About Me.
- **A. Jeroboam's worship is about securing his Kingdom (1 Kings 12:26-28).**
- **B. Jeroboam's worship is about solving his problems (1 Kings 13:1-6).**
- **C. Jeroboam's worship is about predicting his future (1 Kings 14:1-3).**

2. False Religion is a Religion From Me.
- **A. God's Word (1 Kings 11:38).**
- **B. God (1 Kings 11:38).**
- **C. God's Place (1 Kings 12:29).**
- **D. God's Priests (1 Kings 12:31).**
- **E. God's Appointed Time (1 Kings 12:32).**
- **F. God's Sacrifice (1 Kings 12:32).**

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. List various wrong motivations for worship and give examples. How can we accurately discern what our true motivations for worship are?

Wrong motivations for worship include seeking personal gain, social acceptance, power, comfort, or simply following religious habits without loving God. Jeroboam used worship to secure his kingdom rather than honor God. We can examine our hearts by asking: Would I still worship God if it cost me something and brought me no personal benefit?

2. Can you think of examples from your own life—or the lives of others—when, like Jeroboam, you turned to God in a time of trouble but quickly turned away after God mercifully answered your prayer?

Note to the leaders: Encourage members to share honestly but avoid unnecessary details or embarrassment. The goal is not guilt, but recognizing God's mercy, cultivating lasting faithfulness, and encouraging one another toward consistent dependence on Him.

3. As a group, discuss the regulative principle of worship versus the normative principle of worship. What are the key differences, and why do they matter?

The regulative principle teaches that worship should include only what Scripture commands, while the normative principle allows practices not forbidden by Scripture. The difference matters because worship must honor God according to His Word. Jeroboam's false worship warns us against changing God's instructions merely for convenience, preference, or personal gain.

4. Jeroboam created a system of worship that accommodated the people and kept their hearts from turning toward Jerusalem. In what ways might churches today fall into the same trap of allowing convenience, preference, or pragmatism to shape worship?

Churches can fall into this trap when they prioritize attendance, comfort, entertainment, or personal preferences over biblical worship. For example, they may avoid difficult biblical truths, change worship practices mainly to attract people, or make decisions based on popularity. Like Jeroboam, convenience can become more important than faithfully following God's Word.

Discussion Questions

5. Discuss how Jesus is the true Word, the true Temple, the true High Priest, and the true sacrifice—and how these truths should shape the way Christians worship today.

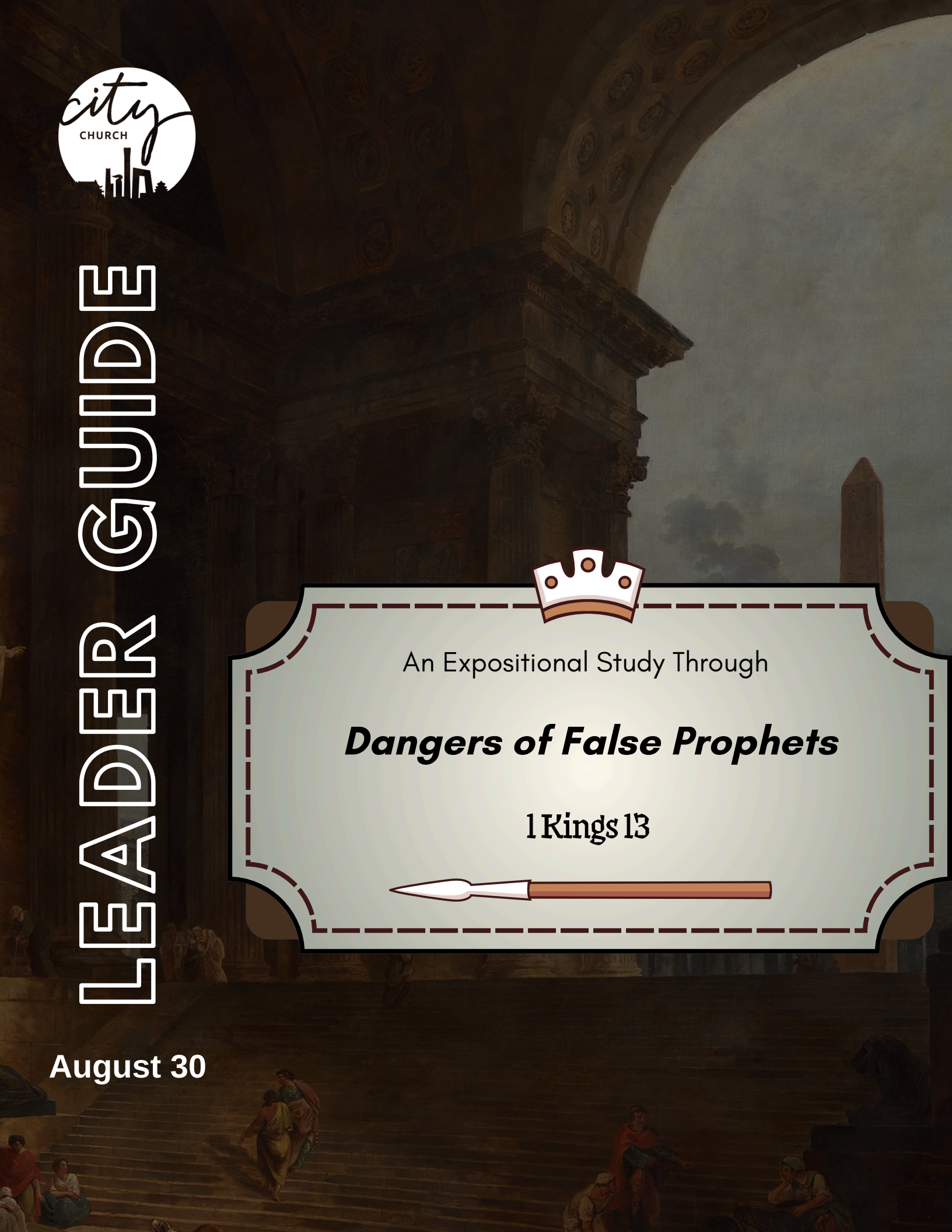
Jesus is the true Word who reveals God, the true Temple where God dwells, the true High Priest who brings us to God, and the true sacrifice for our sins. These truths should lead us to worship Jesus with gratitude, reverence, obedience, and sincerity, focusing on God rather than personal preferences.

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports



LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

Dangers of False Prophets

1 Kings 13

August 30

Sermon Overview

Breaking news, from a news channel you have trusted for years. The right presenter. The right voice. The right studio. He never said a word of it as it was AI fake news.

