



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Through the Bible

April 21 - 27

1 Kings 2

Things to Know

See Other Sermons Here

[Click Here to Watch](#)

VBS MAX Simpsonville Volunteers Needed

June 23 -26, 2025 - [Click Here to Volunteer!](#)

VBS MAX Haywood Volunteers Needed

June 23 -26, 2025 - [Click Here to Volunteer!](#)

Gospel Connections and Conversations

[Click Here to report your Gospel Connections & Conversations](#)

Studying God's Word *In Community*

*Reminder. Seek to understand and apply God's word, **not** rehash the sermon.*

Sermon Recap

1. The only place where we can have hope that is truly secure is in the empty tomb and the resurrected savior.
2. David was temporary, weak, and hypocritical. The true King Jesus is eternal, strong, and true. There is no king like Christ.
3. David was temporary, weak, and hypocritical. The true King Jesus is eternal, strong, and true. There is no king like Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. What does David's mortality teach us about the limits of even the greatest human leaders?

How does it deepen your appreciation for the eternal reign of Jesus?

"I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, and show yourself a man..."

– 1 Kings 2:2

2. David calls Solomon to obey God—yet he often failed to do so himself. What does this tension reveal about our need for a better King?

How does Jesus fulfill what David could only point toward?

"...walk in his ways, keeping his statutes, his commandments... that you may prosper in all that you do..."

– 1 Kings 2:3

3. Why do you think David spent his final breaths calling for justice—or vengeance—against his enemies?

In what ways are we tempted to hold onto offense instead of trusting God's justice?

"You also know what Joab... did to me... act therefore according to your wisdom..."

– 1 Kings 2:5–6

4. How does the finality of David's burial point to the limitations of even the greatest leaders?

What difference does it make that Jesus' tomb is empty?

"Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David."

— 1 Kings 2:10

5. What does Solomon's shaky rise to power teach us about human kingdoms?

How does Easter give us hope in a King whose rule can never be shaken?

"So Solomon sat on the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was firmly established."

— 1 Kings 2:12

Read

Read 1 Kings 2:1-12 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
- What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
- Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
- What do you need help understanding about this passage?

Scripture

1 Kings 2: 1-12

David's Instructions to Solomon

2 When David's time to die drew near, he commanded Solomon his son, saying, ²"I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, and show yourself a man, ³and keep the charge of the Lord your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn, ⁴that the Lord may establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack^[a] a man on the throne of Israel.'

⁵“Moreover, you also know what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, how he dealt with the two commanders of the armies of Israel, Abner the son of Ner, and Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed, avenging^[b] in time of peace for blood that had been shed in war, and putting the blood of war^[c] on the belt around his^[d] waist and on the sandals on his feet. ⁶Act therefore according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace. ⁷But deal loyally with the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table, for with such loyalty^[e] they met me when I fled from Absalom your brother. ⁸And there is also with you Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjaminite from Bahurim, who cursed me with a grievous curse on the day when I went to Mahanaim. But when he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the Lord, saying, ‘I will not put you to death with the sword.’ ⁹Now therefore do not hold him guiltless, for you are a wise man. You will know what you ought to do to him, and you shall bring his gray head down with blood to Sheol.”

The Death of David

¹⁰Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David. ¹¹And the time that David reigned over Israel was forty years. He reigned seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. ¹²So Solomon sat on the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was firmly established.

[The Holy Bible, English Standard Version](#). ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.
1 Kings 2 : 1-12

Living on Mission In Community

David’s final moments remind us that even the most revered leaders are still deeply human—frail, flawed, and finite. His death, his vengeful commands, and his inability to establish lasting peace all point to the need for a better King. Jesus is that King. He obeyed perfectly where David stumbled, offered mercy where David demanded vengeance, and rose from the grave where David’s body still lies. His resurrection proves that His rule is eternal and His reign is

righteous. Unlike David, Jesus does not need to pass His kingdom to another— He lives and reigns forever. If David's throne was a shadow, Jesus is the substance. And if David's kingdom fell short, Christ's kingdom fulfills every promise. The question for us isn't whether we admire Jesus as King, but whether we've actually submitted our lives to His rule. **Is there any part of your life where you're still acting like king instead of surrendering to the risen King, Jesus?**

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?
 - *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
 2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
 3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*
-

Leader Resources

Sermon-Based Curriculum: “The King We Needed All Along”

Text: 1 Kings 2:1–12

Theme: David’s limitations reveal our need for a greater, perfect King—Jesus.

