



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Through the Bible

May 5 - 11

2 Chronicles 36

Things to Know

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Studying God's Word *In Community*

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

Sermon Recap

1. When We Ignore God's Word, We Invite a Hard Heart

 *2 Chronicles 36:12*

Zedekiah heard the truth but refused to humble himself. Hearing without obeying always leads to hardness.

You can't grow spiritually when you're too proud to bend.

 **Charles Spurgeon:**

"When the heart grows callous under rebuke, and conscience itself is seared, the last hope is gone."

2. When We Mock God's Warnings, We Miss His Mercy

 *2 Chronicles 36:15-16*

God sent Word after Word out of compassion — but they mocked, despised, and scoffed until "there was no remedy."

God's patience is great, but it's not forever.

 **Adrian Rogers:**

"God's mercy is everlasting, but your opportunity to receive it is not."

 **Charles Spurgeon:**

"Mercy despised is wrath stored up. If you will not have Christ to save you, you shall have Him to judge you."

3. When We Play With Sin, We Pollute What's Sacred

 *2 Chronicles 36:14, 17-20*

The people defiled the temple — the very place they assumed would shield them. Sin had desecrated what God made holy.

Sin always costs more than we think, and it takes more than we want to give.

 **Matthew Henry:**

"That place is not far from ruin in which religion is already ruined."

 **J.A. Thompson (NAC):**

“The exile came not merely because Israel sinned, but because they persistently spurned God’s offers of reconciliation.”

Discussion Questions

1. Are there any areas in your life where you’re resisting the voice of God – like Zedekiah did when he refused to humble himself before Jeremiah?

 *Verse: 2 Chronicles 36:12*

Zedekiah “did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke from the mouth of the Lord.”

Application: What does humility look like when God’s Word confronts us? What might it look like for you to respond differently this week?

2. Have you ever heard God’s Word repeatedly but delayed obedience? What has that done to your heart over time?

 *Verse: 2 Chronicles 36:15*

“The Lord... sent persistently to them by his messengers... because he had compassion.”

Application: What is one area God has been patiently speaking into your life? What’s stopping you from acting on it?

3. How do we, as modern believers, risk “despising God’s Word” or “mocking His messengers” today?

 *Verse: 2 Chronicles 36:16*

“They mocked the messengers of God, despised his words, and scoffed at his prophets...”

Application: Are there voices of biblical correction you’ve been avoiding – from Scripture, community, or church leadership?

4. Do you treat your life – your body, your heart, your time – as something holy, set apart for God?

 *Verse: 2 Chronicles 36:14*

“They polluted the house of the Lord that he had made holy in Jerusalem.”

Application: What would it look like to more intentionally live as God’s holy temple this week (1 Cor. 6:19)?

5. How does the phrase “there was no remedy” challenge the way you think about God’s justice and patience?

📖 Verse: 2 Chronicles 36:16

“...until the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, until there was no remedy.”

Application: How can you live in a way that responds quickly to God’s correction rather than waiting until consequences fall?

Read

Read 2 Chronicles 36:14-21 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?
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Scripture

**2 Chronicles 36:
14-21**

¹⁴ All the officers of the priests and the people likewise were exceedingly unfaithful, following all the abominations of the nations. And they polluted the house of the Lord that he had made holy in Jerusalem.

¹⁵ The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. ¹⁶ But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, until there was no remedy.

Jerusalem Captured and Burned

¹⁷Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or aged. He gave them all into his hand. ¹⁸And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon. ¹⁹And they burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its palaces with fire and destroyed all its precious vessels. ²⁰He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, ²¹to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

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2 Chronicless 36:14-21

Living on Mission In Community

The story of Judah's downfall is not just a warning from history — it's a mirror for our hearts. Zedekiah and the people of Judah didn't wake up one morning and suddenly reject God; their rebellion was slow, stubborn, and cumulative. They heard God's Word again and again, but each time they hardened their hearts a little more. God sent prophets not because He delighted in judgment, but because He longed to show compassion. And yet, they refused. In a culture like ours that prizes self-rule and self-expression, it's easy to push aside the parts of God's Word that feel uncomfortable — His call to holiness, obedience, repentance. But when we ignore the voice of God, we're not just skipping a rule; we're rejecting a relationship. God's Word comes to us today with the same purpose: to lead us to life. The question is — are you listening with a heart ready to obey, or just with ears that hear and move on?

Where in your life is God speaking – and how will you respond before the moment for mercy is gone?

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?)*
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Leader Resources

Small Group Curriculum: When Judgment Falls

Text: 2 Chronicles 36:11-21

Theme: God's Righteous Judgment After Rejected Mercy

1. Session Overview

This session explores the final moments of Judah before the exile. Zedekiah's reign, marked by pride and disobedience, represents the tipping point of a people who had long rejected God's Word. This passage calls us to take seriously both the **grace and the judgment** of God, reminding us that **hearing without obeying leads to hardness**, and **rejected mercy leads to inevitable justice**.

