

# The Great Miscalculation

## 1 Kings 21

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Crisis

### Reflect

Outline: Recap

### Realize

Points to Ponder

### Respond

Questions to draw out understanding.

## REFLECT

Let's be honest — sometimes, we just want what we want...even when it's not good for us. Unfortunately for us, decisions (whether good or bad) are never one-and-done: consequences always follow. At times, those consequences can be really awful. What's beautiful about the Lord is, when our hearts are open and humble before him, he wants to teach us the most profound lessons and bring beauty from our worst case scenarios.

[LINK to SMALL GROUP VIDEO MATERIALS](#)

## REALIZE

### 1. The flesh is never satisfied

- **1 Kings 21:1-16**
- **Leader Notes**
  - We live in a world that constantly encourages us to “go with our gut” and “trust our instincts.” However, when we are living in rebellion to God, we can't trust our own calculations.
  - We all have a responsibility to ask the Spirit of God to search our hearts and motives in our decision-making processes.
  - Proverbs 27:20 talks about how “the eyes of man are never satisfied,” and apart from Christ, that's true. In the flesh, not one of us will ever be satisfied. Our economy runs on advertisements of what is designed to make us happy — life is mundane without “this” (fill in the blank).
  - Jesus—as usual—flipped our cultural narrative on its head. He taught about generosity, talked about the abundance that is found in relationship with our Creator. To top it all off, he says we are more blessed to give than to receive.
  - Many of us make the same miscalculation that Ahab and Jezebel made: that it's okay to want whatever we want, and to seek satisfaction by any means necessary.
- **What motivates most of your decisions — God's will, or your own satisfaction? Take some time to invite the Spirit of God to search your heart and motives. What is God revealing to you?**

### 2. Properly count the cost

- **1 Kings 21:17-24**
- **Leader Notes**
  - Ahab and Jezebel didn't count the cost of their actions. They believed that because of their powerful positions they were exempt from rules and consequences. If we find ourselves in a

place of authority, we need to recognize God as the ultimate authority and remember that he sees the thoughts of our hearts.

- Even though no one else knew their plot, the Lord knew, and he held them both accountable. Sometimes we are so busy trying to mitigate the effects of our sin on other people we forget that the Lord is the first and most wounded by our sin.
- We are so busy fearing people and trying to protect our reputations, we neglect to fear God. That fear of God is the only thing that keeps us from wrongdoing.
- When we fear God, we open ourselves up to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. God loves us too much to leave us on our courses of destruction and self-destruction.
- **Describe a time you made a decision without considering the long-term consequences. What happened? Is there anything you're considering right now where you need to think more about the long-term consequences?**

### 3. God's mercy is extraordinary

- **1 Kings 21:25-29**
- **Leader Notes**
  - God not only sees Ahab's repentance, he points it out to Elijah. Because of Ahab's clear heart of repentance, the Lord shows him mercy. From an external perspective, not much had changed, but God was looking for the genuineness of Ahab's heart.
  - Ahab was one of the most evil men in Israel's history, but God forgave even Ahab when he repented. Not even the wicked king who led Israel into idolatry was too far gone for the mercy of God.
  - God knows the entirety of our stories, as he did Ahab's. He also sees our secret thoughts and the genuineness of our hearts! Just as he was ready to forgive Ahab, God stands ready and willing to forgive us too.
- **How has God shown his extraordinary mercy in your life? What has his transformation looked like in your life? Take some time to pray and thank God for his mercy in your life and to pray for one or two people who need to encounter the mercy of Jesus for the first time.**

#### Optional Follow-up Questions:

- What makes you say that?
- How do you feel about that?
- How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?
- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can't we just go (some other route) instead?