Sermon Series: The Life of David

Setting: Upstate Church Haywood Small Groups

1. Session Overview

As King David prepares to die, he gives final instructions to his son Solomon—words that reveal both wisdom and weakness. In his dying moments, David urges obedience to God but also delivers vengeance against his enemies. His frailty, mortality, and moral compromises point us to the need for a King who is not just strong, but righteous and eternal. On Resurrection Sunday, we proclaim that this King has come—and He is alive forevermore.

2. Opening

Begin in prayer, inviting the Spirit to speak through the Word.

Then ask in groups of 2–3:

“Is there any way we can pray for your personal walk with God this week?”

After sharing, ask this **icebreaker**:

"What’s a time when you realized someone you looked up to had deep flaws? How did that change the way you saw them—or what you hoped for in a leader?"

3. Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 2:1–12

Have a volunteer read the full passage aloud.

4. Teaching Points with Commentary

Point 1: David Was Weak – The King Must Die (vv. 1–4)

“I am about to go the way of all the earth...” (v. 2)

David, the warrior-poet, the man after God's own heart, is dying. His body fails. His voice falters. He must pass on the kingdom because he cannot hold it forever.

- His charge to Solomon is noble and faithful: “Walk in God’s ways.”
- But it’s also a reminder: **David cannot guarantee that obedience—only God can.**

Commentary Insight: The Tyndale Commentary notes, “The king is not above the law, but under it. His rule succeeds only if he walks with God.” David's death exposes the need for **a king who will never die and will never fail to obey perfectly.**

Gospel Connection: Jesus does what David could not. He lives in perfect obedience, dies for sinners, and rises again to reign forever (Hebrews 7:23–25).

Point 2: David Was Temporary – The Throne Needs a Permanent King (vv. 10–12)

“Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David...” (v. 10)

Solomon ascends, but not as the final king. His own failures and the eventual division of the kingdom show how fragile human reign really is.

Commentary Insight: As Acts 2:29 says, “David died and was buried... and his tomb is still with us.” The permanence of David’s tomb contrasts with the **emptiness of Jesus’ tomb.**

Gospel Connection: Jesus’ resurrection declares a **kingdom that cannot be shaken** (Hebrews 12:28). He is **the eternal King** promised to David, reigning forever on a throne no one can remove (Luke 1:32–33).

Point 3: David Was Vengeful – His Judgment Was Incomplete (vv. 5–9)

David’s final words include a hit list—Joab and Shimei must be dealt with, and Barzillai rewarded.

- Though some of this was wise, it reveals a heart still wrestling with **unfinished justice and unresolved anger.**
- The man who once wrote, “*Create in me a clean heart*” ends with, “*Do not let his gray head go down to the grave in peace.*”

Commentary Insight: Matthew Henry writes, “The charge David gave Solomon, though prudent in its civil administration, shows the weakness of a man under the shadow of a better covenant to come.”

Gospel Connection: Jesus does not send enemies to their graves—He takes the grave upon Himself. Instead of vengeance, He offers forgiveness: “Father, forgive them...” (Luke 23:34).

5. Discussion Questions

1. **What does David’s death teach us about the limits of even the greatest human leaders?** (vv. 1–4)
2. **Why is it significant that David’s tomb still exists, but Jesus’ tomb is empty?** (Acts 2:29–32)
3. **In what ways do we try to be like Solomon—taking justice into our own hands instead of trusting God?** (vv. 5–9)
4. **How does this passage point you to long for Jesus as King in your own life right now?**
5. **What does it look like to live under the reign of a risen King? How does Easter change our daily obedience?**

6. Application Points

Live for an eternal kingdom. Don’t build your life around temporary leaders or comforts. Only Jesus reigns forever.

Trust in Christ’s sufficiency. Where David failed, Jesus succeeded. Where we fall short, Christ stands tall.

Let go of vengeance. Like David, we often carry grudges—but Easter reminds us that Jesus bore our punishment and gave grace.

Pass on a legacy of obedience. Like David to Solomon, we’re called to disciple the next generation—but **with humility**, knowing we are not the heroes of the story. Jesus is.

7. Closing Reflection and Prayer

Ask the group to reflect silently:

“Where do I still live as if Jesus isn’t enough—as if I need to be my own king?”

Then pray together:

“Jesus, thank You that You are the King we truly needed. In David’s weakness, we see Your strength. In David’s death, we are reminded of Your resurrection. Help us surrender to Your reign and live in the power of the risen King. Amen.”

8. Memory Verse

Acts 2:36 – *“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”*

9. Leader’s Notes

- Encourage honesty and depth in discussion. Many participants may have unresolved grief about failing leaders—this passage speaks to that.
- Highlight the **Easter tension**: the hope of resurrection amid human frailty.
- Consider inviting people to **surrender areas of life** where they are still “king” in their

