

Small Group Questions ::: Abimelek ::: Judges 9



After God used Gideon to save Israel from the hands of the Midianites he slowly drifted from the Lord. Gideon rejected the kingship offer from Israel but had a son with a concubine who lived in Shechem. This son was named Abimelek (meaning: My father is the king). Abimelek is the only leader in Israel who is not a judge called by the Lord. Abimelek promoted himself as a leader through a violent uprising. This chapter makes it seem like God is absent in the lives of His people. We read about how quickly Israel forgot about the Lord. But God never forgot Israel. The three short years of Abimelek is a horrific time in the history of Israel.

1. Neal started the sermon and the violence of Saddam Hussain that he watched as a teenager. Think about some of the worst leaders from history. What is a common thread that makes them so despicable and horrific in their leadership?
2. Read Judges 9:1-6. Abimelek hires *reckless scoundrels* who are willing to mass murder all his brothers on a stone. Discuss why Abimelek would have acted in such a violent manner to his family.
3. We have a leadership vacuum in America. It seems there are more leaders who are self-promoting than others serving. What are some traits that people praise in a leader that are not found as godly leadership in the Bible?
4. One of Abimelek's brothers escapes and gives an example of the unwise decision the people of Shechem made (read Judges 9:7-20). What are some ways that God warns us of our potentially disastrous decisions?
5. Think about a time in your life when you were about to make a poor decision. Did you consult with another person before making that decision? What would have happened if you reached out for help? (Proverbs 12:26, 17:17, 27:6)
6. The result of Abimelek's grasping for power is a civil war. The ending of the war is Abimelek's death (read Judges 9:50-57). Talk about how even when it seems like God is silent, that He is still present in the lives of His people.
7. It almost seems like Israel had spiritual amnesia, how quickly they forgot about the Lord. How come we so easily fall into forgetting about the Lord? What is in the heart of man that is prone to rebellion and sin? Can that change?
8. Close your time in prayer. Talk about who you will invite to Coastline this week