In 1 Kings 13 a young preacher says no to a king before lunch, and by evening he is dead on the road - destroyed by quiet words from a man who sounded just like him. This Sunday: how to spot a lie that looks like the truth.

Elder Ling Lai

Sermon Outline

Title: Dangers of False Prophets

Text: 1 Kings 13

Proposition: Because God never contradicts his own word, the most dangerous lie is the one that sounds exactly like the truth — convenient, comfortable, and never checked. So know the Word, test every voice, and walk with others, holding on to Christ, who is the Truth and never changes.

1. The man who could not be bought - THE KING'S OFFER (v7-10).

2. The prophet who lied - THE SAME OFFER, A NEW MOUTH (v11-19).

RED FLAG #1: He claims to be one of us …. "I also am a prophet as you are"

RED FLAG #2: He claims something newer than Scripture …. "an angel spoke to me"

RED FLAG #3: His language is perfect …. "by the word of the LORD"

RED FLAG #4: He offers you what you already want …. bread, a bed, rest

3 Jesus is the Truth

3 STEPS TO KEEP US FROM DRIFTING THIS WEEK:

1. **KNOW THE WORD: so that you cannot be talked out of it**
2. **TEST THE VOICE: every time, however respected**
3. **WALK TOGETHER: never travel alone**

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. Compare 1 Kings 13:7–10 and 1 Kings 13:15-19. In what ways was the prophet of Judah tempted to compromise his obedience to God? Why did he successfully resist temptation in one and not the other? What can we learn from this?

The prophet initially resisted temptation by obeying God's direct command. Later, however, he accepted another prophet's claim that God had given new instructions. He failed to test those words against what God had already said. We must remain faithful to God's Word, regardless of who encourages us to compromise.

2. Share a time when someone tried to persuade you to disobey God in a way similar to the king (offering a reward) or the old prophet (offering a spiritual-sounding lie). How did you respond?

Note to leaders: Encourage members to share honestly and specifically, without naming or embarrassing others. Help them identify how the temptation was presented and what helped—or would have helped—them remain faithful to God's Word.

3. How should knowing that the old man of Israel is called a prophet and receives a direct word from God, yet he intentionally lies and deceives the prophet of Judah, caution us against assuming that modern ministries or individuals are automatically approved by God simply because they exhibit supernatural gifts or accurate predictions?

It would be naïve to believe everything someone says about God without testing it against Scripture. Even supernatural gifts, accurate predictions, or visible ministry success do not automatically prove God's approval. We must examine both teaching and character according to God's Word, remembering that genuine ministry should honor God, not contradict Him.

4. In your opinion, what is the greatest danger that false prophets pose to the church today, and why?

The greatest danger false prophets pose is leading people away from the true God and His Word. Their teaching can create confusion, cause believers to question their faith, and sometimes separate them from healthy Christian community. This danger is serious because false teaching may appear spiritual while gradually drawing hearts away from Christ.

Discussion Questions

5. What are some Biblical ways we can "test the spirits" (1 John 4:1) to discern whether someone's message is truly from God?

We can “test the spirits” by comparing someone’s teaching with God’s Word and checking whether it agrees with Scripture. We should also examine the person’s character and whether their message points people toward Christ. A message from God will not contradict Scripture or lead people into sin, confusion, or false worship.

6. In what ways does this story fit into the overall narrative of the book of Kings, and what can we learn from it?

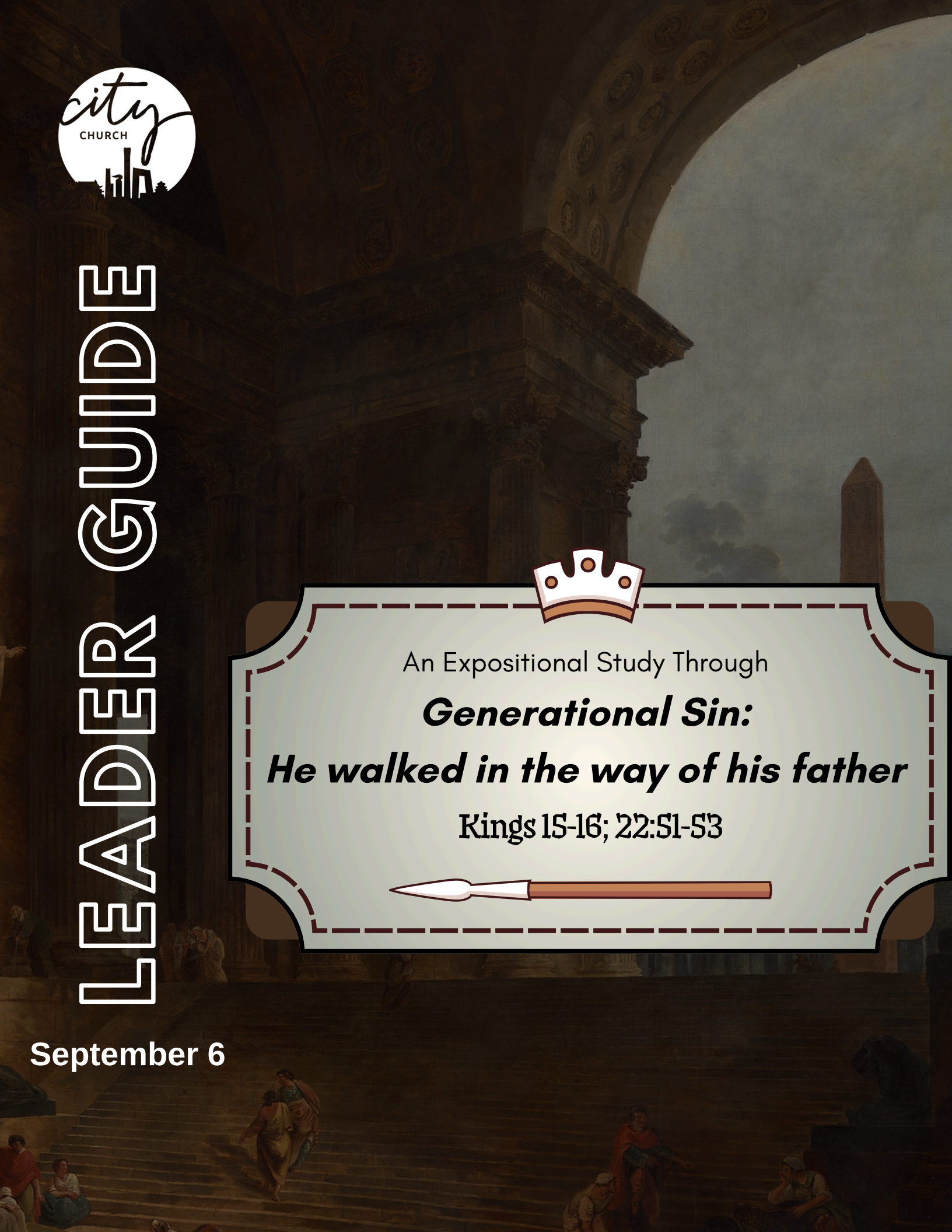
The book of Kings explains Israel’s downfall and exile because of persistent disobedience and idolatry. This story reinforces the call to repent and return to God. The old prophet’s deception also reminds us that we must listen to God’s Word, test every message against Scripture, and obey God faithfully.

