

Small Group and Personal Bible Study Guide

This Weeks Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 12:9

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

This Weeks Lesson: 1 Kings 18 & 19 Elijah

1 Kings 18 tells the great story of Elijah facing the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel. It is a wonderful story of how God strategically used His chosen servant Elijah and the circumstances around the people to boldly declare His power and glory! Elijah trusts and turns to God's power alone and God responds to His prayer.

1. Have you ever wished you could be like Elijah against the prophets of Baal in some relationships you encounter in life? I believe that through the power of prayer, God performs miracles. I find times in life where I want to use God to show people just how great he is and just who he is! I want to be bold for God. I want to witness Him to do miracles that win over those who don't trust in him. On the other hand, I must remember that the greatest miracle of all is that he has loved me with an everlasting love and that he has rescued me from the depths of my own demise only to call me his child. If I could somehow communicate that miracle to others, the evil one would be defeated much like the prophets of Baal. I know that through the power of prayer the Holy Spirit works to declare the glory and love of God.

As you read on in 1 Kings 19 you find an interesting twist in that after outward victory from the power of God, Elijah suffers internal defeat as he struggles with fear and disillusionment. Even though he still serves the same God who revealed His power on Mt. Carmel, we find him afraid and running for his life. He is left sitting under a broom tree asking God to take his life. He is done, finished, exhausted, burnt out! But God gives him the rest he needs. God brings Elijah back to His table and restores Elijah and gives him just what he needed, shade, food, water, and rest. Then God reveals himself once again to Elijah. This time he comes to him in a still, small voice, a gentle whisper, for that is what Elijah needed right then (1 Kings 19:11-13). And God provides all that is needed including the support to carry on the mission he had appointed to Elijah.

2. How is Elijah's story similar to your own life story? There are times that I am bold for God. I am obedient and trusting in Him and His power for my life. Then, I find times when I almost feel alone. That I have fought through one battle and then I turn and here comes another to fight. It is easy to become defeated and burnout if I put my confidence in the flesh.

3. Have you ever faced burnout or disillusionment as you try to live the life of being a follower of Christ? At one time in my life, I had a thriving youth ministry and felt that God was really using me for His purpose. But over time, things began to unravel on me. Disunity between youth leaders, problem students, gossip and hurt feelings sent the group into a tailspin. I put everything I had and knew into reversing the bad trend only to eventually burn out completely myself. My job was overwhelming at the time and I just couldn't handle the pressure. I eventually quit only to watch things get even worse. Over time, God restored me like he did Elijah. He not only restored me but he gave me just what I needed, a refreshing. I taught me to depend upon him and him alone. It has changed my ministry and my life.

4. How does this story encourage and restore you as it did Elijah? For me, it serves as a reminder to stay near to God. Remain in him and let him refresh and restore me. For many people, this should serve as a reminder that God will not depart from you. In fact he pursues you every step of the way and when we need him most he brings a time of refreshing. Acts 3:19 says, “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.” Each of us experience times for burnout or frustration or sin and in each case what we need most is to turn to God and experience a time of refreshing.

5. What encouragement do you receive from 2 Corinthians 12:9, our memory verse this week? God wants me to depend upon His power and grace. The best thing for me is to feel weak. As the saying goes, “God does not call the ready, He readies the called.” I never have to depend upon my own abilities or worry about my own weakness. I simply have to approach God and His power to do what He purposes through my life.

This Weeks Reading Schedule

Day 1 – 1 Kings 16:29-34, 17:1-24

Day 2 – 1 Kings 18:1-15

Day 3 – 1 Kings 18:16-46

Day 4 – 1 Kings 19:1-21

Day 5 – 2 Kings 2:1-15