2. Opening (Prayer & Icebreaker)

Start with Prayer:

Break into groups of 2-3. Ask,

"Is there any way we can pray for our personal walks with God this week?"

Leaders, go first. Lead by example in vulnerability.

Icebreaker Question:

"What's a time you ignored a warning and regretted it? (Funny or serious!)"

3. Scripture Reading

Read 2 Chronicles 36:11-21 aloud as a group.

4. Teaching Points with Commentary

Point 1: God's Word Must Be Heard and Obeyed (vv. 11-13)

Zedekiah heard God's Word through Jeremiah but "did not humble himself" (v. 12). He resisted truth and broke promises to both God and Babylon.

💬 *Spurgeon*: “When the heart grows callous under rebuke, and conscience itself is seared, the last hope is gone.”

- Refusing to humble ourselves before God's Word leads to hardness of heart (cf. Heb. 3:13).
- Disobedience begins not with action but with pride that says, “I know better.”

🧠 *Insight*: Sin is not merely breaking God’s rules – it’s **rejecting His voice**.

Point 2: Rejected Mercy Turns to Judgment (vv. 14–16)

God “sent word again and again” (v. 15) because of His compassion, but the people mocked His messengers, despised His Word, and scoffed at His prophets.

💬 *Adrian Rogers*: “God’s mercy is everlasting, but your opportunity to receive it is not.”

- God's repeated warnings are a mercy – but they are not indefinite.
- “There was no remedy” (v. 16) is one of the most chilling phrases in Scripture. It’s not that God ran out of love – it’s that His people ran past it.

🧠 *Insight*: Hearing God's Word without obeying it doesn’t leave us neutral – it hardens us (James 1:22).

Point 3: Sin Defiles What God Has Made Holy (v. 14)

They “polluted the house of the Lord.” Sin doesn’t just hurt the sinner – it corrupts the community and defiles sacred things.

💬 *Matthew Henry*: “That place is not far from ruin in which religion is already ruined.”

- As Christians, we are God’s temple (1 Cor. 6:19). Our sin doesn’t stay private – it dishonors God’s presence.

Point 4: God's Judgment Is Just and Complete (vv. 17–20)

The temple burned, the walls fell, and the people were exiled. God’s judgment, long delayed, came swiftly and decisively.

💬 *Selman (TOTC)*: “Because Israel wanted none of God’s compassion, no compassion was received from their conquerors.”

- God's patience is great – but it is not infinite (2 Peter 3:9).
- The judgment came not just because of sin – but because of **rejected mercy**.

🧠 *Insight*: “Mercy has a deadline. Grace is not permission to persist in sin” (summary of Rogers/Spurgeon).

5. Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Zedekiah refused to humble himself before Jeremiah, even after multiple warnings? (v. 12)
2. How have you seen the danger of hearing God's Word without responding to it in your own life or in others? (v. 16)
3. What does it mean to “pollute the house of the Lord” today? How does our sin impact the church community? (v. 14)
4. What stood out to you about the phrase, “there was no remedy”? How does this shape how we think about grace and repentance?
5. Where in your life is God showing patience right now – and how can you respond to His Word before correction becomes necessary?

6. Application Points

- Ask: Am I merely hearing God's Word or obeying it?
- Identify an area of delayed obedience in your life and make a plan to respond this week.
- Consider how your personal walk affects your church community – sin is never isolated.
- Be warned by Judah's story, but also be comforted: God's Word came again and again because of His compassion.

 *Spurgeon*: “He who despises the Word cuts the only lifeline that can save him.”

7. Closing Reflection & Prayer

Reflect Together:

Invite the group to silently reflect:

“Lord, is there any area where I've been resisting Your Word? Am I growing callous under conviction?”

Then pray aloud:

“Father, help us be a people who don't just hear Your Word but do it. Thank You for Your compassion and patience. Help us not to presume upon Your mercy but to respond in humility and obedience. Keep us soft-hearted, surrendered, and in awe of both Your love and Your holiness.”

8. Memory Verse

2 Chronicles 36:16 (ESV):

“But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his

prophets, until the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, until there was no remedy.”

9. Leader’s Notes

- **Tone:** Lead with humility and gravity – this is a heavy passage, but it leads us to deeper reverence for God's holiness and gratitude for the gospel.
- **Gospel Connection:** After the group explores the weight of judgment, be sure to point to the cross: Jesus bore the wrath of God so that we wouldn’t have to. The exile anticipates a greater return – and Jesus is the one who brings us home.
- **Follow-Up:** Encourage group members to read Lamentations 3 or Psalm 137 this week to feel the emotional aftermath of exile and prepare for God’s restoring grace.