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports



LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

Generational Sin:

He walked in the way of his father

Kings 15-16; 22:51-53

September 6

Sermon Overview

In 1 Kings 15–16, we are introduced to a rapid succession of kings over both Judah and Israel—and nearly all of them are remembered as evil. The lone exception is King Asa, who followed God and did what was right. But as I read through these chapters, I found myself asking: Why did so many kings, one after another, choose evil? Didn't they know they were wrong in the sight of God and His people? Why couldn't they turn from their sin and repent, so that they might experience His blessing and guidance?

Instead, they walked in sin, grew worse with each generation, and left behind a legacy of wickedness. It seems they learned only from the evil of their predecessors—and then sought to outdo them.

This raises a sobering truth: parents are responsible for raising their children in the way of the Lord, teaching them to live righteously before God. The influence of parents and leaders is vital—not only for raising families, but for shaping entire nations. And yet, as we see in this passage, godly influence is not automatic. Evil can be passed down just as easily as faith.

We know that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). But we also know the good news: Jesus Christ came to save us and died for our sins (John 3:16). Praise God for His forgiveness and love!

As we prepare our hearts for this message, let us ask Him for wisdom, patience, and strength to live righteously—and to choose His ways in every decision and every situation.

Elder Stas Luy

Sermon Outline

Title: Dangers of False Prophets

Text: 1 Kings 15-16

Proposition: A relentless downward spiral of sin and division, showing that when kings abandon God's covenant, they bring chaos, assassination, and judgement upon themselves and their nations. No king has real power and wisdom without God!

1. The title "Generational sin" can be misleading because some may have the wrong idea about generational curses.

2. Proposition (see above).

3. There is one repeating verse that describes how evil they were.

4. Among 10 kings only one king Asa was right and did right things.

5. The main idea is that parents are responsible for teaching their kids good values and faith in God.

6. Why did God write about all these bad kings? What does He want us to learn from them?

7. Those bad kings needed God and His guidance.

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. What might have caused a king to "walk in the way of his fathers"? What examples do you see of this today?

Verse 3 says Abijam's heart was not fully devoted to God, suggesting that his faith was not wholehearted. He also followed his father's sinful example. His many wives may reflect this pattern of compromising God's design, though Scripture does not directly connect them. Today, family, culture, and relationships can similarly influence our faith.

2. In what ways has your family upbringing impacted your walk for good or evil?

Note to leaders: Encourage members to reflect honestly on how their family shaped their faith, both positively and negatively. Help members focus on how God's grace can heal and transform these patterns.

3. Since generational sin is often passed down through a parent's teaching and influence, discuss the importance of Deuteronomy 6.

Deuteronomy 6 shows that parents have a vital responsibility to teach God's Word and model faith in everyday life. What children repeatedly see and hear can shape their beliefs and choices. Therefore, parents should intentionally teach Scripture, love God sincerely, and demonstrate faithfulness, helping prevent sinful patterns from continuing to future generations.

4. How are you intentionally teaching God's commands to your children (spiritual as well as physical)?

Note to leaders: Encourage members to share practical ways they teach God's commands through both words and example. Discuss family prayer, Bible reading, worship, discipline, serving others, generosity, and daily conversations about faith. Remind that children learn not only from instruction but also by observing their parents' attitudes, priorities, and behavior.

Discussion Questions

5. How should we, as God's children, respond when our leaders are evil and sin openly before God?

We should not imitate or support leaders when they openly oppose God's ways. Instead, we should remain faithful to God, obey His Word, pray for our leaders, and respectfully speak against injustice when appropriate. We should remember that every leader is accountable to God, and our ultimate loyalty belongs to Him.

6. How do we obey Romans 13:1–7, which tells us to submit to our leaders, when those leaders are evil?

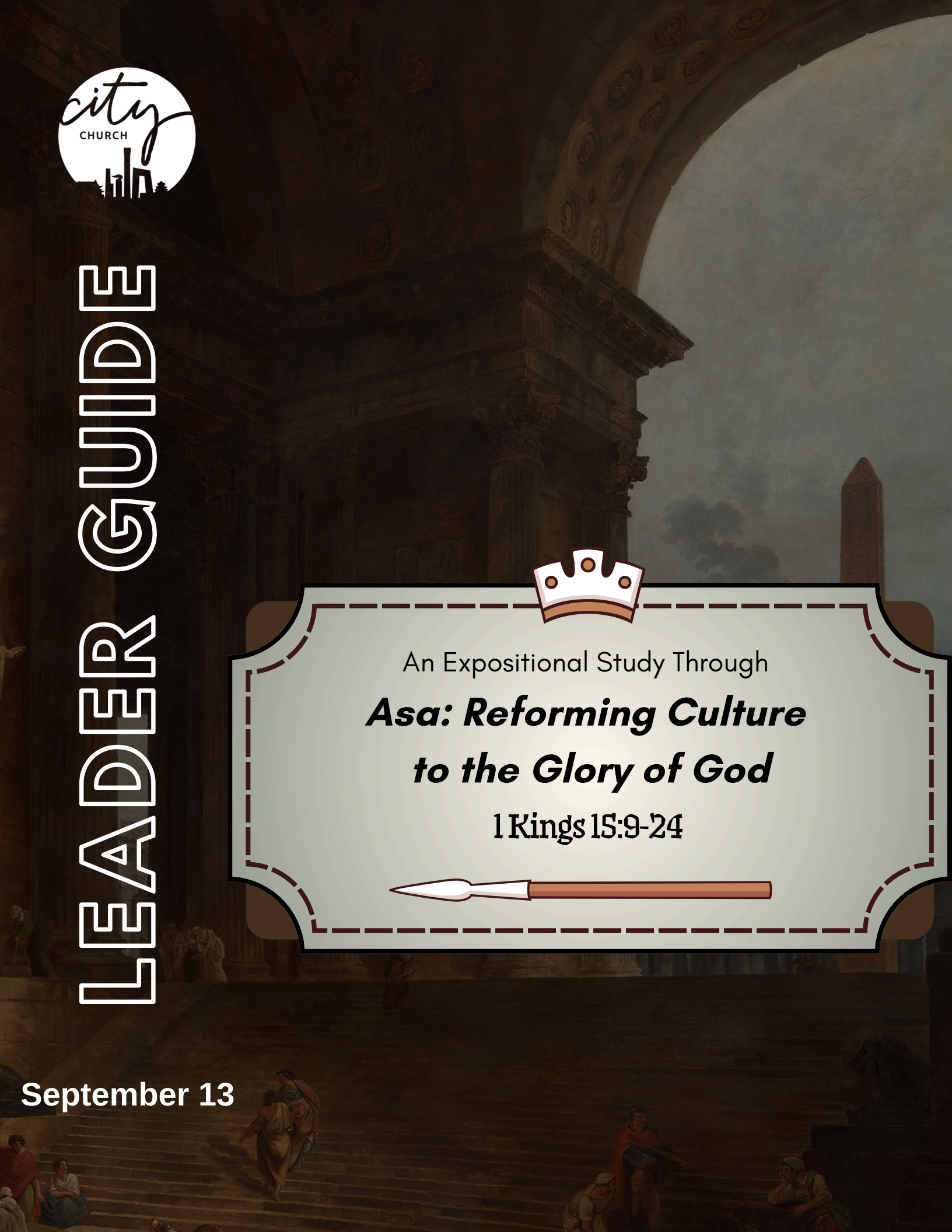
We should respect authorities and obey lawful commands, recognizing that God establishes authority. However, our ultimate loyalty belongs to God. When leaders command us to sin or oppose God's Word, we must obey God rather than people. We should remain respectful, pray for leaders, and faithfully do what is right.

