

What I Say to a Young Leader — April 22-23, 2017
Follow-up Bible Studies

Written by Maggie Baxter

Day One: 1 Kings 12:1-24

- What was happening in Shechem (1)? What did Jeroboam do (2)? Describe his encounter with King Rehoboam (3-5). Whom did the king first consult on this matter, and what did they advise (6-7)? What did he do with this advice (8)? What did he do next (8-9)? What did the young men advise (10-11)?
- What happened three days later (12-15)? How did the people react to Rehoboam's harshness (16-18)? Describe the fallout (18-20). How did Rehoboam try to regain his kingdom (21)? Describe how and what the Lord spoke into this situation, along with the people's response to the prophetic word (22-24).
- Why do you think the king adopted the young men's counsel? Imagine if he instead took the elders' advice. Rewrite verses 13-14 accordingly. Pray for a mentor like these elders, someone wiser and more experienced in leadership or some other pursuit. Also pray you'd be a faithful mentee.

Day Two: Proverbs 7

- Summarize all the ways the writer tells readers to keep these commands (1-4). Which reminder or symbol speaks most deeply to you? Why? What is the benefit of heeding this advice (5)?
- In the story that follows, describe the young man and what he was doing (6-9). Likewise, describe the woman (9-12). What did she both do and say to the man (13-20)?
- Summarize the writer's commentary on this affair (21-23). Also describe his concluding remarks, full of urgency and warning (24-27). Now, tell the Lord how you feel about this text's imagery and symbolism. What do you sense him speaking in response?
- End by reflecting on how the writer's warning and a main point from the sermon – "Don't do anything stupid!" – may apply to your own life. How do you avoid destructive choices? What is one way you can have an even stronger defense against them? This week, make a plan to begin walking this out.

Day Three: Matthew 23:13-26

- What are some of the ways Jesus accuses the Pharisees of impeding people's access to God (13-15)? What does he say about their approach to swearing oaths (16-22)? How does Jesus contrast the Pharisees' tithes with their handling of "more important matters of the law" (23-24)? What imagery points to their concern for outward appearance only (25-28)?
- Of all the accusations Jesus levels against the Pharisees in this passage, which one do you think most highlights their failure to "keep the main things the main things"? Read that section alongside 1 Timothy 1:15. What do you think of this juxtaposition?
- Finally, meditate on verses 23-24 and ask the Holy Spirit to speak as you ponder the following: what "important matters" do you neglect? What "gnats" preoccupy you? How can you instead "keep the main things the main things" in your heart and life?

Day Four: Galatians 2:11-14

- Set the scene of this text (11). What did Paul do to Cephas (the apostle Peter) (11)? Why (11-12)? What was the ripple effect (13)? What was Paul's assessment of this behavior (14)? What did this prompt him to say (14)?
- How do you think Peter responded to Paul's objection and question? How would you describe Paul's tone and emotional state in this section of his letter to the Galatians?

- In Paul's choice to oppose Peter "to his face," what do we learn about him as a leader? Consider leadership positions you hold. Ask the Lord to reveal any reluctance to engage in healthy confrontation and problem solving. What is he speaking? In response, begin with repentance; then, ask for boldness and grace to faithfully deal with problems instead of avoiding them.

Day Five: James 5:7-11

- What does James tell us to do (7)? Until when (7)? What imagery does he use to inspire us (7)? Why is it worthwhile to "be patient and stand firm" (8)? What may we be tempted to do while waiting (9)? Why shouldn't we do it (9)?
- What other example does James give to encourage us to persevere (10)? What do we think of those who persevere (11)? What example from the scriptures supports this view (11)? Bring to mind other believers – both those from the Bible and outside of it – who have modeled fierce perseverance to you. Take some time now to thank God for their powerful examples.
- Focus on the last sentence in this passage: "The Lord is full of compassion and mercy." When you feel overwhelmed and want to quit, especially when in a leadership position, how true does this promise feel to you? Ask God to rewire and reinforce your sense of his compassion and mercy so that when challenges and opposition come, you are able to "be patient and stand firm." Pray the same for loved ones in positions of leadership.