

Small Group Study Guide

Elijah: Being Near to God when Alone and Afraid | 1 Kings 19:1-16 | From Sunday April 19, 2020

Appetizer:

Question: Has anyone noticed any tensions being “cooped up” with family members? Stories are coming out that domestic disputes are on the rise. What are ways in which families and spouses can live together peacefully?

A couple questions from the passage:

Have someone read 1 Kings 19:1-16. What are some details that you notice? What direction did Elijah travel when he ran from Jezebel? What do you think the significance is of Elijah ending up on Mt. Horeb?

Main Course:

Elijah ran away from Jezebel. He was discouraged and upset. He didn’t necessarily run away from God. But he ran away in fear. Yet, in his wilderness experience God met with him. In fact, while he was running in fear, God sent an angel to provide for him.

Three reflections come out of the passage:

1. God cares for us in the midst of our fear.

Question: 1 Kings 19:7 quotes the angel saying to Elijah, “Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.” What does this language say about the character of God?

Question: Pastor Jeff suggested that we often think that God only cares for us when we are happy and confident. Do you think that’s a true observation? What do we usually think about God when we are afraid?

2. God finds us in the caves we’re hiding in.

In 1 Kings 19:9, it states that “the word of the Lord came to him...” Even in a cave God is able to hunt Elijah down.

Pastor Jeff suggested that we find ourselves in caves today, like depression and anxiety. What other kinds of caves do we find ourselves in?

Question: How does God meet us in these dark places?

3. God challenges our motivation

God is kind in the midst of our fear, but he doesn’t want to leave us there. In verse 9 God asks Elijah, “What are you doing here?” And then sends him on another mission.

In the midst of that we read about this strange experience that Elijah had, where an earthquake appeared, a strong wind, and a fire... but God wasn’t in these things: he was in the stillness of a whisper.

Question: What do you think the significance of this display of earth, wind, and fire is all about? Why is the presence of God found in the whisper and not in the powerful demonstrations?

Question: What kind of poor motivations come out of fear? Is all fear irrational? Where is the divide between helpful fear, and fear that cripples us?

God challenges Elijah in two ways: Go and stand in God’s presence and Go back to being on mission.

Question: How does being in God’s presence and being on mission draw us near to God in the midst of fear?

Dessert:

Suggestion: Have each person draw two columns on a piece of paper, titling one column, “My weaknesses” and the other column, “God’s strengths.” Have group members take some time to fill out the ways God can use their weaknesses to show his strength.

Pray this prayer out loud with the group:

Take some time to pray with the group, pray that God would bring peace in the midst of fear, and that in our alone times, we would sense His presence in a new and powerful way.