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports



LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

Asa: Reforming Culture to the Glory of God

1 Kings 15:9-24

September 13

Sermon Overview

In The Fellowship of the Ring, after Gandalf informs Frodo that the Dark Lord has arisen again and returned to the Dark Tower, Frodo responds with something I believe we have all felt at some point in our lives:

“I wish it need not have happened in my time.”

It’s a tremendous blessing to live in days when all is right with the world…but far too often we find ourselves, like Frodo, in a world where all is NOT right. Tolkien, having lived through the Great War, was writing from his own experience. And having put a bit of age and wisdom between himself and that horrid world event, he captures in the words of Gandalf something all who live in dark times need to remember:

“So do I,” said Gandalf, “and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us. And already, Frodo, our time is beginning to look black.”

This week we come to the story of King Asa, who finds himself king during a time of great spiritual decay. It would have been a much easier task to MAINTAIN decency and order than to work tirelessly to REFORM a culture afoul of Christ. And yet, to be king in such times was not his to decide. What he did have to decide was what he would do as king in dark times. Would he follow in the sins of the times? Would he skurry off to some hole to watch the world burn? Or would he spend his life seeking to defeat the darkness he was born into?

This is the question that each of us must ask. We live in times of great moral decay, and we, like Frodo, wish it need not have happened in our time. But here we are. Have you decided what to do with the time God has given you? The good news is that you don’t have to do it alone. God himself is the one who preserves “a lamp in Jerusalem.”

Reforming Culture with You,

Elder TJ Johnson

Sermon Outline

Title: Asa, a Lamp for Jerusalem: Reforming Culture to the Glory of God.
Text: 1 Kings 15:9-24 (see also 2 Chronicles 16)
Proposition: When you find yourself surrounded by a culture in spiritual decline, remember that even in the darkest of times God can bring about spiritual reform.

1. The Source of Biblical Reform.
- **A. A Passionate Heart (1 Kings 15:11, 15).**
- **B. A Patient and Persistent Heart (1 Kings 15:10, 14).**

2. The Strategy of Biblical Reform.
- **A. Things to Remove (1 Kings 15:12-14).**
- **B. Things to Restore (1 Kings 15:15).**
- **C. Things to Repurpose (1 Kings 15:22).**

3. The Limits of Biblical Reform.
- **A. Couldn't do it all (1 Kings 15:14).**
- **B. Couldn't do it alone (1 Kings 15:22).**
- **C. Couldn't do it perfectly (1 Kings 15:17-21).**

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. Compare the spiritual decay that defined the culture in which Asa lived with the spiritual decay in the culture in which you currently live.
Compared with Asa's time, our culture also faces spiritual decay through idolatry, materialism, sexual immorality, and rejection of God's authority. Like Asa, Christians should not simply follow cultural values but remain faithful to God's Word. We should courageously remove sinful influences from our lives while influencing our culture through faithful living and witness.

2. Discuss wrong and right motivations for seeking to bring about cultural change.
Wrong motivations include seeking cultural change for personal or political power, popularity, control, or recognition. Right motivations are to honor God, promote righteousness, protect people, and remove influences that lead others away from Him. Asa courageously removed idols and even confronted his grandmother, showing that faithfulness to God must come before relationships or personal interests.

3. Give examples from the Bible and modern history where spiritual change took place over a long period of time. Discuss how these examples might encourage you to persevere.
Biblical examples like Asa, Josiah, and the people of Nineveh show that spiritual renewal can take years and may require faithful leaders and generations of obedience. Modern history also shows gradual spiritual change through faithful Christians like Wilberforce. These examples encourage us to persevere, trusting God to work through faithful obedience over time.

4. What were the things Asa removed, and what are some things in our current culture that need to be removed?
Asa removed idolatry, shrine prostitution, and the Asherah image made by Maacah. Today, we should remove influences that draw people away from God, such as materialism, pornography, dishonesty, racism, hatred, and unhealthy entertainment. We should examine our lives and culture through Scripture and courageously remove what leads us into sin.

Discussion Questions

5. What did Asa restore, and what are some things in our current culture that need to be restored?
Asa restored the dedicated silver, gold, and utensils to the Lord's temple, showing renewed commitment to worship and devotion. Today, we need to restore biblical values such as truth, family, integrity, compassion, respect, generosity, and genuine worship. As Christians, we should help restore these values through faithful living and example.

6. What are some things in our current culture that you feel can be repurposed (like Baasha's timber and stone) for God's glory?
We can repurpose technology, education, media, business, and social platforms to serve God's purposes. Like Asa used Baasha's materials to build Geba and Mizpah, we can redirect existing cultural resources toward discipleship, evangelism, serving others, promoting truth, and strengthening Christian community instead of allowing them to promote sin.

7. Just as Asa did not see all the high places removed, what are some things you fear will not be changed in your lifetime? What can you do to help future generations finish the mission?

8. Asa's reforms did not come about through the efforts of only one person. In what ways can the church do a better job of working together to bring about cultural change?
Leaders should equip members to use their different gifts in workplaces, families, and communities. Like Asa, we should courageously remove harmful influences, restore godly values, and encourage one another to remain faithful to God's Word.

