

## Sermon-Based Small Group Preparation

For the week of November 13, 2011

**“Make It All About Power”**

Sermon Series: *How to Wreck Your Life* (week 5 of 5)

2 Chronicles 26:1-5, 16-23

» Please look over these questions *before* your Small Group meeting «

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### Getting Started

- 1) Over the past five weeks we've looked at how money, success, love (relationships), and now power can become idols in our lives. In comparison to the other three we've discussed, how common would you say it is for us to make an idol of power today? What examples come to mind when thinking of the misuse of power in the US and abroad?
- 2) The passage we looked at during Sunday's sermon focused mainly on King Uzziah (someone whose power is evident based on his position). Who in our society has lots of power and whom do they have power over? What negative consequences come from the misuse of power?
- 3) Pastor Tom mentioned that we all have a kingdom that is ours (an area of our life in which we are in control). What kingdom/s are you in control of? Can you think of any less obvious areas in your life that are affected by your choices?

*Read Matthew 6:9-13*

<sup>9</sup> This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, <sup>10</sup> your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup> Give us today our daily bread. <sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. <sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”  
(NIV)

- 4) What is the difference between God's kingdom and ours?

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### Into the Bible

We all have the ability to exercise influence over certain aspects of our lives and the lives of others. This reality makes it essential that we seek God's guidance and wisdom to properly govern that which has been entrusted to us.

*Read Ephesians 6:10-17*

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, <sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (NIV)

These verses point to the battle we all face in life as well as what we can do to arm ourselves for victory.

- 5) What is so important about verse 10? Where are we told to find our strength? Where else have you looked to find strength or power?
- 6) Referring to Ephesians passage above, which of these pieces of the armor of God can best help you keep humble even when given power over others?

Read 1 Peter 5:2-3

<sup>2</sup> Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; <sup>3</sup> not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. (NIV)

- 7) How many times is the word “power” used in this text? Do these verses provide you with any fresh insights in your understanding of power? Does viewing yourself as a shepherd of a flock change your view of the power you have over others?

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### Digging Deeper

Power and status are aspects of our culture that are often associated with hard work and thus become something that “we have deserved.” However, power often becomes a means to an end (to keep or grow your power). This was the case with King Uzziah.

- 8) King Uzziah started well and “did what was right in the eyes of the Lord” (vs. 4). Over which kingdoms in your life do you intend to govern well but find it easy to misuse your power?
- 9) Have you encountered anyone who you felt was a good role model for dealing responsibly with the power (or status) entrusted to them?
- 10) Over these past five weeks we have looked at how we make idols of things that are commonly found in our lives. Which of the four that we touched on do you struggle with elevating the most (money, success, love, power)? What has been a helpful idea or scripture that you've come across that can begin the process of perceiving these things in the way God intends?

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### Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer

## Sermon Notes

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