9. While Asa's heart was wholly devoted to the Lord, he had blind spots and sinned in many areas. What are some of the greatest blind spots of the church today? *Some of the church's greatest blind spots are compromising biblical truth for cultural acceptance, prioritizing comfort over holiness, trusting human wisdom instead of God, and overlooking injustice or sin within ourselves. Like Asa, we may sincerely love God while failing to address certain areas of compromise. We need humility, accountability, and continual examination.*

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

Elijah: Courage to Confront

1 Kings 17-18

September 20

Sermon Overview

Last week we saw how King Asa brought about reform in the Southern Kingdom and were challenged to do all we can to bring about reform in the places where God has planted us. This week we move our attention to the Northern Kingdom. It had not experienced the same reform as Judah. It did not have a king who used his power to bring the people back to God. Instead, each king became progressively worse.

1 Kings 16 tells us that near the end of King Asa's reign in Judah, King Ahab began to reign in Israel. It also tells us that Ahab did more evil than all who were before him. He and his wife Jezebel persecuted and killed many of the prophets of God and replaced them with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah.

In other words, bringing about reform in the north (with a godless king) looked radically different from that of the south (with a godly king). The question becomes: how does one go about reforming culture when you are not in charge? Or more pointedly, how do you reform culture when those who are in charge use their power to put to death anyone who would stand up for truth and oppose idol worship? This is the situation that Elijah finds himself born into—not just an evil world, but a dangerously evil world where God's followers are killed for their faith. This week's text reminds us that reform should be pursued even in great danger. Come ready to learn about the courage to confront.

In Him,

Elder TJ Johnson

Sermon Outline

Title: Elijah: Courage to Confront
Text: 1 Kings 17-18
Proposition: Trust God, and you will find courage to wisely speak hard truth that offers mercy to those who need redemption.

1. Courageous Confrontation Requires Trust (1 Kings 17:1).

2. Courageous Confrontation Requires Wisdom (1 Kings 17:1-3; 18:1).

3. Courageous Confrontation Requires Rebuke (1 Kings 18:17-21).

4. Courageous Confrontation Requires Mercy (1 Kings 18:21).

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways does this passage teach us that God can be trusted? How does trusting in God give us the courage to confront sin in the world around us?
God can be trusted because He faithfully provided for Elijah and the widow, answered prayer, raised the widow's son, and demonstrated His power over Baal. Trusting God gives us courage because we know His Word is true, allowing us to confront sin faithfully rather than fearing people or consequences.

2. How does the text teach us that while God can be trusted, that does not mean God will always deliver us or make life easier for us when we confront sin? What other examples do you find from the New Testament or even your own life?
1 Kings 17–18 shows that trusting God does not guarantee an easy life. Elijah faced drought, danger, opposition, and even discouragement while faithfully confronting sin. Yet God remained faithful. Similarly, Jesus and His disciples faced suffering despite obeying God. Following God may bring hardship, but we can trust Him through it.

3. Compare the ways God used both Elijah and Obadiah to confront evil and do good. Have you ever found yourself in a position like either of them? Which role feels more natural to you? Which is more difficult, and why?
Elijah confronted evil publicly by challenging Ahab and the prophets of Baal, while Obadiah quietly protected God's prophets within Ahab's palace. Both served God faithfully in different ways. Some of us can relate more to Obadiah's role of quietly doing good where we are at. Elijah's boldness is more difficult because it requires courage to stand publicly against wrongdoing.

4. The sermon listed six principles to consider before confronting someone. Discuss these principles together. What other important considerations would you add? *Principles to Consider When to Confront:*

1. *What does God's word clearly require?*
2. *Are you motivated by fear of God or fear of man?*
3. *Are you motivated by love for God or love for self?*
4. *How can you best honor God and serve the church?*
5. *What does wise counsel say?*
6. *Are you listening to your conscience?*

5. Do you think it was right for Elijah to mock the prophets of Baal and their god? What other examples of this kind of sharpness do we see in the Bible? Where is the balance between a sharp rebuke and a gentle one?

Elijah's mockery exposed the emptiness of Baal and confronted Israel's idolatry, showing the seriousness of false worship. Jesus also sharply rebuked the Pharisees (Matthew 23), while Nathan confronted David directly (2 Samuel 12). Yet Scripture also calls us to gentleness. The right approach depends on truth, love, purpose, and the person's heart

6. To whom does God show mercy to in this narrative and why? What does merciful confrontation look like in everyday situations—at home, at work, or within the church?

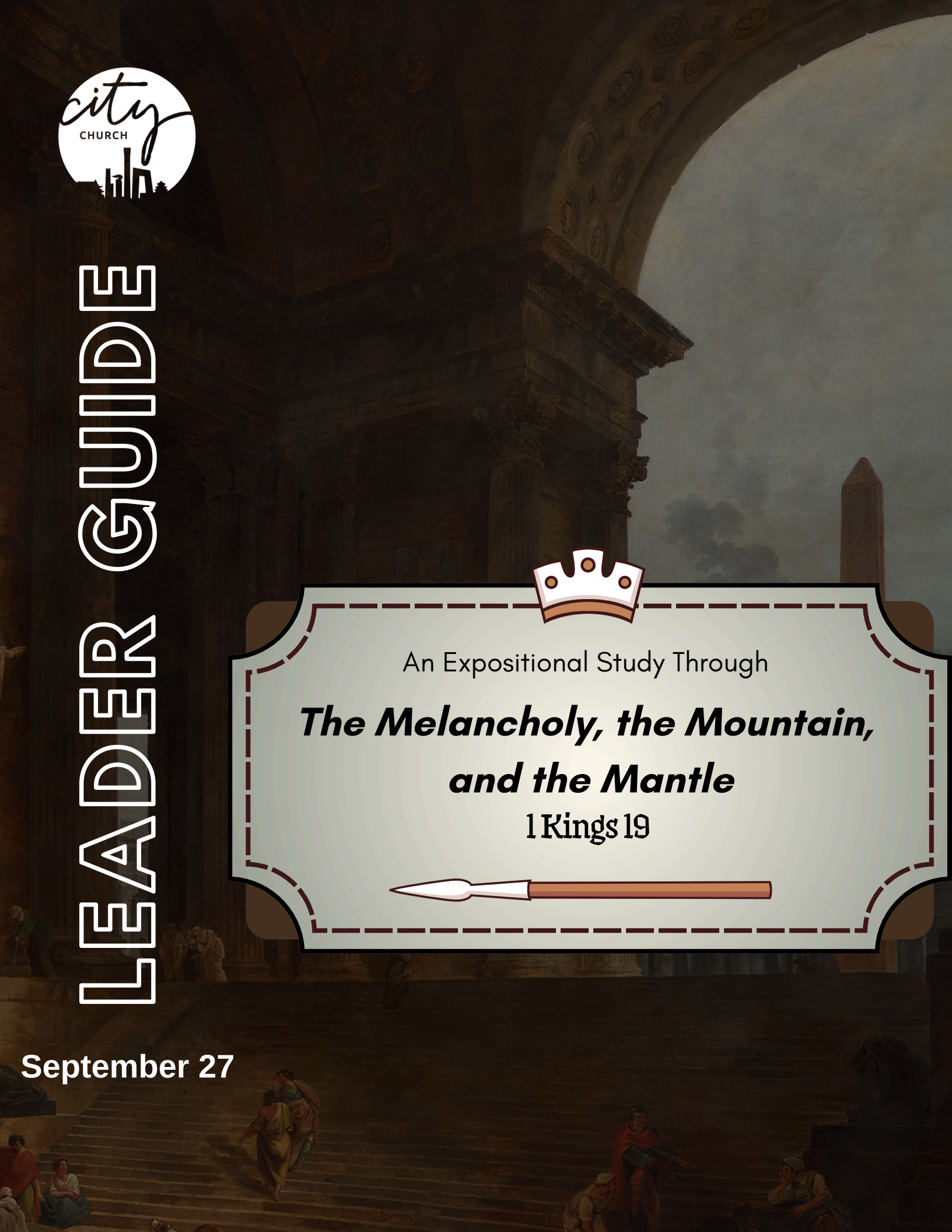
God shows mercy to Israel by calling them back from idolatry rather than abandoning them. He also protects His faithful servants. Merciful confrontation means addressing wrong honestly while seeking restoration, not humiliation. At home, work, or church, we can speak truth with patience, humility, and love, remembering God desires repentance and reconciliation.

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports



LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

The Melancholy, the Mountain, and the Mantle

1 Kings 19

September 27

Sermon Overview

Church Family,

We have made it quite far into 1 Kings and I hope you are seeing that even the most promising kings still fell to sin including most consistently idol worship. But remember… the kings were but shadows of the True King who was sinless. Last week, in 1 Kings 18, we heard about God demonstrating His power through Elijah in a great visible sign to show that false gods are worthless. And yet, in Chapter 19, we read this same mighty prophet fled in fear while succumbing to a blinding spiritual depression.

This week we will walk through 1 Kings 19 to trace the actions of Elijah in order to see the faithfulness of the Lord and the importance for the believer to be faithful in seasons of bliss and seasons of bleakness. By doing this, I hope we can see the Glory of God in His care for Elijah and reflect on our own duties to ask: “Have I too, like Elijah, fled to the wilderness?”. Hear the call to gather for public worship this coming Lord’s Day as we explore the Melancholy, the Mountain, and the Mantle of 1 Kings 19 in the name of the Greater Prophet…Christ Jesus!

Sincerely,
Elder Grant Jones

Sermon Outline

Title: The Melancholy, the Mountain, and the Mantle
Text: 1 Kings 19
Proposition: The Christian life has spiritual highs and lows. Though our faith may falter, our God is ever-present regardless of our presumptions.

1. Elijah's Melancholy (v. 1 - 10)

2. The Lord's Mountain (v. 11-18)

3. The Passing Mantle (v. 19 - 21)"

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. As mentioned in the sermon, melancholy is a term not often used anymore but depicts deep sadness and lasting gloom that can be fueled by persistent fears. Have you had short or long seasons of melancholy (or spiritual depression)? Consider sharing the causes and the side effects towards the duties that God has called you to (e.g., as a student, parent, spouse, and/or employee)? Has fear ever led you to being unfaithful to God's moral law?

Note to leaders: Encourage members to share honestly but only as much as they feel comfortable. Avoid trying to "fix" someone's struggle or press for painful details. Remind the group that Scripture shows God's people experiencing deep sorrow and fear. Focus on how fear affected faithfulness and how we can support one another.

2. Elijah shows us that often our perception of reality is false. In 1 Kings 19 Elijah expressed he felt he was the only faithful person left and that all the other prophets had been killed. Neither were true. The Lord tells him this was not true (v. 15-19). Have you ever been guilty of believing you are "the only one doing xyz"…or to put it another way, maybe you have been guilty of presuming others are not as faithful as you because they didn't attend some event (small group or prayer group)? While lack of prayer and fellowship can be signs if spiritual decay, it would be sinful of us to assume lack of faith in the life of others merely because they don't attend all the same things we do. Discuss the danger of this mindset and consider sharing if you have been guilty of this attitude. After all, instead of Elijah being the "only" one, the Lord told him of a faithful remnant of 7,000!

This mindset can create pride, judgment, and division within the church. We should remember that only God knows people's hearts and faithfulness. Instead, we should encourage, trust, and pray for one another.

3. In Chapter 18, the Lord spoke in a mighty way with a great demonstration to defeat the prophets of Baal. But in Chapter 19, the Lord seems to be reminding Elijah that he is always with His people and that the main thing is not thundering experiences but the thing that sustains the follower of the Lord is listening to His voice (v. 11 - 12). Do you see this in our current Christian Culture (desire of a sign above a desire to hear the Lord's Voice in His Word)? Maybe you have some experiences you could share where seeing a sign took pre-eminence over the Lord's Word, or maybe you have a background in Roman Catholicism as it relates to "Church Relics" you would like to share.
Note to leaders: Encourage members to discuss experiences without criticizing other Christian traditions. For Roman Catholic backgrounds, relics can be explained as physical objects honored because of their connection to saints or biblical events, but they should never replace Scripture or become the basis of faith. Emphasize that God's Word remains our primary authority.

4. Elisha accepts the mantle and signifies he will answer the Lord's call to become a Prophet of the Lord and to follow Elijah (1 Kings 19:19-21). The actions of Elisha should be inspiring towards our lives today. What are things Elders, Parents, and those in positions of authority can do to ensure they are seeking and training up those who will come after them in order to pass on the mantle of Christ to serve His Kingdom here on earth?
We should intentionally disciple others by modeling faithful Christian living, teaching God's Word, giving younger believers opportunities to serve, and patiently mentoring them. We should identify gifts and potential in others, encourage them to respond to God's calling, and gradually entrust them with greater responsibility for Kingdom ministry and leadership.

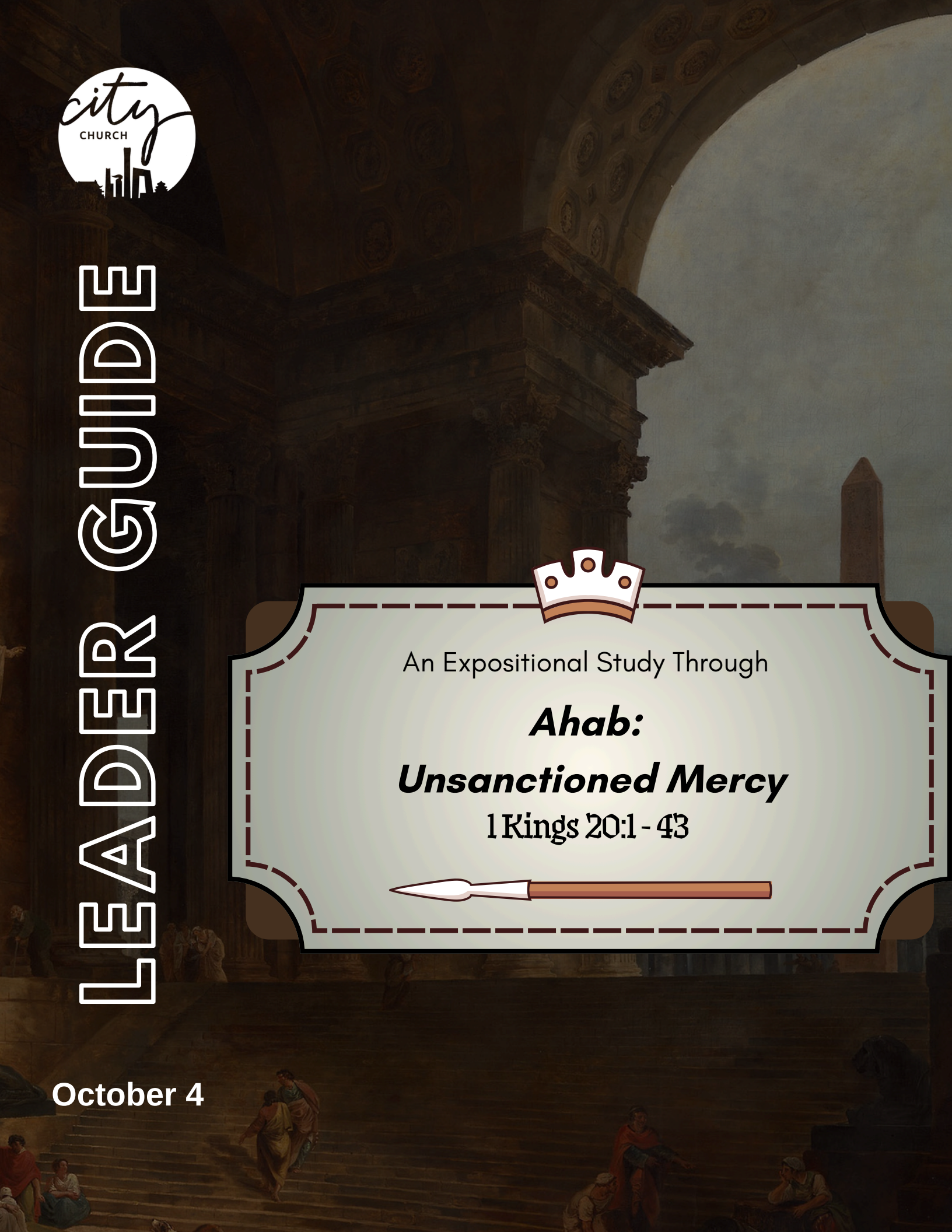
5. Discuss ways you were encouraged, convicted, or challenged by the text. What are some things you can change/adjust moving forward, and/or what are things this small group can be praying for you about in relation to the sermon?

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports



LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

Ahab:

Unsanctioned Mercy

1 Kings 20:1 - 43

October 4

Sermon Overview

Hello city church family,

We are coming to the end of our study of 1 Kings, and this week we are focused on chapter 20. In this chapter, God graciously delivers Israel from their enemies, demonstrates His sovereignty over all creation, and His judgment of evil. This chapter also shows the grave consequences of disobedience when Ahab shows mercy to a king that God had devoted to destruction.

How do we respond when God’s commands seem unfair or unwise to us? Join us this Lord’s Day as we behold our God, seek to trust Him, and walk in obedience.

Elder Ben Whitmore

Sermon Outline

TTitle: Ahab: Unsanctioned Mercy
Text: 1 Kings 20:1 - 43
Proposition: Because God alone is our gracious, sovereign judge, we must bring Him total obedience in every area, and ruthlessly eliminate every stronghold of the enemy from our lives.

1. **The God We Behold**
    a. **Gracious**
    b. **Sovereign**
    c. **Judge**
2. **The Obedience We Bring**
    a. **Full obedience**
    b. **There are consequences for disobedience**
3. **The Warfare We Wage**
    a. **Do not fall for the schemes of the enemy**
    b. **Confront your own sin, sin in the community, and beware those who twist Scripture**

Sermon Applications

Discussion Questions

1. What are some ways you've seen God's grace or sovereignty or justice in your life over the past few weeks?

2. Where do you see God's grace, sovereignty, and justice in 1 Kings 20?
God is gracious toward Ahab by sending prophets and giving him victory. He shows His sovereignty by giving Israel victory, and proves that He is not only the God of the hills but also the plains. He shows judgment by condemning Ben-hadad.

3. When you look at the text, why does Ahab grant mercy to Ben-hadad?
The text is pretty clear (1 Kings 20:34) that he does it in order to get a trade deal and more cities restored.

4. Are there any of God's commands to us that feel harsh or confusing to you? What should we do when we feel this way?
You might get some interesting answers to this… sometimes people have been told God commands things that are not actually from Scripture. If this happens, be prepared to gently point out what the Bible says/doesn't say. For those things that are clear commands, we must remember who God is - He made us and knows what is best for us, and He demonstrated His love by dying for us… this can give us confidence to trust and obey Him even in matters that we do not understand. Proverbs 14:12 says There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

5. Why do you think the prophet in 1 Kings 20:35 - 43 goes through the process of pretending to be a wounded soldier when he brings God's word to Ahab?
The prophets often used creative ways to embody and demonstrate God's message to His people. Examples: Isaiah 20:2 - 4, Jeremiah 27:2 - 3, and Ezekiel 4:4 - 6. This shows how committed God is to communicating clearly with His people. Through this process, the prophet also exposes Ahab's hypocrisy: he was willing to condemn a soldier for letting an enemy escape, but he allowed Ben-hadad to escape. Finally, the story of the prophet's companion refusing to strike the prophet emphasizes the theme of this passage: We must obey the word of the Lord even when it seems unwise or harsh.

6. In the sermon, we talked about the need to confront sin in our own lives, confront sin in the community, and beware of those who tamper with the word of God. Which of these is most difficult for you, and how can you allow the Holy Spirit to give you courage in that area?

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

LEADER GUIDE

An Expositional Study Through

Ahab: God's Mercy to the Chief of Sinners

1 Kings 21:1-22:40

October 11

Sermon Overview

This Sunday we continue our study through 1 Kings by looking at the final chapters of Ahab's life in 1 Kings 21:1–22:40. Ahab was a king who "sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD," yet even in the midst of judgment, God extended mercy. Together we will consider the seriousness of sin, the certainty of God's justice, the evidence of repentance, and the mercy God offers to sinners. Take some time before Sunday to read 1 Kings 21–22 and come ready to hear from God's Word.

In Him,

Elder TJ Johnson

Sermon Outline

Title: Ahab: God's Mercy to the Chief of Sinners.
Text: 1 Kings 21:1-22:40
Proposition: Those who sell themselves to sin will experience its destructive consequences, but those who turn to Christ will find mercy and deliverance.

1. **Sin is Serious (1 Kings 21:20).**
2. **Justice is Sure (1 Kings 20:42).**
3. **Repentance is Expressed (1 Kings 21:27).**
    a. **Repentance Can Be Rejected (1 Kings 20:43).**
    b. **Repentance Can Be Faked (1 Kings 20:31).**
    c. **Repentance Can Be Genuine (1 Kings 21:27-29).**
4. **Mercy is Shown (1 Kings 21:29).**

Sermon Applications

Sermon Questions

1. Read 1 Kings 21:25. What does it mean that Ahab had "sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD"? In what ways are we more like Ahab than we might want to admit?

Ahab "sold himself" by willingly surrendering to sin, allowing greed, idolatry, and evil desires to control his choices. Like Ahab, we can compromise when we prioritize possessions, comfort, approval, or personal desires over God's commands. We may excuse sin, ignore injustice, or justify wrong choices when they benefit us personally.

2. How do you see sin progressively taking hold of Ahab throughout 1 Kings 21? How have you seen the progressive nature of sin in your own life or in the world around you? What does this teach us about the importance of dealing seriously with sin?

Ahab's sin progresses from coveting Naboth's vineyard to sulking, accepting Jezebel's evil plan, murdering Naboth, and taking his property. Sin often grows when we tolerate small compromises instead of confronting them. This teaches us to recognize sin early, confess it honestly, and turn to God before it controls our choices and harms others.

3. Read 1 Kings 20:42 and 21:20-21. What do these passages teach us about the certainty and seriousness of God's judgment against sin? What do they reveal about God, about sin, and about our need for salvation?

These passages show that God's judgment against sin is certain and serious; His warnings will be fulfilled. They reveal that God is holy, just, and faithful to His Word. Sin is rebellion deserving judgment, not something to excuse. Therefore, we desperately need God's mercy and salvation through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

4. Read 1 Kings 20:31, 43, and 21:27. Compare Ahab's responses when confronted by God's Word. What is the difference between being sorry about the consequences of sin and truly repenting of sin? What evidence should genuine repentance produce in a person's life?

Ahab sometimes felt sorrow and humbled himself when facing God's judgment, but his responses did not consistently show lasting obedience. Being sorry focuses on painful consequences, while repentance turns from sin toward God. Genuine repentance produces changed desires, obedient actions, humility, confession,

restitution, and a willingness to reject sinful patterns and follow God.

Going Deeper in the Text

1. Why was Naboth unwilling to sell his vineyard to Ahab? (21:1–4)
Naboth refused to sell his vineyard because it was his ancestral inheritance, given to his family by God. Selling it would mean giving up his family's allotted inheritance. His refusal shows faithfulness to God's law and respect for what God had entrusted to his family, even when pressured by the king.

2. Why does God hold Ahab responsible for Naboth's death even though Jezebel orchestrated it? (21:19) What parallels do we see from Genesis 3 and why?
God held Ahab responsible because he approved Jezebel's actions and benefited from Naboth's death. This parallels Genesis 3, where Adam also blamed another but willingly participated in sin. Both accounts show that God holds people accountable for their own choices; influence or temptation does not remove personal responsibility before God.

3. Do you think Ahab's repentance was genuine, why or why not? (21:27–29)
Ahab's repentance appears genuine in the sense that he humbled himself, fasted, and mourned after hearing God's judgment. However, his earlier pattern of repeated disobedience raises questions about lasting change. His response brought God's mercy, but genuine repentance should produce continued obedience, changed behavior, and turning away from sinful desires.

4. Why does Micaiah initially tell Ahab to go to battle and succeed? (22:15–16)
Micaiah initially tells Ahab to go and succeed because he is using sarcasm to expose the false prophets who had repeatedly told Ahab what he wanted to hear. Ahab recognizes this and demands the truth. Micaiah then reveals God's judgment, showing the danger of surrounding ourselves with voices that avoid uncomfortable truth.

5. What is the “lying spirit” in 1 Kings 22:19–23?

The “lying spirit” is a spirit permitted by God to deceive Ahab’s prophets so Ahab would receive the false message he desired and face judgment. God Himself does not lie; He sovereignly allows deception as judgment on Ahab’s persistent rejection of truth. This shows God’s justice and sovereignty over evil.

6. What does Micaiah's vision of God's throne room teach us about God's sovereignty? (22:19–23)

Micaiah’s vision shows that God is completely sovereign over earthly events, spiritual beings, kings, and nations. Ahab may think he controls his destiny, but God remains on His throne and accomplishes His purposes. Even when God permits deception and judgment, nothing happens outside His authority, wisdom, and righteous plan.

7. What is the significance of the “certain man” who draws his bow “at random”? (22:34)

The “certain man” who shoots “at random” shows that God’s judgment does not depend on human intention or planning. Ahab tried to protect himself by disguising his identity, but the arrow struck the exact place God had ordained. This demonstrates God’s sovereignty: even seemingly accidental events can accomplish His purposes.

8. Why does the narrator emphasize that the dogs licked Ahab's blood? (22:37–38)

The narrator emphasizes the dogs licking Ahab’s blood to show the fulfillment of Elijah’s earlier prophecy in 1 Kings 21:19. Ahab had abused his power, murdered Naboth, and rejected God’s commands. His death demonstrates that God’s judgment is certain and that His Word will ultimately be fulfilled, despite human resistance.

9. What parallels do we find between this story and David and Bathesheba? Do you think this is intentional?

Both Ahab and David abused royal power, desired another man’s possession, and became responsible for an innocent man’s death. Both stories involve a king taking what belonged to another and facing God’s judgment. The parallels are likely intentional, reminding us that God holds even powerful leaders accountable and shows no favoritism.

10. What other questions do you have regarding the text?

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports