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Lessons from
ELIJAH

STUDY GUIDE

Andrew Wommack

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

The author has emphasized some words in Scripture quotations with underline.

Lessons from Elijah Study Guide

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Foreword

Most people learn much of what they know through the school of “hard knocks.” I’ve certainly attended that school. If you live through the hard lessons of your own mistakes, it makes a great testimony, but there is a better way.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:6-11,

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. [7] Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. [8] Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. [9] Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. [10] Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. [11] Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

UNDERLINE MINE

Twice Paul made the point that all the things written in the Old Testament were for your examples that you might learn through them. It’s better to learn through others mistakes than your own.

I received the Lord at the age of eight and have been seeking the Lord my whole life. I haven’t rebelled against God and experimented with many things that some reading this book have. This doesn’t make me any better than anyone else, but in the eyes of some, it makes me less.

I’ve been told I can’t really know the goodness of God unless I’ve plumbed the depths of Satan’s bondage. I beg to differ. Our heavenly Father doesn’t want us to learn the hard way any more than we want our children to suffer so they can appreciate the good things of life more. We can learn by the revelation of the Holy Spirit. That is why the Lord was so candid with sharing the strengths and weaknesses of His servants recorded in the Bible. These things were written for our instruction.

Elijah is one of those Bible characters that the Lord has used to teach me some great lessons. Some of the things Elijah did, inspire me to believe God for more, while other things he did, serve

as a constant reminder that apart from my faith in the Lord, I am and can do nothing (John 15:5). Elijah has been a mentor to me although he lived thousands of years ago. Through Scripture, his life has impacted me big time.

I pray that as I share some of the lessons I've learned from the Lord through Elijah, you, too, will open your heart and let the Holy Spirit teach you things that can inspire you to trust the Lord and make a difference as Elijah did. The Lord will also warn you about the pitfalls that brought Elijah down and instruct you about his faith that allowed him to recover and become one of only two people in the Bible who never died.

So, join the class, open your heart, and let the Holy Spirit teach you lessons that will forever change you through the life of Elijah.

How to Use Your Study Guide

Whether you are teaching a class, leading a small group, discipling an individual, or studying on your own, this study guide is designed for you! Here's how it works:

Each study consists of the **Lesson, Outline, Teacher's Guide, Discipleship Questions, Answer Key, and Scriptures**—some of which have been divided into sections. Some studies also have additional information.

Outline for Group Study:

- I. If possible, briefly review the previous study by going over the **Answer Key/Teacher's Guide** answers for the **Discipleship Questions/Teacher's Guide** questions.

- II. Read the current **Lesson** or **Teacher's Guide** aloud (or section—e.g., 1.1, 1.2, etc.).
 - A. Be sure that each student has a copy of the **Outline**.
 - B. While the **Lesson, Teacher's Guide, or section** is being read, students should use their **Outlines** to follow along.

- III. Once the **Lesson, Teacher's Guide, or section** is read, facilitate discussion and study using the **Discipleship Questions/Teacher's Guide** questions (all questions are the same).
 - A. Read aloud one question at a time.
 - B. The group should use their **Outlines** to assist them in answering the questions.
 - C. Have them read aloud each specifically mentioned scripture before answering the question.
 - D. Discuss the answer/point from the **Lesson**, as desired.
 - E. As much as possible, keep the discussion centered on the scriptures and the **Lesson, Teacher's Guide, or section** points at hand.
 - F. Remember, the goal is understanding (Matt. 13:19).
 - G. One individual should not dominate the discussion; instead, try to draw out the quieter ones for the group conversation.
 - H. Repeat the process until all of the questions are discussed/answered.

Materials Needed:

Study guide, Bible, and enough copies of the **Outline, Discipleship Questions, and Scriptures** for each student. (PDFs of the **Outlines, Discipleship Questions, and Scriptures** can be downloaded via the URL located on the first page of this study guide.)

Outline for Personal Study:

- I. Read the current **Lesson, Teacher's Guide**, or section.
 - A. Read additional information, if provided.
 - B. Meditate on the given scriptures, as desired.
- II. Answer the corresponding **Discipleship Questions/Teacher's Guide** questions.
- III. Check your work with the **Answer Key/Teacher's Guide** answers.

Materials Needed:

Study guide, Bible, and a writing utensil.

A Word from God

In 1 Kings 17, Elijah appears on the scene with no introduction. We are not told about his family history or how he came to know the Lord. The Bible just says that he was a Tishbite, which means he was an inhabitant of Gilead.

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

1 KINGS 17:1

This scripture doesn't give Elijah any introduction. He just appears and gives the king a word from the Lord. There is no indication in Scripture that Elijah even knew King Ahab or had any political clout or special access to him. In fact, just the opposite is implied.

Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, had been systematically killing all the prophets of the Lord (1 Kin. 18:13). They fed 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the groves at their expense each day (1 Kin. 18:19). They were trying to stamp out the worship of the true God of Israel in favor of the pagan worship of Baal. Elijah put his life at risk by coming to Ahab with a word from the Lord. This immediately identified him as one of the Lord's prophets and put him squarely in the crosshairs of Ahab and his wicked wife.

The only thing that made Elijah different from anyone else was the fact that God had spoken to him; he *had a word from God*. The leadership of the nation had instituted Baal worship, and people were afraid to speak about their faith in the Lord. In many ways, it was very similar to what we see happening today.

It is now "politically incorrect" to be committed to the Lord and have biblical standards. We may not be killed as in Elijah's day, but the persecution is still very real. Many believers are cowed into submission just as the people of Elijah's day were.

But praise God that there was a man who had a word from God that penetrated the darkness of that day. Elijah had been in communion with the King of kings, so he went boldly into the presence of King Ahab and just announced that there would be a drought for years until he said differently.

Where did Elijah get the boldness to do this? He could have been killed or imprisoned. What made Elijah fearless in the presence of the world's opposition? It was the word he had from God.

Jeremiah 5:14 says,

Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

Jeremiah also said in Jeremiah 20:9b,

But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.

God's Word is powerful (Heb. 4:12). It's like a fire that devours anything in its path. It's also like a hammer that breaks into pieces everything that opposes it (Jer. 23:29). Anyone with a word from God is never inferior to those who don't have a word from the Lord.

INCORRUPTIBLE SEED

Elijah had a word from God. He believed it enough to march boldly into the very presence of the king and declare, "There's going to be a drought according to my word." That's awesome!

You may be thinking, *I wish I had a word from the Lord.* You do! You have millions of words from the Lord in your Bible. You can't get saved without a word from God. It's the seed—the sperm of God's Word that produced your new birth. That seed came to you by hearing and believing God's Word (Rom. 10:17).

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

1 PETER 1:23

We have a word, or revelation, from God's Word. It's not the lack of God speaking that is the problem; it's the lack of people realizing what they have in God's Word and acting on it that is the problem today.

You weren't born again by accident. God's Word was literally planted in your heart, and that incorruptible, eternal seed—the same Word that spoke the worlds into existence—created a new creature on the inside of you. You had God's Word germinate and explode in your heart.

Every one of us as true believers has a word from God. We just haven't fully recognized and truly understood what we have. We have allowed the world and the fear of man to intimidate us (Prov. 29:25) and make us feel like we're the ones who are weird for being moral and having convictions. The world labels us as "bigots" or "prejudiced" because we believe that some things are absolute. We're the ones who have the revelation of God's Word. The problem is we just aren't as bold about it as Elijah was.

STRAIGHT TO THE TOP

What would have happened if Elijah had just stayed in his prayer closet and only *prayed* concerning the word God had spoken to him about the drought? What would have happened if he had never gone and spoken to the king? I'm not sure there would have been a drought if Elijah hadn't spoken forth and acted on the word God gave him. Even if the drought had come, King Ahab wouldn't have recognized it as being the hand of God. He would have rationalized and written it off as circumstance and coincidence.

Elijah took what the Lord had said to him and boldly spoke it when there wasn't any physical proof that it would come to pass. It was really easy for the king to just reject this and say, "Who are you and what makes your word more important than anyone else's?" Although Ahab blew it off and forgot about it at first, as the drought manifested over time...

There [was] no nation or kingdom, whither [King Ahab] hath not sent to seek [Elijah]: and when they said, He is not [here]; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found [him] not.

1 KINGS 18:10, BRACKETS MINE

Elijah's boldness to go and speak forth the word is what made everything else begin to happen. That's what set his whole ministry in motion. All of the great miracles—multiplying food, calling down fire from heaven, raising the dead, etc.—began with him getting a word about a drought and just being bold enough to go straight to the very top! He went right into the presence of the king and spoke what God had given him.

NO SUBSTITUTE

Boldly speaking forth and acting upon the Word of God in faith will set your life and ministry in motion. It doesn't matter if a word on salvation, Holy Spirit baptism, or healing is all you have. The average person doesn't know that. You're passing by people every day of your life who don't have a clue about things you have a word from God on. But you have to speak up to make a difference.

Today, many people have substituted prayer for speaking forth and acting on God's Word. I'm not against prayer. In fact, I'm all for it—in its proper place. However, Elijah could have prayed over this from then until Jesus came, but nothing would have happened if he hadn't been bold enough to go speak the word and act on it in faith and obedience.

Elijah came on the scene with no introduction. He didn't have a genealogy, an education, or a degree. All he had was the Word of God, and that was all he needed!

The devil will try to make you think you just don't have enough. I certainly had to deal with that. I was just like Jeremiah, who said,

Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

JEREMIAH 1:6

I was an introverted hick from Texas. I thought, *How could God ever use me?* But then I discovered His Word and found out it was God's Word that produces the fruit (Mark 4:14-20). I'm just the dirt the seed is planted in. I don't make a good seed, but I'm good dirt.

If God has given you a revelation of His nature and character, you have something that will put you over the top. If the Lord has shown you any truth—spoken anything to you—then you have something that will ignite miracles if you're bold enough to act on that word and speak it!

THE NEXT STEP

And [then] the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [3] Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [4] And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

1 KINGS 17:2-4, *NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION*, BRACKETS AND UNDERLINE MINE

God didn't show Elijah the outcome of all this. This word about God supernaturally supplying his need and protecting him at the brook Cherith didn't come until after he had acted on the first word the Lord gave him.

He didn't know everything that was going to happen. He didn't know he was going to multiply the widow's food (1 Kin. 17:14-16), raise her son from the dead (1 Kin. 17:17-23), and call down fire out of heaven (1 Kin. 18:37-38). He didn't know that a great revival was coming (1 Kin. 18:39).

Elijah didn't have the end results. The Scripture reveals that this second word concerning his direction, protection, and provision (1 Kin. 17:2-4) came after he had already been bold and stepped out in faith on the previous word (1 Kin. 17:1).

Have you ever experienced this in your life? I have! When people receive a word from God, they usually allow their minds to think, *Okay, now, how's this going to work? If I do this, then what's going to happen over here?* And they try to get it all figured out. They want the entire picture before they step out on God's Word. Elijah didn't have that! He didn't know that the Lord was going to make supernatural provision for him. He just had one word from God: "Tell the king a drought is coming." Then after he was faithful to go and speak it forth, God gave him the next step.

There are steps and stages to walking with God. One of the things that hinders us from really seeing His best in our lives is wanting to get the end result before stepping out in faith on the word we already have. We want to play it safe and say "Lord, if I do this, then what will You do? How will You provide all of the needs? Will everything work out?" However, the Lord doesn't usually work that way.

Elijah just had one word from God. He stepped out and spoke it. He went straight to the king without any guarantee of protection. According to the Scripture, all that the Lord showed him was that there was going to be a drought (1 Kin. 17:1). It wasn't until after he had spoken that word that the Lord came to him with this promise of protection, direction, and provision.

"ACT ON IT!"

We're playing it too safe! We have to get out and do what God has told us to do. We need to act on the word we have, before we get another one. Every once in a while, I catch myself looking at our Bible college students and thinking, *Man, they haven't got a chance! They'll never make it! That person doesn't even have enough sense to get out of town.* Yet they have all this zeal and a word from God.

Just about the time I'm tempted to tell them "You'll never make it," the Lord reminds me that I didn't have a clue what was going on when I got started either. But we *did* have a word from God. Jamie and I jumped out and did things that I wouldn't encourage anybody to do. It makes a great testimony if you live through it, but not many people do!

When Jamie and I were first married, I had about \$3,000. I just cashed it all in and turned it into \$100 bills. In one week's time, I gave it all away because I was so excited about getting out there and seeing God meet our needs supernaturally. That's stupid! That's dumb to the second power, or "dumb dumb."

Even though this definitely isn't the way to do it, my heart attitude was right. I was actually anticipating the challenge and genuinely looking forward to believing God. I knew it would take a miracle for the Lord to fulfill His word to me, and I was excited to get started! I had zeal, but very little knowledge.

After going through some of these things, you see how stupid you were and you start trying to do things smarter. There is no premium on ignorance, but if you aren't careful, you'll become so cautious that you won't listen for the voice of God and step out in faith anymore. Yet a person with a word from God will beat a smart person every time.

There needs to be a balance. You need enthusiasm and zeal, but it should be tempered with wisdom and knowledge. If you aren't careful, you will get to a place where you won't do anything until God has already planned it out, shown you the end result, and accounted for everything that could possibly happen. Elijah just got a word from God, stepped out, and spoke it. He didn't have a clue what was going to happen next. He didn't have a plan, but he did have a word from God!

Maybe the Lord has shown you something or has done something and spoken into your life. And you are praying and asking Him to show you more, but He's saying, "Act on it!" When you step out and begin doing something with what God has already called you to do, that's when the miracles start happening!

The Lord won't show you steps two through ten, until you've acted on step one. Why would He show you more if you haven't already done what He told you to do? That would just make you accountable for more if you fail. He just shows you one step at a time because He loves you so much.

The Lord told us to pray for our daily bread (Matt. 6:11), not a year's supply. However, most of us would prefer to get it all at one time. It doesn't take any faith that way. We just believe the

Lord once and then go on our merry way. The Lord wants us to be totally dependent on Him. He shows us His will and His way one step at a time, and only after we act on that does He give us our next instructions.

Are you acting on the word you already have from the Lord? What made Elijah fearless in the presence of the world's opposition? It was the word he had from God.

Outline

- I. In 1 Kings 17, Elijah appears on the scene with no introduction of his family history or how he came to know the Lord.

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

1 KINGS 17:1

- A. There is no indication in Scripture that Elijah even knew King Ahab or had any political clout or special access to King Ahab; just the opposite is implied.
 - B. Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, were trying to stamp out the worship of the true God of Israel in favor of the pagan worship of Baal.
 - C. Elijah put his life at risk by coming to Ahab.
 - D. People were afraid to speak of their faith in the Lord.
 - E. In many ways, it was very similar to what we see happening today.
 - F. Many believers are cowed into submission just as the people of Elijah's day were.
 - G. Where did Elijah get the boldness to do this?
 - H. It was the word he had from God.
- II. God's Word is powerful (Heb. 4:12).
- A. It's like a fire that devours anything in its path (Jer. 5:14).
 - B. It's also like a hammer that breaks into pieces everything that opposes it (Jer. 23:29).
 - C. Anyone with a word from God is never inferior to those who don't have a word from the Lord.
- III. You may be thinking, *I wish I had a word from the Lord.*
- A. You do—you have millions of words from the Lord in your Bible!
 - B. It's not the lack of God speaking that is the problem; it's the lack of people realizing what they have in God's Word and acting on it that is the problem today.
 - C. If that's you, you just haven't fully recognized and truly understood what you have.
 - D. Maybe you allow the world and the fear of man to intimidate you (Prov. 29:25) and make you feel like you're the one who is weird for being moral and believing that some things are absolute.
 - E. But you're the one who has the revelation of God's Word—the problem is you just aren't as bold with it as Elijah was.

- IV. What would have happened if Elijah had just stayed in his prayer closet and only *prayed* about this word God had spoken to him about the drought?
- Well, even if the drought had come, King Ahab wouldn't have recognized it as being the hand of God, and he would have written it off as circumstance and coincidence.
 - I'm sure that when Elijah boldly spoke what God had told him, it was really easy for the king to just reject this.
 - But as the drought manifested over time...

There [was] no nation or kingdom, whither [King Ahab] hath not sent to seek [Elijah]: and when they said, He is not [here]; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found [him] not.

1 KINGS 18:10, BRACKETS MINE

- Elijah's boldness to go straight to the very top and speak forth the word is what set his whole ministry in motion.
- V. Boldly speaking forth and acting upon the Word of God in faith will set your life and ministry in motion.
- It doesn't matter if a word on salvation, Holy Spirit baptism, or healing is all you have; the average person doesn't know that.
 - You have to speak up to make a difference!
 - Today, many people have substituted prayer for speaking forth and acting on God's Word.
 - Elijah could have prayed from then until Jesus came, but nothing would have happened if he hadn't been bold enough to go speak the word and act on it in faith and obedience.
 - The devil will try to make you think you just don't have enough—I certainly had to deal with that.
 - But then I discovered His Word and found out that it was God's Word that produces the fruit (Mark 4:14-20).
 - If the Lord has shown you any truth—spoken anything to you—then you have something that will ignite miracles if you're bold enough to act on that word and speak it!
- VI. The Scripture reveals that this second word concerning Elijah's direction, protection, and provision came *after* he had already been bold and stepped out in faith on the previous word:

And [then] the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [3] Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [4] And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

1 KINGS 17:2-4, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION, BRACKETS AND UNDERLINE MINE

- A. Have you ever experienced this in your life?
- B. When people receive a word from God, they usually want the entire picture before they step out.
- C. Elijah didn't know that the Lord was going to make supernatural provision for him before he stepped out in faith on the word he had.
- D. You need to act on the word you have, before you get another one.
- E. You need enthusiasm and zeal, but it should be tempered with wisdom and knowledge.
- F. If you aren't careful, you will get to a place where you won't do anything until God has already planned it out, shown you the end result, and accounted for everything that could possibly happen.

VII. He just shows you one step at a time because He loves you so much.

- A. You might prefer to get it all at one time, but it doesn't take any faith that way.
- B. The Lord wants you to be totally dependent on Him.
- C. Only after you act on the first step does He give you the next instructions.
- D. Are you acting on the word you already have from the Lord?

Teacher's Guide

1. In 1 Kings 17, Elijah appears on the scene with no introduction of his family history or how he came to know the Lord.

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

1 KINGS 17:1

There is no indication in Scripture that Elijah even knew King Ahab or had any political clout or special access to King Ahab; just the opposite is implied. Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, were trying to stamp out the worship of the true God of Israel in favor of the pagan worship of Baal. Elijah put his life at risk by coming to Ahab. People were afraid to speak of their faith in the Lord. In many ways, it was very similar to what we see happening today. Many believers are cowed into submission just as the people of Elijah's day were. Where did Elijah get the boldness to do this? It was the word he had from God.

1a. Elijah _____ on the scene.

(Appears)

1b. True or false: Elijah didn't approach King Ahab because of his political clout.

(True)

1c. Though Elijah put his life at risk by coming to Ahab, how did he get the boldness to approach him anyway?

(The word he had from God)

2. God's Word is powerful (Heb. 4:12). It's like a fire that devours anything in its path (Jer. 5:14). It's also like a hammer that breaks into pieces everything that opposes it (Jer. 23:29). Anyone with a word from God is never inferior to those who don't have a word from the Lord.

2a. Read Hebrews 4:12 and Jeremiah 23:29. According to these verses, what are two things God's Word is like?

A. A flood that fills the whole earth

B. A fire that devours anything in its path

C. A hammer that breaks into pieces everything that opposes it

D. B. and C.

E. A. and C.

(D. B. and C.)

2b. *Discussion question:* Why is a person who has a word from God superior to those who don't have a word from God?

(Discussion question)

3. You may be thinking, *I wish I had a word from the Lord*. You do—you have millions of words from the Lord in your Bible! It's not the lack of God speaking that is the problem; it's the lack of people realizing what they have in God's Word and acting on it that is the problem today. If that's you, you just haven't fully recognized and truly understood what you have. Maybe you allow the world and the fear of man to intimidate you (Prov. 29:25) and make you feel like you're the one who is weird for being moral and believing that some things are absolute. But you're the one who has the revelation of God's Word—the problem is you just aren't as bold with it as Elijah was.

3a. Who has a word from the Lord?

(You do)

3b. If you don't realize what you have in God's Word and aren't acting on it, you haven't what?

(Fully recognized and truly understood what you have)

3c. If you have revelation of God's Word, you need to be as _____ as Elijah was.

(Bold)

4. What would have happened if Elijah had just stayed in his prayer closet and only *prayed* about this word God had spoken to him about the drought? Well, even if the drought had come, King Ahab wouldn't have recognized it as being the hand of God, and he would have written it off as circumstance and coincidence. I'm sure that when Elijah boldly spoke what God had told him, it was really easy for the king to just reject this. But, as the drought manifested over time...

There [was] no nation or kingdom, whither [King Ahab] hath not sent to seek [Elijah]: and when they said, He is not [here]; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found [him] not.

1 KINGS 18:10, BRACKETS MINE

Elijah's boldness to go straight to the very top and speak forth the word is what set his whole ministry in motion.

4a. True or false: According to 1 Kings 18:10, King Ahab searched nearly every nation for Elijah.

(False)

4b. What set Elijah's ministry in motion?

A. His stubbornness to go straight to the very top and speak forth the word

B. His anger to go straight to the very top and speak forth the word

C. His arrogance to go straight to the very top and spell the word

D. His eagerness to go straight to the very top and sing the word

E. His boldness to go straight to the very top and speak forth the word

(E. His boldness to go straight to the very top and speak forth the word)

5. Boldly speaking forth and acting upon the Word of God in faith will set your life and ministry in motion. It doesn't matter if a word on salvation, Holy Spirit baptism, or healing is all you have; the average person doesn't know that. You have to speak up to make a difference! Today, many people have substituted prayer for speaking forth and acting on God's Word. Elijah could have prayed over this from then until Jesus came, but nothing would have happened if he hadn't been bold enough to go speak the word and act on it in faith and obedience. The devil will try to make you think you just don't have enough—I certainly had to deal with that. But then I discovered His Word and found out it was God's Word that produces the fruit (Mark 4:14-20). If the Lord has shown you any truth—spoken anything to you—then you have something that will ignite miracles if you're bold enough to act on that word and speak it!

5a. What do you have to do to make a difference?

(Speak up)

5b. Who will try to make you think you just don't have enough?

- A. Your boss
- B. A well-meaning Christian
- C. The devil
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(C. The devil)

5c. Read Mark 4:14-20. What did Andrew discover that helped him counter the devil?

(That it's God who produces the fruit)

5d. If the Lord has shown you any truth—spoken anything to you—then what do you have?

(Something that will ignite miracles if you're bold enough to act on that word and speak it)

6. The Scripture reveals that this second word concerning Elijah's direction, protection, and provision came *after* he had already been bold and stepped out in faith on the previous word:

And [then] the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [3] Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [4] And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

1 KINGS 17:2-4, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION, BRACKETS AND UNDERLINE MINE

Have you ever experienced this in your life? When people receive a word from God, they usually want the entire picture before they step out. Elijah didn't know that the Lord was going to make supernatural provision for him before he stepped out in faith on the word he had. You need to act on the word you have, before you get another one. You need enthusiasm and zeal, but it should be tempered with wisdom and knowledge. If you aren't careful, you will get to a place where you won't do anything until God has already planned it out, shown you the end result, and accounted for everything that could possibly happen.

6a. True or false: The second word concerning Elijah's direction, protection, and provision came *before* he had already been bold and stepped out in faith on the previous word.

(False)

6b. You need to _____ on the word you have, before you get another one.

(Act)

6c. What do enthusiasm and zeal need to be tempered with?

- A. Wisdom and knowledge
- B. A healthy diet
- C. Counsel from your financial advisor
- D. Fasting and tithing
- E. Hobbies and recreation

(A. Wisdom and knowledge)

6d. *Discussion question:* What does it take for you to act on what God has told you?

(Discussion question)

7. He just shows you one step at a time because He loves you so much. You might prefer to get it all at one time, but it doesn't take any faith that way. The Lord wants you to be totally dependent on Him. Only after you act on the first step does He give you your next instructions. Are you acting on the word you already have from the Lord?

7a. Why does God show you one step at a time?

(Because He loves you)

7b. True or false: Getting everything all at once doesn't take any faith.

(True)

Discipleship Questions

1. Elijah _____ on the scene.
2. True or false: Elijah didn't approach King Ahab because of his political clout.
3. Though Elijah put his life at risk by coming to Ahab, how did he get the boldness to approach him anyway?
4. Read Hebrews 4:12 and Jeremiah 23:29. According to these verses, what are two things God's Word is like?
 - A. A flood that fills the whole earth
 - B. A fire that devours anything in its path
 - C. A hammer that breaks into pieces everything that opposes it
 - D. B. and C.
 - E. A. and C.
5. *Discussion question:* Why is a person who has a word from God superior to those who don't have a word from God?
6. Who has a word from the Lord?
7. If you don't realize what you have in God's Word and aren't acting on it, you haven't what?
8. If you have revelation of God's Word, you need to be as _____ as Elijah was.
9. True or false: According to 1 Kings 18:10, King Ahab searched nearly every nation for Elijah.

10. What set Elijah's ministry in motion?
 - A. His stubbornness to go straight to the very top and speak forth the word
 - B. His anger to go straight to the very top and speak forth the word
 - C. His arrogance to go straight to the very top and spell the word
 - D. His eagerness to go straight to the very top and sing the word
 - E. His boldness to go straight to the very top and speak forth the word

 11. What do you have to do to make a difference?

 12. Who will try to make you think you just don't have enough?
 - A. Your boss
 - B. A well-meaning Christian
 - C. The devil
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

 13. Read Mark 4:14-20. What did Andrew discover that helped him counter the devil?

 14. If the Lord has shown you any truth—spoken anything to you—then what do you have?

 15. True or false: The second word concerning Elijah's direction, protection, and provision came *before* he had already been bold and stepped out in faith on the previous word.

 16. You need to _____ on the word you have, before you get another one.

 17. What do enthusiasm and zeal need to be tempered with?
 - A. Wisdom and knowledge
 - B. A healthy diet
 - C. Counsel from your financial advisor
 - D. Fasting and tithing
 - E. Hobbies and recreation
-

18. *Discussion question:* What does it take for you to act on what God has told you?

19. Why does God show you one step at a time?

20. True or false: Getting everything all at once doesn't take any faith.

Answer Key

1. Appears
2. True
3. The word he had from God
4. D. B. and C.
5. *Discussion question*
6. You do
7. Fully recognized and truly understood what you have
8. Bold
9. False
10. E. His boldness to go straight to the very top and speak forth the word
11. Speak up
12. C. The devil
13. That it's God who produces the fruit
14. Something that will ignite miracles if you're bold enough to act on that word and speak it
15. False
16. Act
17. A. Wisdom and knowledge
18. *Discussion question*
19. Because He loves you
20. True

Scriptures

1 KINGS 17:1

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

1 KINGS 18:13

Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord, how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?

1 KINGS 18:19

Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

JEREMIAH 5:14

Wherefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

JEREMIAH 20:9

Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.

HEBREWS 4:12

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

JEREMIAH 23:29

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

ROMANS 10:17

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

1 PETER 1:23

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

PROVERBS 29:25

The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.

1 KINGS 18:10

As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not.

JEREMIAH 1:6

Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

MARK 4:14-20

The sower soweth the word. [15] And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. [16] And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; [17] And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. [18] And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, [19] And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. [20] And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

1 KINGS 17:2-4 (NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION)

Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah: [3] "Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. [4] You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there."

1 KINGS 17:14-23

For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth. [15] And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. [16] And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah. [17] And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. [18] And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son? [19] And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. [20] And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? [21] And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. [22] And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. [23] And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.

1 KINGS 18:37-39

Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. [38] Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. [39] And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

MATTHEW 6:11

Give us this day our daily bread.

A Place Called "There"

Further direction came to Elijah, along with the promise of protection and provision, after he stepped out in faith and acted on the initial word he had been given.

And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [3] Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [4] And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

1 KINGS 17:2-4, UNDERLINE MINE

God made supernatural provision for Elijah. Of course, he was in trouble with the king once the word about the drought actually started to come to pass. Ahab began to look for Elijah, so God hid, protected, and provided for him during this period of time. Notice where the Lord sent this provision: *"I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there"* (1 Kin. 17:4, underline mine). God made provision for Elijah, but it wasn't sent directly to him. The provision was sent "there"—where the Lord told him to go.

GOD ALWAYS PROVIDES

Whenever God tells you to do something, He makes full provision for you. There's always an ample supply for anything the Lord tells you to do. Yet I've seen people who have stepped out on a word from God and didn't see everything work out. Instead of seeing the provision, they suffered many problems instead. This makes you wonder, if you're honest and bold enough to admit it, *What happened to these folks? Was God faithful?*

God sent the supply to where He told Elijah to go—not to where he was. He didn't send the provision to Elijah directly. It was there at the Brook Cherith. *"I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there"* (1 Kin. 17:4b). I'm not exactly sure how God speaks to ravens, but He didn't send them to where Elijah was. He must have given them a grid coordinate somewhere along the Brook Cherith and told them to take the food there.

The supply was where God told Elijah to go. If he had stayed right where he was, the Lord still would have supplied the food at the brook because verse 4 says, “*I HAVE commanded the ravens*” (emphasis mine). The Lord had already spoken to the birds to take the food. It would be “there,” even if Elijah wasn’t “there.” God’s provision wasn’t dependent on Elijah’s obedience, but Elijah’s ability to receive God’s provision was.

Those ravens would have brought bread and flesh every morning and evening, and piled it high beside the water. Yet, as far as Elijah was concerned, he could have starved to death, wondering, *God, where are You? I stepped out on Your word, but where’s Your supply?*

God provides for us every single time. He loves us and has made abundant provision for everything we need, but it isn’t sent to where we are. It’s sent to where we’re supposed to be. Therefore, if we aren’t obedient and following through on what He has told us to do, we can miss His supply.

GO DEEP!

When a quarterback throws a pass to his receiver, he doesn’t throw the football to where the receiver is. He throws it to where the receiver is supposed to be. I’ve watched quarterbacks throw the football long before the receiver makes his break. The receiver may even be headed in the opposite direction from where he eventually catches the ball. But the quarterback and receiver have made prior arrangements. They have called a play in which the ball will be thrown to a specific spot, and in order for the receiver to make the catch, he has to run to that specific spot.

That’s why you will sometimes see the ball thrown to a place where there’s no one. You might wonder, *What was the quarterback thinking? No one was even near the ball.* But either the quarterback or the receiver made a mistake.

Likewise, the Lord is the one calling the plays in our lives. He sends our provision to where He tells us to go, not to where we are. If we make a wrong turn or don’t ever move off the line of scrimmage, we aren’t going to receive. And it’s not the Lord’s fault. He’s always faithful to give, but we have to be in the right place to receive.

IT'S PROPORTIONAL

When Jamie and I first started out in ministry, I did many things wrong. This hindered our finances and our ability to receive His provision. For at least five years, we were constantly on the edge of starving to death. It was literally just a step between us and death all the time. Here we were preaching the Gospel—abundant life and prosperity—yet we were suffering.

Since things weren't working in our personal lives, I had to constantly battle thoughts like: *God, it's not working. You aren't faithful. I'm doing what You told me to do, but where's the supply?*

Looking back now, I can see all the different ways I was violating the Word. We were told, "If you're called to be a minister, then you're sinning against God if you do anything but minister. If you get a job, you're denying your call. You aren't faithful!" Due to this misconception, I just committed myself to full-time ministry no matter what.

The first church we pastored in Seagoville, Texas, only had about eight to ten people in attendance. Yet we were having five services a week. I refused to work another job, because I was "called," and I was determined to be "faithful." As a result, I hindered my own finances. Later, the Lord showed me that it's proportional.

Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:14

When you get to where you are ministering full time, you can expect to live off the Gospel full time. But if ten people are all you're ministering to right now, you ought to get a job. It's not wrong to supplement your income. You're not denying your call. It's wisdom to do something else to help support yourself and your family. It took me years to get this through my thick skull!

We survived, but the provision that God really had for us was over "there." It was somewhere else. It wasn't in the way I was walking. I had a pure heart, but a dumb head. I wasn't doing what the Word said. God was making provision. As a matter of fact, several people offered me jobs that would have fit in my schedule, so I could still pastor and minister. It was His provision, but I refused to receive it because I thought I would be sinning against my calling if I got a job. I made a mistake.

OBEDIENCE MATTERS!

There's a place called "there" for you. You can't necessarily see it from where you are. You just have to step out in faith on what God has told you to do. The provision isn't where you are. It's "there"—out doing what God has told you to do. Many people are waiting to see the provision before they step out, but God said, "I have already commanded the ravens to feed you there!"

The Brook Cherith must have been at least two or three miles long. How did Elijah know which spot to camp at along the brook? He knew he was in the right place because God had already spoken to these ravens, and they could certainly fly there quicker than he could walk. Therefore, he knew he was in the right place when he saw the provision of bread and flesh. God had already sent the provision. All Elijah had to do was obey.

So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD.

1 KINGS 17:5

Obedience matters! God gave Elijah a word. He knew there was going to be a need in Elijah's life for protection and supernatural supply, so He made the provision and sent the ravens. What would have happened if Elijah hadn't obeyed? God's provision would have just laid up there rotting, and he could have starved. There is a place for obedience. Obedience doesn't change God's heart toward you, but if you aren't obedient, you can certainly make it hard on yourself.

God has a purpose for us. He has put a call on our lives. Supernatural provision has already been sent to accomplish whatever God has told us to do, but it's "there." The problem is that we aren't all "there" yet! We're doing our own thing, in our own timing, and in our own way. But there is an anointing on just being obedient to God and doing what He says.

PRITCHETT, COLORADO

After struggling for most of the first ten years of our ministry, we finally began to see a small measure of success in the second place I pastored, Childress, Texas. About fifty people attended our church, and for the first time in my life, there was light at the end of the tunnel—and it wasn't another train! I was excited! We were eating regularly for the first time, and things were beginning to work out. Great miracles happened and this small measure of success took a little bit of the pressure off.

During this period of time, Don Krow's sister and brother-in-law asked us to come up to Colorado Springs to minister. On our way, we stopped to see a friend of ours in Kim, Colorado—a tiny old town of eighty people in the middle of nowhere. As we visited with them, they invited us to come and minister in the Bible study they had in Pritchett, Colorado. I thought, *Sure, I'll go minister anywhere.*

I remember driving through Pritchett with the Krows. We started laughing and saying, "Who would want to live in this dippy place?" Jokingly I stated, "Don, I believe God is calling you to Pritchett, Colorado!" Ironically, within a few weeks, they asked me to come to Pritchett to hold a meeting. During this meeting, we saw a man raised from the dead. It turned that church upside down! Pritchett only had about 144 people, 10 of whom attended this church.

When I was ready to leave, they sat me down and said, "You've come here and destroyed everything we ever believed. We've experienced the power of God—and you're just going to waltz in and out of here in a week and leave us? You can't do this! God is calling you to Pritchett, Colorado!" I laughed as I replied, "You must be kidding!"

By the time I arrived home, the Lord had spoken to me to go to Pritchett, Colorado. So, we went there out of nothing but sheer obedience, believing that Pritchett was our "there." It was where God had called us to be. We didn't expect anything in return, but that's where our ministry exploded. That's where everything took off. That's where God began to pour out His blessing.

We didn't take an offering or a salary from the church. Out of these few people, we grew to a hundred in just a very short period of time. We were only there six months, but our ministry income increased to \$6,000 a month. We prospered as never before!

That's where God opened up both our radio and tape ministry. That's where our whole ministry started. We just took a step of obedience to go "there." Nobody in their right mind would have ever thought that Pritchett was "there" for anyone! But that's what God told me to do. I believe God has something like that in everyone's life.

YOUR PROVISION IS "THERE"

The Lord asked Abraham to sacrifice his son. That didn't make sense. It looked like he was killing the promise, but that was "there" for him. It was what God called him to do.

You can look at all the major characters in the Bible and see that God has asked just about every single one of them to do something completely illogical. Yet it's just an act of obedience. That's where the supernatural power of God comes. You can probably think of something the Lord has asked you to do like that. It's just how He operates!

God has already sent your provision "there." If you're missing out on His supernatural supply, it's because you aren't "there." You aren't doing what you know in your heart God has called you to do. Even by stepping out, taking a risk, throwing caution to the wind, and doing everything God tells you to do, it will still often take a great miracle to see something happen. It's still hard! But if you aren't even doing what you know in your heart God has called you to do, then you don't stand a chance to succeed.

Hearing from God and acting on that word is simply a necessity, if you ever want to see His power manifest in your life. The Lord will never do anything to destroy you. He might do a few things to test you, but He'll never do anything to hurt you. There's just a tremendous blessing and anointing in being "there" and doing what God has called you to do. Are you "there?" If not, why not? Do what the Lord tells you to do.

ANDREW'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY:

My teachings entitled *Blessings & Miracles* and *Financial Stewardship* will help you understand how to receive God's abundant supply and avoid making these same mistakes that I made.

Outline

- I. Further direction came to Elijah after he stepped out in faith and acted on the initial word he had been given:

And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [3] Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [4] And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

1 KINGS 17:2-4, UNDERLINE MINE

- A. God hid, protected, and provided for him during this period of time.
 - B. Notice where the Lord sent this provision: “*I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there*” (1 Kin. 17:4, underline mine).
 - C. God made provision for Elijah, but it was sent “there”—where the Lord told him to go.
- II. Whenever God tells you to do something, He always makes full provision for you.
- A. Yet I’ve seen people who have stepped out on a word from God, and instead of seeing the provision, they suffered many problems instead, which makes you wonder, *What happened to these folks? Was God faithful?*
 - B. God sent the supply to where He told Elijah to go—not to where he was.
 - C. Yet, if he had stayed right where he was, then as far as Elijah was concerned, he could have starved to death, wondering, *God, where are You? I stepped out on Your word, but where’s Your supply?*
 - D. If you don’t follow through on what God has told you to do, you can miss His supply.
 - E. You have to be in the right place to receive.
- III. When Jamie and I first started out in ministry, we were told, “If you’re called to be a minister, then you’re sinning against God if you get a job!”
- A. Due to this misconception, I did many things wrong, which hindered our finances and our ability to receive God’s provision.
 - B. I had to constantly battle thoughts like: *God, it’s not working. You aren’t faithful. I’m doing what You told me to do, but where’s the supply?*
 - C. Later, the Lord showed me that it’s proportional.

Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:14

- D. When you are ministering full time, you can expect to live off the Gospel full time.
- E. In the meantime, it's wisdom to do something else to help support yourself and your family.
- F. It took me years to get this through my thick skull!
- G. I had a pure heart, but I refused to receive God's provision, because I thought I would be sinning against my calling if I got a job.

IV. Elijah knew he was in the right place when he saw the provision of bread and flesh, because God had already sent the provision.

So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD.

1 KINGS 17:5

- A. Obedience matters!
 - B. Obedience doesn't change God's heart toward you, but if you aren't obedient, you can certainly make it hard on yourself.
 - C. There is an anointing on just being obedient to God and doing what He says.
- V. After struggling for most of the first ten years of our ministry, we finally began to see a small measure of success in the second place I pastored, Childress, Texas.
- A. But the Lord had spoken to me to go to Pritchett, Colorado, to pastor a small church.
 - B. So, we went there out of nothing but sheer obedience, not expecting anything in return, but that's where our ministry exploded.
 - C. Nobody in their right mind would have ever thought that Pritchett was "there" for anyone, but that's what God told me to do!
 - D. I believe God has something like that in everyone's life.
- VI. You can look at all the major characters in the Bible and see that God has asked just about every single one of them to do something completely illogical.
- A. The Lord asked Abraham to sacrifice his son.
 - i. It looked like he was killing the promise, but that was "there" for him.
 - B. You can probably think of something the Lord has asked you to do like that.
 - C. It's just how He operates!
 - D. If you're missing out on His supernatural supply, it's because you aren't "there"; i.e., you aren't doing what you know in your heart God has called you to do.
 - E. Even by stepping out, taking a risk, throwing caution to the wind, and doing everything God tells you to do, it will still often take a great miracle to see something happen.

- F. But if you aren't even doing what you know in your heart God has called you to do, then you don't stand a chance to succeed.
- G. The Lord might do a few things to test you, but He'll never do anything to hurt you.
- H. If you're not "there," why not?
- I. Do what the Lord tells you to do.

ANDREW'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY:

My teachings entitled *Blessings & Miracles* and *Financial Stewardship* will help you understand how to receive God's abundant supply and avoid making these same mistakes that I made.

Teacher's Guide

1. Further direction came to Elijah after he stepped out in faith and acted on the initial word he had been given:

And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [3] Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [4] And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

1 KINGS 17:2-4, UNDERLINE MINE

God hid, protected, and provided for him during this period of time. Notice where the Lord sent this provision: “I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there” (1 Kin. 17:4, underline mine). God made provision for Elijah, but it was sent “there”—where the Lord told him to go.

1a. When did further direction come to Elijah?

(After he stepped out in faith and acted on the initial word he had been given)

1b. *Discussion question:* Why do you think God sent Elijah’s provision to where he wasn’t?

(Discussion question)

2. Whenever God tells you to do something, He always makes full provision for you. Yet I’ve seen people who have stepped out on a word from God, and instead of seeing the provision, they suffered many problems instead, which makes you wonder, *What happened to these folks? Was God faithful?* God sent the supply to where He told Elijah to go—not to where he was. Yet, if he had stayed right where he was, then as far as Elijah was concerned, he could have starved to death, wondering, *God, where are You? I stepped out on Your word, but where’s Your supply?* If you don’t follow through on what God has told you to do, you can miss His supply. You have to be in the right place to receive.

2a. Whenever God tells you to do something, He always makes _____ provision for you.

(Full)

2b. True or false: You have to follow through on what God has told you, or you’ll miss His supply even if you’ve stepped out on God’s Word.

(True)

3. When Jamie and I first started out in ministry, we were told, “If you’re called to be a minister, then you’re sinning against God if you get a job!” Due to this misconception, I did many things wrong, which hindered our finances and our ability to receive God’s provision. I had to constantly battle thoughts like: *God, it’s not working. You aren’t faithful. I’m doing what You told me to do, but where’s the supply?* Later, the Lord showed me that it’s proportional.

Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:14

When you are ministering full time, you can expect to live off the Gospel full time. In the meantime, it’s wisdom to do something else to help support yourself and your family. It took me years to get this through my thick skull! I had a pure heart, but I refused to receive God’s provision, because I thought I would be sinning against my calling if I got a job.

3a. Read 1 Corinthians 9:14. What is proportional? Give an example.

(When you are ministering full time, you can expect to live off the Gospel full time)

3b. To do something else to help support yourself and your family in the meantime is what?

- A. Unbelief
- B. Foolish
- C. Popular
- D. Boring
- E. Wisdom

(E. Wisdom)

3c. True or false: Andrew knew he was refusing God’s provision.

(False)

4. Elijah knew he was in the right place when he saw the provision of bread and flesh, because God had already sent the provision.

So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD.

1 KINGS 17:5

Obedience matters! Obedience doesn't change God's heart toward you, but if you aren't obedient, you can certainly make it hard on yourself. There is an anointing on just being obedient to God and doing what He says.

4a. How did Elijah know he was in the right place?

- A. He saw the provision of bread and flesh
- B. He was too tired to continue
- C. There was a mark in the dirt
- D. He had been there before
- E. He followed the map correctly

(A. He saw the provision of bread and flesh)

4b. *Discussion question:* When is obeying God not legalism?

(Discussion question)

4c. True or false: If you are obedient, you make it hard on yourself.

(False)

4d. There is an _____ on just being obedient to God and doing what He says.

(Anointing)

5. After struggling for most of the first ten years of our ministry, we finally began to see a small measure of success in the second place I pastored, Childress, Texas. But the Lord had spoken to me to go to Pritchett, Colorado, to pastor a small church. So, we went there out of nothing but sheer obedience, not expecting anything in return, but that's where our ministry exploded. Nobody in their right mind would have ever thought that Pritchett was "there" for anyone, but that's what God told me to do! I believe God has something like that in everyone's life.

5a. *Discussion question:* Why do you think God would call a person to a place that looks His provision isn't there?

(Discussion question)

6. You can look at all the major characters in the Bible and see that God has asked just about every single one of them to do something completely illogical. The Lord asked Abraham to sacrifice his son. It looked like he was killing the promise, but that was “there” for him. You can probably think of something the Lord has asked you to do like that. It’s just how He operates! If you’re missing out on His supernatural supply, it’s because you aren’t “there”; i.e., you aren’t doing what you know in your heart God has called you to do. Even by stepping out, taking a risk, throwing caution to the wind, and doing everything God tells you to do, it will still often take a great miracle to see something happen. But if you aren’t even doing what you know in your heart God has called you to do, then you don’t stand a chance to succeed. The Lord might do a few things to test you, but He’ll never do anything to hurt you. If you’re not “there,” why not? Do what the Lord tells you to do.

6a. True or false: God has asked just about every single major character of the Bible to do something completely illogical.

(True)

6b. When God asks you to do something, why shouldn’t you go by what it looks like?

- A. Because God doesn’t want you to use your eyes
- B. Because you won’t like what you see
- C. Because you will be punished if you do
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(E. None of the above)

6c. What is another way of saying a person isn’t “there”?

(They aren’t doing what they know in their heart God has called them to do)

6d. Even by stepping out, taking a risk, throwing caution to the wind, and doing everything God tells you to do, it will still often take a great _____ to see something happen.

(Miracle)

6e. True or false: The Lord might do a few things to test you, but He’ll never do anything to hurt you.

(True)

6f. *Discussion question:* If you’re not “there,” why not?

(Discussion question)

Discipleship Questions

1. When did further direction come to Elijah?
2. *Discussion question:* Why do you think God sent Elijah's provision to where he wasn't?
3. Whenever God tells you to do something, He always makes _____ provision for you.
4. True or false: You have to follow through on what God has told you, or you'll miss His supply even if you've stepped out on God's Word.
5. Read 1 Corinthians 9:14. What is proportional? Give an example.
6. To do something else to help support yourself and your family in the meantime is what?
 - A. Unbelief
 - B. Foolish
 - C. Popular
 - D. Boring
 - E. Wisdom
7. True or false: Andrew knew he was refusing God's provision.

8. How did Elijah know he was in the right place?
 - A. He saw the provision of bread and flesh
 - B. He was too tired to continue
 - C. There was a mark in the dirt
 - D. He had been there before
 - E. He followed the map correctly

9. *Discussion question:* When is obeying God not legalism?

10. True or false: If you are obedient, you make it hard on yourself.

11. There is an _____ on just being obedient to God and doing what He says.

12. *Discussion question:* Why do you think God would call a person to a place that looks His provision isn't there?

13. True or false: God has asked just about every single major character of the Bible to do something completely illogical.

14. When God asks you to do something, why shouldn't you go by what it looks like?
 - A. Because God doesn't want you to use your eyes
 - B. Because you won't like what you see
 - C. Because you will be punished if you do
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

15. What is another way of saying a person isn't "there"?

16. Even by stepping out, taking a risk, throwing caution to the wind, and doing everything God tells you to do, it will still often take a great _____ to see something happen.

17. True or false: The Lord might do a few things to test you, but He'll never do anything to hurt you.

18. *Discussion question:* If you're not "there," why not?

Answer Key

1. After he stepped out in faith and acted on the initial word he had been given
2. *Discussion question*
3. Full
4. True
5. When you are ministering full time, you can expect to live off the Gospel full time
6. E. Wisdom
7. False
8. A. He saw the provision of bread and flesh
9. *Discussion question*
10. False
11. Anointing
12. *Discussion question*
13. True
14. E. None of the above
15. They aren't doing what they know in their heart God has called them to do
16. Miracle
17. True
18. *Discussion question*

Scriptures

1 KINGS 17:2-5

And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [3] Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [4] And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. [5] So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:14

Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

Natural & Supernatural

Your place called “there” isn’t necessarily limited to only a specific geographic location. It’s an attitude of wholeheartedly moving in the direction of, and doing, what God has said for you to do.

So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [6] And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

1 KINGS 17:5-6

There was a supernatural supply of bread and flesh, but there was also a natural supply of water. The water wasn’t a supernatural supply. It was already there, and had been for thousands of years. It was natural.

When God calls you to do something, it’s not totally supernatural. There are also natural things that will meet your needs. I got in trouble in my early years because I had been led to believe that since the Lord had called me into the ministry, He was going to meet all my needs supernaturally. So, I was just expecting God to rain money out of heaven. I refused to take any natural action—like working. I was trying to do it all spiritual, with no natural to it. But God’s supply is both supernatural and natural.

You need to keep these things in balance. You can be in a ditch by always looking for your needs to be met in a totally natural, human way. When you do this, you look to yourself and the pressure is on you to provide. The other ditch is just expecting God to rain it out of heaven while refusing to do anything according to natural wisdom.

100 X 0 = 0

We led a Baptist pastor into the baptism in the Holy Spirit. He became so excited about the Lord that he was kicked out of the Baptist church. He started coming to our church, but he wouldn’t work because he was so fanatical about believing God to meet his needs in a supernatural way. By this time, the Lord had shown me these things, so I was trying to teach him that it’s okay to go out and work a job even though he’s called to the ministry. This guy was starving!

One day I told him, “The Bible says the Lord will bless the work of your hands. A hundred times zero equals zero ($100 \times 0 = 0$). Do something, even if it’s just a little. Go get a job at a burger joint, but do something and God will prosper it.”

He replied, “Well, back when I was in the world, I used to fix dents and upholstery on cars. If I ever needed work, I’d just take one of my business cards, go downtown, and find a vehicle that had a ding in it. If it was \$100 to fix it, I’d give them a 25 percent discount and bid it for \$75. Then I’d stick it in the door. By nightfall, I’d have four or five jobs.”

I asked, “Well, why don’t you do that now?”

“I’m waiting on God to meet my needs,” he responded.

I told him, “God can meet your needs through that.”

Finally, I convinced him and he started doing that, and money started coming in. The Lord began prospering him. He did a natural thing with the supernatural blessing of God upon it. Sometimes people have trouble understanding this interaction between the natural and the supernatural.

A TIMELY TITHE

At one point in time, the board of Andrew Wommack Ministries told me, “It’s over. Turn out the lights. Quit!” As we were just sitting around trying to figure out what to do because we were bankrupt on paper, my mother called from the office and told me that an offering had just come in from a church for \$60,000! We started rejoicing!

The board told me, “Don’t spend it until you make sure it clears the bank.” It cleared just fine—praise God! It turned out that this gift was from a little church in Kansas that I had never been to before or since. This church of two or three hundred people didn’t know my need, but they sent me an offering of \$60,000.

You’re probably thinking, *That was just totally supernatural.*

It was definitely God, but it wasn’t just “totally” supernatural. The fellow who started that church had attended one of our camp meetings several years earlier. By a gift of the Holy Spirit, I

called him out and prophesied over him some things that were going to happen and that God had called him to the pastorate. He went into the ministry through this, and went home and started this church.

Four or five years later, he led a man to the Lord in his church who was a millionaire. After being born again, this man gave him something like \$150,000 or \$200,000. He said, “This is my tithe. I don’t know where it’s supposed to go. Would you please tithe it for me?”

Ever since I had spoken that word into his life by the Holy Spirit at our camp meeting, he had wanted to bless me back. I sowed seed into his life—this physical contact from several years before—so he sent me \$60,000 of that tithe. Therefore, this timely provision from God was both natural and supernatural.

A COMBINATION OF THE TWO

One of my partners is a big giver, but he’s always on my case, saying, “If you have a need, don’t put out a letter or tell anybody; just pray to God, and He will supernaturally meet your need.” That sounds great, but that’s not the way things work. The Word says,

Ye have not, because ye ask not.

JAMES 4:2b

God told Moses to take an offering from the children of Israel and to tell them to give these specific things (Ex. 25:1-7). It’s wrong to just expect God’s provision to be one hundred percent supernatural. However, it’s also wrong to just get out there and try to figure it all out in the physical realm. God will tell you natural things to do, but there will also be a supernatural supply.

Elijah had supernatural bread and meat, but he also had natural water. It was a combination of the two. You can’t live without water. Neither can you live 100 percent supernatural. There are some carnal, natural things to do also.

NATURAL WISDOM

One of the best things that happened to our ministry came in the form of natural wisdom. One of my partners has a business that grosses about \$550 million a year. About four or five years ago, he brought his accountant into our ministry to look things over. After a couple of days, he said, “Something is wrong. On paper, you’re bankrupt. Yet you aren’t. You’re still functioning and things are working. We’re just going to have to go through everything from the top to the bottom and check things out.”

One of the main things they found was nearly \$200,000 worth of inventory sitting in a back room. Since products like our *Life for Today* study Bibles were less expensive to buy in bulk, I purchased them this way. So, instead of paying \$10 for each, we only paid \$5. That’s why we had something like \$60,000 worth of Bibles just sitting there.

This guy started teaching me about something called “Just-in-Time Management.” He said, “You have money just sitting there in that storage that could be out paying bills and other things.” So, we bled our inventory down to bare bones. Since then, we haven’t had a financial crisis in our ministry.

That was just natural wisdom. It wasn’t supernatural. Yet sometimes we look for everything to be just totally supernatural. Now, don’t misunderstand me: We all need the supernatural power of God, but there are also some natural things that we have to do.

Outline

- I. Your place called “there” is an attitude of wholeheartedly moving in the direction of, and doing, what God has said for you to do.

So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [6] And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

1 KINGS 17:5-6

- A. When God calls you to do something, His supply is both supernatural and natural.
- B. You need to keep these things in balance.
- i. You can be in a ditch by always looking for your needs to be met in a totally natural, human way.
 - ii. The other ditch is just expecting God to rain your supply out of heaven while refusing to do anything according to natural wisdom.
- II. Sometimes people have trouble understanding this interaction between the natural and the supernatural.
- A. At one point in time, the board of Andrew Wommack Ministries told me we were bankrupt on paper.
- B. But that same day, an offering came in from a church for \$60,000!
- C. It was definitely God, but it wasn't totally supernatural.
- D. I had spoken a word to the fellow who started that church, and he had wanted to bless me back.
- E. Therefore, this timely provision from God was both natural and supernatural.
- III. One of my partners is a big giver, but he's always on my case, saying, “If you have a need, don't put out a letter or tell anybody; just pray to God, and He will supernaturally meet your need.”
- A. That sounds great, but the Word says,

Ye have not, because ye ask not.

JAMES 4:2b

- B. It's wrong to just expect God's provision to be one hundred percent supernatural.
- C. However, it's also wrong to just get out there and try to figure it all out in the physical realm.

- D. God will tell you natural things to do, but there will also be a supernatural supply.
 - E. Elijah had supernatural bread and meat, but he also had natural water.
- IV. At another time, a partner brought his accountant into our ministry to look things over.
- A. This accountant said, “On paper, you’re bankrupt, yet you’re still functioning and things are working.”
 - B. Then, after a more thorough check, he told us to bleed our inventory down to bare bones.
 - C. Since then, we haven’t had a financial crisis in our ministry.
 - D. That was just natural wisdom.
 - E. We all need the supernatural power of God, but there are also some natural things that we have to do.

Teacher's Guide

1. Your place called “there” is an attitude of wholeheartedly moving in the direction of, and doing, what God has said for you to do.

So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [6] And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

1 KINGS 17:5-6

When God calls you to do something, His supply is both supernatural and natural. You need to keep these things in balance. You can be in a ditch by always looking for your needs to be met in a totally natural, human way. The other ditch is just expecting God to rain your supply out of heaven while refusing to do anything according to natural wisdom.

- 1a. *Discussion question:* How did you identify that your place called “there” is an attitude of wholeheartedly moving in the direction of, and doing, what God has said for you to do?

(Discussion question)

- 1b. When God calls you to do something, His supply is _____ supernatural
_____ natural.

- A. Never / always
- B. Always / never
- C. Both / and
- D. Seemingly / and
- E. Neither / nor

(C. Both / and)

- 1c. The supernatural and natural need to be in what?

(Balance)

2. Sometimes people have trouble understanding this interaction between the natural and the supernatural. At one point in time, the board of Andrew Wommack Ministries told me we were bankrupt on paper. But that same day, an offering came in from a church for \$60,000! It was definitely God, but it wasn't totally supernatural. I had spoken a word to the fellow who started that church, and he had wanted to bless me back. Therefore, this timely provision from God was both natural and supernatural.

2a. *Discussion question:* Why do you think people have trouble understanding this interaction between the natural and the supernatural?

(Discussion question)

3. One of my partners is a big giver, but he's always on my case, saying, "If you have a need, don't put out a letter or tell anybody; just pray to God, and He will supernaturally meet your need." That sounds great, but the Word says,

Ye have not, because ye ask not.

JAMES 4:2b

It's wrong to just expect God's provision to be one hundred percent supernatural. However, it's also wrong to just get out there and try to figure it all out in the physical realm. God will tell you natural things to do, but there will also be a supernatural supply. Elijah had supernatural bread and meat, but he also had natural water.

3a. According to James 4:2, in order to have, what do you need to do?

- A. Beg
 - B. Manipulate
 - C. Fast
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above
- (E. None of the above)***

3b. What part of God's supply to Elijah was supernatural?

(The bread and meat)

3c. What part of God's supply to Elijah was natural?

(The water)

3d. *Discussion question:* How do you know which is which?

(Discussion question)

4. At another time, a partner brought his accountant into our ministry to look things over. This accountant said, “On paper, you’re bankrupt, yet you’re still functioning and things are working.” Then, after a more thorough check, he told us to bleed our inventory down to bare bones. Since then, we haven’t had a financial crisis in our ministry. That was just natural wisdom. We all need the supernatural power of God, but there are also some natural things that we have to do.

4a. *Discussion question:* Why do you need natural things along with the supernatural power of God?

(Discussion question)

Discipleship Questions

1. *Discussion question:* How did you identify that your place called “there” is an attitude of wholeheartedly moving in the direction of, and doing, what God has said for you to do?

2. When God calls you to do something, His supply is _____ supernatural _____ natural.
 - A. Never / always
 - B. Always / never
 - C. Both / and
 - D. Seemingly / and
 - E. Neither / nor

3. The supernatural and natural need to be in what?

4. *Discussion question:* Why do you think people have trouble understanding this interaction between the natural and the supernatural?

5. According to James 4:2, in order to have, what do you need to do?
 - A. Beg
 - B. Manipulate
 - C. Fast
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

6. What part of God's supply to Elijah was supernatural?

7. What part of God's supply to Elijah was natural?

8. *Discussion question:* How do you know which is which?

9. *Discussion question:* Why do you need natural things along with the supernatural power of God?

Answer Key

1. *Discussion question*
2. C. Both / and
3. Balance
4. *Discussion question*
5. E. None of the above
6. The bread and meat
7. The water
8. *Discussion question*
9. *Discussion question*

Scriptures

1 KINGS 17:5-6

So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [6] And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

JAMES 4:2

Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

EXODUS 25:1-7

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, [2] Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering. [3] And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, [4] And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, [5] And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, [6] Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, [7] Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate.

"There" Changes

And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

1 KINGS 17:7

Just because God gave you a word, you obeyed it, and He supernaturally provided for you—that doesn't mean it won't change! "There" is not a static place. At times, it's going to change.

DYNAMIC & PROGRESSIVE

There are progressive steps toward the fulfillment of anything God has for you to do. "*First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear*" (Mark 4:28). Many people are stuck where they were five, ten, or even twenty years ago. They seek God when their back is against the wall, when they're desperate and nothing is going right. Then He opens up a door, and they start getting some relief. They begin to see the power of God and experience some success, but then they let up, and over time they slide back to where they were before.

The Christian life is a relationship. It's dynamic and progressive. At times, God is going to change some things in your life. Will you continue following Him or not? Will you go on to the new "there" or get stuck?

NO PROBLEMS?

For a period of time, God sent Elijah's supply by the Brook Cherith. However, the brook dried up after a while "*because there had been no rain in the land*" (1 Kin. 17:7).

Can you guess why there wasn't any rain in the land? That's right! Elijah had received, proclaimed, and obeyed the word of the Lord. It wasn't because he had done anything wrong. The brook dried up because he did things right. Sometimes we think we will never have any problems if we just do what God tells us to do. But this just isn't so!

Consider Paul. He was led by a heavenly vision to go to Macedonia (Acts 16:9-10). First thing in the morning, he got up and went there. Paul assumed that surely the Lord had sent them to preach the Gospel in Philippi (a city in the province of Macedonia). He wasn't there forty-eight hours before being thrown into the worst part of the prison (Acts 16:22-24). His obedience to God to go "there" and do what He told him to do caused him problems.

FACING OPPOSITION

It's wrong to think that if you're doing what God wants you to do, then you will never have to face any opposition or problems. However, the vast majority of believers functionally interpret whether or not they're doing what the Lord wants them to do by how easy it is. If something comes against them, they think they've missed God.

If you follow that logic, then Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, and Moses all missed God. Moses obeyed the Lord and went back to Egypt. He threw his rod down in front of Pharaoh and commanded, "Let my people go!" Instead of the Israelites getting free, things became worse. Pharaoh doubled their work and took away their straw. The people wanted to kill Moses. Everything became worse, not better.

Joseph acted on the word God gave him. Instead of things getting better, he got beaten, thrown into a pit, nearly killed, and sold into slavery. While there, he was faithful and obeyed God. But just as things were starting to improve, his master's wife lied about him and he found himself in prison again. Every time he obeyed God, it looked like things became worse. But all along the way, the Lord had His hand on Joseph.

The Word describes Joseph, a slave standing naked on the auction block, as "*a prosperous man*" (Gen. 39:2). Nobody in the natural would have considered him a prosperous man at that moment in his life. But he was obeying God. He was standing steadfastly in that place called "there." Even in prison, "*God was with him*" (Acts 7:9). Later, Joseph prospered and became the head of the prison. God's blessing and anointing will be on your life when you're really obeying Him, but that doesn't mean that everything in the physical realm will be going right.

WHEN ALL HELL HAS BROKEN LOOSE

I was with Bob and Joy Nichols when the doctor walked in and said, “Your daughter is dead. Pull the plug. She’s brain dead.” The doctor was polite, but his prognosis was the total opposite of the word Bob and Joy had from the Lord.

Bob didn’t get mad; he just sweetly, kindly, and lovingly told him, “No, that’s not what we’re believing.” Their daughter is at home now recovering. She’s been on a treadmill, talks a little bit, and continues improving day by day.

I’ve known pastors who had people almost split their church, but they just blessed them and sent them out. Rather than letting these people divide their fellowship, they sowed them and encouraged them on their way. We think we have problems, until we hear what other folks have been through. In the midst of opposition and pain, their joy, peace, and victory challenges us to also rise up in faith.

This idea that, *If God is blessing and you’re really succeeding, there will be no opposition*, isn’t true. In fact, it’s actually the opposite. You can usually tell whether or not God is in what you’re doing by how much opposition there is. Neither way is 100 percent correct. You just need to have a word from God. But if you were going to look at it in the natural, it’s probably more scriptural to say that you’re in the right place when all hell has broken loose and everything is going against you. That’s about the way it goes in Scripture.

WAIT FOR THE NEW WORD

Here Elijah was—he knew he was in the blessing of God. He was in that place called “there.” He was obeying God, but the brook dried up. And he’s the one who caused it to do that! It was his *own* prophecy that brought the drought. It was his *own* preaching that got him into the mess he was in.

You can preach yourself into a corner. But to Elijah’s credit, he didn’t move just because the brook dried up. This was a serious situation because you must have water to live; you can only go three days without water before you begin to die. Seven days without water and you’re dead. You can go forty days without food, but you can’t go without water very long.

In a situation like this, when the supply has quit and something has to change, most people wouldn't wait on a word from God. They would feel like they had to do something. And they would do something out of panic. There have been so many times in our ministry when it looked like that, and I didn't know what to do. I prayed and asked God, but I didn't have a new word. I didn't have anything different than what I was already doing. Yet everything in the natural was screaming, "You have to do something! You can't just sit there!" But really—you can't do anything else.

Well, you couldn't expect Elijah to just sit there and die of thirst. He had to have water. God could have supplied the water supernaturally. Moses hit a rock and water gushed out, enough for all the Israelites and their cattle (Ex. 17:6). Samson nearly died of thirst. God gave him water from the jawbone of an ass (Judg. 15:15-19). Certainly there was a bone around there from all the flesh he had been eating. The precedent was already there. Elijah didn't have to move to get his need met. God could have done it supernaturally.

Sometimes you might allow circumstances to dictate to you and say, *You have to do something—move!* But in truth, you don't ever have to do anything contrary to what the Lord has told you to do. If God gave you a word, then the thing to do is to keep doing what the Lord told you to do until you get a new word. You may say, "But, Andrew, you can't always do that." Yes, you can!

DEAL WITH YOUR THOUGHTS

One of my good friends, Pastor Bob Nichols, really struggled under some financial pressures with his church a while back. He told a story about when he was facing a balloon payment on his church, which was totally impossible to pay in the natural. It looked like everything he had believed for decades was done for. He was desperate.

He went out into a field one evening and said he wouldn't leave that field until he had a word from God. He spent all night out there without anything. It was beginning to get light, and he felt like he had to leave because people would be able to see him there. So, he got in his car, turned the ignition, and the radio came on. He didn't realize it was the radio at first, because he had forgotten that he had left it on. The voice of Brother Shambach came on, saying, "Preacher, you don't have any problem. All you need is faith in God."

Immediately, Bob turned the car off. He thought this was the Lord speaking to him in an audible voice. But in just a few seconds, he realized what had happened. This didn't, however,

change the impact it had on him. God had spoken to him through that voice. He had a word from God, and sure enough, it all worked out. The church has more than doubled its assets, and they are debt free. Hallelujah! God is faithful!

Everybody runs across situations in which they know what God wants them to do, but it looks like they just can't do it. Circumstances won't allow them to do it, and they feel like they need to bail out. Their decision in a situation like this will determine whether they really go on and see the blessing of God or not.

Elijah had to cooperate with God through this whole thing. If Elijah would have run from there without getting a word from God, I believe the Lord wouldn't have spoken to him about Zarephath (1 Kin. 17:9). Then all of these other things that happened there wouldn't have come to pass either.

When the brook dried up, it didn't just quit all at once. It started to get less, and less, and less, until finally it got down to a trickle and stopped. Elijah could see this coming. We can usually see when we're getting into trouble and things aren't working out. Our biggest problem is our own thoughts about it. The Word doesn't tell us what he was thinking. But apparently Elijah was so committed to the fact that the Lord had told him to be there at the Brook Cherith that he wasn't going to move until he heard from God again. Elijah just dealt with all those contrary thoughts.

HE LEADS YOU IN STEPS

And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [9] Arise get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

1 KINGS 17:8-9, UNDERLINE MINE

God changed Elijah's "there." He changed the place of provision.

God leads us in steps. He called me to pastor for a period of time. It wasn't for the people; it was me. It was my training. Lord have mercy on those poor people that I learned on. God definitely led me to do what I was doing, but if I had stopped there, I would have missed His real purpose. God will lead you in stages.

I pastored three small churches over a six-year period of time. I thought that would be what I did forever. But then the Lord moved me into a radio and traveling ministry for the next twenty years. I thought that's what I would do forever. Then the Lord told me to start a Bible college. That had been the farthest thing from my mind, but I did it, and it has proven to be one of the most important things the Lord has led me to do.

Next, the Lord gave me a word about going on television. As I prepared to take that step, the Lord spoke to me on July 26, 1999, and told me that I was just now beginning to do what He made me for. Even though I had been in ministry for thirty-one years, if I had died before I began my television ministry on January 3, 2000, I would have missed His will for my life.

Once I was on television, we saw tremendous growth in the ministry. But the Lord wasn't through. The second most significant encounter I've had with the Lord came on January 31, 2002. The Lord told me I was limiting what He could do in my life and ministry through my small thinking. It was time to grow again. Almost immediately, the ministry just exploded with growth that continues to this day.

I have now been in full-time ministry for forty-five years. But I couldn't do what I'm doing now forty-five years ago. There is growth and steps you have to take to find and fulfill God's will. Don't let what you don't know keep you from doing what you know to do. As you take that first step, the Lord will be faithful to show you the following steps. That's my testimony and that's what the Lord did for Elijah.

Outline

- I. Just because God gave you a word, you obeyed it, and He supernaturally provided for you—doesn't mean it won't change!

And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

1 KINGS 17:7

- A. There are progressive steps toward the fulfillment of anything God has for you to do.
 - B. The Christian life is a relationship—it's dynamic and progressive.
 - C. At times, God is going to change some things in your life.
 - D. Will you go on to the new "there" or get stuck?
- II. Elijah had received, proclaimed, and obeyed the word of the Lord—the brook didn't dry up because he had done anything wrong.
- A. You might think you will never have any problems if you just do what God tells you to do, but this just isn't so!
 - B. The vast majority of believers functionally interpret whether or not they're doing what the Lord wants them to do by how easy it is.
 - i. If something comes against them, they think they've missed God.
 - C. God's blessing and anointing will be on your life when you're really obeying Him, but that doesn't mean that everything in the physical realm will be going right.
 - D. In fact, you can usually tell whether or not God is in what you're doing by how much opposition there is.
 - E. That's about the way it goes in Scripture.
- III. Elijah was in that place called "there," but the brook dried up.
- A. It was his own prophecy that brought the drought.
 - B. But to Elijah's credit, he didn't move just because the brook dried up.
 - C. In a situation like this, when the supply has quit and something has to change, most people wouldn't wait on a word from God, and they would do something out of panic.
 - D. But in truth, you don't ever have to do anything contrary to what the Lord has told you to do.
 - E. If God gave you a word, then the thing to do is to keep doing what the Lord told you to do until you get a new word.

- F. You can always do that!
- G. Your biggest problem will be your own thoughts.

IV. Apparently Elijah was so committed to the fact that the Lord had told him to be there at the Brook Cherith that he wasn't going to move until he heard from God again.

And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [9] Arise get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there; behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

1 KINGS 17:8-9, UNDERLINE MINE

- A. God changed Elijah's "there," the place of provision.
- B. There is growth and steps you have to take to find and fulfill God's will.
- C. Don't let what you don't know keep you from doing what you know to do.
- D. As you take that first step, the Lord will be faithful to show you the following steps.
- E. That's my testimony and that's what the Lord did for Elijah.

Teacher's Guide

1. Just because God gave you a word, you obeyed it, and He supernaturally provided for you—that doesn't mean it won't change!

And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

1 KINGS 17:7

There are progressive steps toward the fulfillment of anything God has for you to do. The Christian life is a relationship—it's dynamic and progressive. At times, God is going to change some things in your life. Will you go on to the new "there" or get stuck?

1a. Read 1 Kings 17:7. It's possible that if God gives you a word, you obeyed it, and He supernaturally provided for you, it will _____!

(Change)

1b. What is the Christian life?

- A. A relationship
- B. Dynamic
- C. Progressive
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(D. All of the above)

1c. True or false: God is constantly changing your place called "there."

(False)

2. Elijah had received, proclaimed, and obeyed the word of the Lord—the brook didn't dry up because he had done anything wrong. You might think you will never have any problems if you just do what God tells you to do, but this just isn't so! The vast majority of believers functionally interpret whether or not they're doing what the Lord wants them to do by how easy it is. If something comes against them, they think they've missed God. God's blessing and anointing will be on your life when you're really obeying Him, but that doesn't mean that everything in the physical realm will be going right. In fact, you can usually tell whether or not God is in what you're doing by how much opposition there is. That's about the way it goes in Scripture.

2a. True or false: You will never have any problems if you just do what God tells you to do.

(False)

2b. *Discussion question:* Why shouldn't you interpret whether or not you're doing what the Lord wants you to do by how easy it is?

(Discussion question)

2c. You can _____ tell whether or not God is in what you're doing by how much opposition there is.

(Usually)

3. Elijah was in that place called “there,” but the brook dried up. It was his own prophecy that brought the drought. But to Elijah’s credit, he didn’t move just because the brook dried up. In a situation like this, when the supply has quit and something has to change, most people wouldn’t wait on a word from God, and they would do something out of panic. But in truth, you don’t ever have to do anything contrary to what the Lord has told you to do. If God gave you a word, then the thing to do is to keep doing what the Lord told you to do until you get a new word. You can always do that! Your biggest problem will be your own thoughts.

3a. It was Elijah’s _____ prophecy that brought the drought.

(Own)

3b. *Discussion question:* Why do you think people don’t wait on a word from God panic when the supply has quit?

(Discussion question)

3c. You don’t ever have to do anything _____ to what the Lord has told you to do.

(Contrary)

3d. If God gave you a word, what should you do if you haven’t gotten a new word?

A. Nothing

B. Plan B

C. What He told you to do

D. Cry

E. What makes sense to you

(C. What He told you to do)

3e. You can _____ do that!

(Always)

3f. What will be your biggest problem?

(Your thoughts)

4. Apparently Elijah was so committed to the fact that the Lord had told him to be there at the Brook Cherith that he wasn't going to move until he heard from God again.

And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [9] Arise get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

1 KINGS 17:8-9, UNDERLINE MINE

God changed Elijah's "there," the place of provision. There is growth and steps you have to take to find and fulfill God's will. Don't let what you don't know keep you from doing what you know to do. As you take that first step, the Lord will be faithful to show you the following steps. That's my testimony and that's what the Lord did for Elijah.

4a. True or false: Elijah was so committed to the fact that the Lord had told him to be there at the Brook Cherith that he wasn't going to move until he heard from God again.

(True)

4b. Read 1 Kings 17:8-9. What did God change?

- A. Elijah's "there"
- B. The place of provision
- C. His behavior toward Elijah
- D. A. and C.
- E. A. and B.

(E. A. and B.)

4c. True or false: Without growth and taking steps, you will not find and fulfill God's will.

(True)

4d. *Discussion question:* Why shouldn't you let what you don't know keep you from doing what you know to do?

(Discussion question)

4e. What will happen as you take the first step?

- A. The Lord might show you the following steps
- B. The Lord will be faithful to show you the following steps
- C. The Lord will begrudgingly show you the following steps
- D. The Lord will have to show you the following steps
- E. The Lord will be faithful to show you all the following steps

(B. The Lord will be faithful to show you the following steps)

Discipleship Questions

1. Read 1 Kings 17:7. It's possible that if God gives you a word, you obeyed it, and He supernaturally provided for you, it will _____!
2. What is the Christian life?
 - A. A relationship
 - B. Dynamic
 - C. Progressive
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above
3. True or false: God is constantly changing your place called "there."
4. True or false: You will never have any problems if you just do what God tells you to do.
5. *Discussion question:* Why shouldn't you interpret whether or not you're doing what the Lord wants you to do by how easy it is?
6. You can _____ tell whether or not God is in what you're doing by how much opposition there is.
7. It was Elijah's _____ prophecy that brought the drought.

8. *Discussion question:* Why do you think people don't wait on a word from God panic when the supply has quit?
9. You don't ever have to do anything _____ to what the Lord has told you to do.
10. If God gave you a word, what should you do if you haven't gotten a new word?
- A. Nothing
 - B. Plan B
 - C. What He told you to do
 - D. Cry
 - E. What makes sense to you
11. You can _____ do that!
12. What will be your biggest problem?
13. True or false: Elijah was so committed to the fact that the Lord had told him to be there at the Brook Cherith that he wasn't going to move until he heard from God again.
14. Read 1 Kings 17:8-9. What did God change?
- A. Elijah's "there"
 - B. The place of provision
 - C. His behavior toward Elijah
 - D. A. and C.
 - E. A. and B.

15. True or false: Without growth and taking steps, you will not find and fulfill God's will.
16. *Discussion question:* Why shouldn't you let what you don't know keep you from doing what you know to do?
17. What will happen as you take the first step?
- A. The Lord might show you the following steps
 - B. The Lord will be faithful to show you the following steps
 - C. The Lord will begrudgingly show you the following steps
 - D. The Lord will have to show you the following steps
 - E. The Lord will be faithful to show you all the following steps

Answer Key

1. Change
2. D. All of the above
3. False
4. False
5. *Discussion question*
6. Usually
7. Own
8. *Discussion question*
9. Contrary
10. C. What He told you to do
11. Always
12. Your thoughts
13. True
14. E. A. and B.
15. True
16. *Discussion question*
17. B. The Lord will be faithful to show you the following steps

Scriptures

1 KINGS 17:7-9

And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. [8] And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, [9] Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

MARK 4:28

For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

ACTS 16:9-10

And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. [10] And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

ACTS 16:22-24

And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. [23] And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: [24] Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

GENESIS 39:2

And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

ACTS 7:9

And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him.

EXODUS 17:6

Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

JUDGES 15:15-19

And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. [16] And Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men. [17] And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand, and called that place Ramathlehi. [18] And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised? [19] But God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof Enhakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day.

"The" Widow Woman

God led Elijah to a new place:

Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

1 KINGS 17:9

The Lord had already spoken to this widow, which was exactly the same thing He did with the ravens. He had already spoken to the ravens before He told Elijah about it (1 Kin. 17:4). Likewise, God had already spoken to this woman.

This is important because this widow wasn't just anyone. Elijah wasn't just led by circumstances to come to the first person he ran into and pick him or her. God sent him to a *specific* woman—Jesus Himself said,

But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias [Elijah], when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; [26] But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta [Zarephath], a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

LUKE 4:25-26, BRACKETS MINE

God sent Elijah to this specific widow woman. First Kings 17:9 reveals that God had already commanded her to sustain him. Perhaps she had heard about Elijah's prophecy and knew that this drought had been caused by the man of God. She could have been believing the Lord to send Elijah her way because she knew she was supposed to sustain him. It's also possible that God had just shown her that somehow or another, He was going to miraculously provide for her through the drought. We don't know how detailed it was, but the Lord had already spoken to her heart. He had already commanded this widow woman to sustain Elijah.

MIRACLES TAKE TWO!

So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman...

1 KINGS 17:10a, UNDERLINE MINE

This wasn't "a" widow woman, but "*the*" widow woman. If Elijah could hear God tell him "Go to Zarephath. There is a widow there who will sustain you," then he could also hear Him say, "She's the one." Elijah knew this wasn't just any woman but "*the*" woman: "*The widow woman was there gathering of sticks*" (1 Kin. 17:10b, underline mine). She was "there." God had a place called "there" for her too!

It takes two people for a miracle to happen. God had already told this woman that He was going to sustain her. She was out there picking up sticks. That's pretty mundane. It wasn't anything special. She wasn't out there praying, laying hands on the sick, or doing anything "holy." She was just picking up sticks so she could make a fire and cook her last little bit of food. This may not seem very significant, but she was "there."

Many people would have thought, *It's my last little bit of food. It's my last day. I give up!* They would have been back at their house griping, complaining, and quitting. They might have been depressed or desperately praying for God to do something. However, she was just "there" doing what she knew to do. This put her in the right place at the right time.

We might want to do all these super spiritual things. We want God to do something in a spectacular supernatural fashion. Yet sometimes, we'll encounter some of the most awesome miracles just doing the things God has called us to do.

Abraham was sitting at his tent's door when the Lord appeared to him (Gen. 18:1). Jacob was asleep when the Lord spoke to him (Gen. 28:11-16). Moses was tending sheep when the Lord appeared to him (Ex. 3:1-2). Gideon was threshing wheat (Judg. 6:11); Saul was looking for lost animals (1 Sam. 9:2-4). And David was watching his father's sheep (1 Sam. 16:11) when the Lord called him and anointed him to be king.

We could receive a word from the Lord while talking to people at the store, being kind to neighbors, or loving coworkers. The Word says that "*some have entertained angels unawares*" (Heb. 13:2). Many of us are down at the church building looking for a heavenly vision or an angel to walk through the door, when the truth is we pass them on the street. If we aren't living the Christian life in everyday things, we could be missing out on God's blessing. We could miss out on our miracle because we are too "spiritual"!

If this woman hadn't been there just picking up sticks, which was really an insignificant thing, she could have missed her miracle. God has called you to do a lot of things that aren't necessarily super spiritual. Sometimes you might look down on those things and not do them with as much joy as all the spiritual stuff. There are just some natural things that you need

to do. Be faithful to do what God has called you to do. Remember, this woman was “there,” picking up sticks.

SERVE SOMEBODY!

And he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. [11] And as she was going to fetch it...

1 KINGS 17:10-11a

If you were getting ready to make your last little bit of food and then die, and somebody came to you and asked for a drink of water—would you give it to them? How about if both you and your refrigerator were full and everything looked good for you, and a stranger came up to you and asked for a drink of water—would you give it to him? Many Christians would say, “Who died and made you God? Go get it yourself!”

For this woman to go and actually serve Elijah first says a lot about her. I believe that’s one of the reasons God chose her over everyone else. She was a giver. She was someone who didn’t just think only of herself. Here she was on what seemed to be her last day on the face of the earth, yet she was willing to serve somebody. Many of us aren’t willing to serve anybody on a good day, much less a bad one.

He called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

1 KINGS 17:11b

Remember, Elijah knew this was “*the*” woman. He wasn’t just asking this randomly to check her out. He was doing this on purpose.

And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

1 KINGS 17:12

Now, that doesn’t seem like a very positive confession. On the surface, it appears as if she was in total unbelief. Yet the Word reveals that God had commanded this widow woman to feed Elijah. Jesus said that this was a specific widow that he had been sent to. This was a divine connection, and she already had a word from God. Yet here’s this negative confession.

AN ACT OF FAITH

Personally, I believe she was wavering in her faith a little bit. God had spoken to her and she had a revelation. She was believing Him for supernatural supply, but not strong enough to speak it. This is exactly the reason God led Elijah to ask for her last little bit of food: She needed to take a step of faith. She needed to get beyond that doubt and unbelief, and step out into the realm of faith.

You'll find this truth also in the ministry of Jesus. The blind man on the side of the road cried out, "*Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me*" (Mark 10:47). Everybody told him to shut up, but it didn't bother him. He just cried out all the louder. Then the Lord asked him what he wanted, and he answered, saying, "*Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole*" (Mark 10:52).

This man had already overcome opposition and had taken a step of faith, so the Lord told him his faith had made him whole. But when someone was pointed out to Jesus, like the man who was born blind (John 9), He told them to go do something. If you study this out, you will find that the people who didn't make a step toward Him were given something to do. To those who took steps toward Him, He said things like, "*According to your faith be it unto you*" (Matt. 9:29).

When someone is strong enough in faith, all they had to do was reach out and touch the hem of His garment and healing flowed—without Jesus doing anything (Mark 5:25-34)! But the Lord had to solicit some response, some act of faith from other people.

"THEY NEED TO GIVE!"

This widow from Zarephath had a revelation, but she was struggling with it. That's precisely why Elijah asked her to give of her food. If she would have been stronger in faith, it's possible that he may not have made this same demand of her. He was trying to help her.

Ministers need to do the same thing when they receive offerings and encourage people to give. One of the ways Satan has hindered the flow of finances in the body of Christ is through preachers seeing themselves as asking for finances for themselves, when they receive tithes and offerings. If they see it that way, they're always going to be bashful and apologetic. They're going to be timid because they don't want to portray that they're trying to take from the people. But the truth is, we're asking the people to give for them, not us!

Elijah was the prophet of God. He was blessed. Elijah could have eaten at the best restaurant and stayed in the best hotel in Zarephath. He didn't need this food for himself. This was the provision for that woman. He was asking her to give the last thing she had for herself, not him.

If you're a minister, you need to change your mindset to *I'm not just giving this offering talk, encouraging the people to sow, and receiving this money for me. I'm doing it for them. They need to give!* If you could just make that change in your thinking, it will make a difference in your finances and in people receiving.

ENCOURAGED TO STEP OUT

What would happen today if you went into a town, saw a widow, and found out that this was her last little bit of food? She and her son were about to die, and you take her welfare check right out of her hand, saying, "Give it to me!" If you took her last little bit of food, the Sidon Post would have been all over it! The headline would read, "Prophet Takes Widow's Last Bit!" However, Elijah wasn't doing it for his sake; he was doing it for her sake.

Elijah knew that this was *"the"* woman. He knew that he had her miracle, but if he didn't become aggressive, she wasn't going to receive it. If she didn't get out of her negative attitude, saying, "This is all I have. I'm going to die," she was going to miss God's provision.

Most of us would feel sympathy for that woman, and instead of taking her last little bit, we would shell out and give to her. However, giving her some food might feed her one more day, but taking from her what she had would give her a supply that would last nearly three years!

Many times, our compassion is misdirected. People don't need a hand out but a hand up. Elijah was doing what was best for this widow woman. He was saving her life by asking for her last little bit of food.

GIVE ME ALL YOU HAVE

Once, while I was ministering on this passage in Decatur, Texas, a woman came up for prayer at the end of the service and asked me if I remembered her. I told her that I was sorry, but I didn't.

She said I had prayed with her a year ago for her to be released from a mental hospital. She was a patient and had come to church on a Sunday pass. So, I prayed with her and she got released. She was so changed in her appearance that I didn't recognize her.

But now she had another prayer request. She wasn't a patient at the mental facility anymore; she was the janitor there, and they supplied her with room and board. She wanted a new job and a new place to live.

I had just taught about this widow at Zarepath, so I asked her what she had. She went back to her seat, got her purse, and counted \$83.23. She said this was all the money she had, and she had to make it last for another ten days because that's when she got paid again. I told her to give it all. Just so people wouldn't think I was doing this just to get all of her money, I gave all her money to the pastor. Then I prayed for her and believed she was going to receive big time!

The pastor of that church called me the next week. He told me that the day after I received this woman's offering, a man came to her who wasn't at the church service and didn't know what had happened, and he gave her a car. It wasn't brand-new, but it was nice, and that was something she hadn't even asked for. On Wednesday of that week, this woman's mother called to see how she was doing. They had been estranged from each other because of the woman's mental problems. They hadn't talked in over a year. When the mother found out the woman had been released from the mental care, she repented for the way things had gone and asked her daughter to come back home and live with her.

This woman not only got her request for someplace else to live besides the mental institution, but she had the relationship with her mother restored. And by Friday of that week, she had a new job paying her twice as much! I imagine someone at that church service was highly offended at me for taking all of this woman's money. There was a time when I also would have been offended if I had seen a minister do that. But I've come to realize that we aren't taking from people when we encourage them to give. We are giving to them—just like Elijah did with this widow in Zarepath.

As a minister, you need to recognize that the greatest thing you can do for people is get their money from them. I know how terrible that sounds, but if you do this with the motive that I'm sharing here, you will actually be helping them. You need to challenge God's people to give, and then receive their offerings with the right attitude. It's one of the best things you can do for them!

Ministers, myself included, haven't been bold in the area of finances because we don't want to be perceived as being after people's money. We have let the devil intimidate us into thinking we

are receiving the offering for us, when in reality, we're receiving it for them! When I minister on healing, deliverance, or anything else, I'm preaching it for the people—not myself. But when it comes to ministering on finances, we become timid and lose the anointing and power of finances.

Every believer needs to be encouraged to step out in faith. As ministers, it's our responsibility to challenge them. We need to push them to get out there and do what God has called them to do!

Outline

I. God led Elijah to a new place:

Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

1 KINGS 17:9

- A. The Lord had already spoken to this widow before He told Elijah about her, which was exactly the same thing He did with the ravens (1 Kin. 17:4).
- B. God sent Elijah to a *specific* woman—Jesus Himself said,

But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias [Elijah], when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; [26] But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta [Zarephath], a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

LUKE 4:25-26, BRACKETS MINE

- C. Perhaps she had heard about Elijah’s prophecy and knew that this drought had been caused by the man of God.
- D. She could have been believing the Lord to send Elijah her way, because she knew she was supposed to sustain him.
- E. It’s also possible that God had just shown her that somehow or another He was going to miraculously provide for her through the drought.

II. Elijah knew this wasn’t just any woman but “the” woman:

So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman...

1 KINGS 17:10a, UNDERLINE MINE

- A. God had a place called “there” for the widow woman, too, and that’s where she was!

The widow woman was there gathering of sticks.

1 KINGS 17:10b, UNDERLINE MINE

- B. This woman wasn’t out there praying, laying hands on the sick, or doing anything “holy”; she was just picking up sticks.

- C. This may not seem very significant, but she was “there”— doing what she knew to do, which put her in the right place at the right time.
- D. You might want to do all these super spiritual things, yet sometimes you’ll encounter some of the most awesome miracles just doing the things God has called us to do.
- E. If you aren’t living the Christian life in everyday things, you could miss out on your miracle because you are too “spiritual!”
- F. God has called you to do a lot of things that aren’t necessarily super spiritual.
- G. Sometimes you might look down on those things and not do them with as much joy as all the spiritual stuff.
- H. Be faithful to do what God has called you to do; remember, this woman was “there,” picking up sticks.

III. If you were getting ready to make your last little bit of food and then die, and somebody came to you and asked for a drink of water—would you give it to them?

And he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. [11] And as she was going to fetch it...

1 KINGS 17:10-11a

- A. For this woman to go and actually serve Elijah first says a lot about her.
- B. I believe that’s one of the reasons God chose her over everyone else.
- C. She was a giver.
- D. She was someone who didn’t just think only of herself.
- E. Many of us aren’t willing to serve anybody on a good day, much less a bad one.

IV. Remember, Elijah knew this was “*the*” woman.

He called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

1 KINGS 17:11b

- A. He wasn’t just asking this randomly to check her out; he was doing this on purpose.
- B. This was a divine connection, and she already had a word from God, but I believe she was wavering in her faith a little bit:

And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

1 KINGS 17:12

- C. She was believing Him for supernatural supply, but not strong enough to speak it.
 - D. This is exactly the reason God led Elijah to ask for her last little bit of food: She needed to take a step of faith and get beyond that doubt and unbelief.
 - E. You'll find this truth also in the ministry of Jesus.
 - i. When someone was pointed out to Jesus, He told them to go do something.
 - ii. If you study this out, you will find that the people who didn't make a step toward Him were given something to do.
 - iii. To those who took steps toward Him, He said things like, "*According to your faith be it unto you*" (Matt. 9:29).
- V. Elijah knew he had the widow woman's miracle, but if he didn't become aggressive and get her out of her negative attitude, she was going to miss God's provision.
- A. Most of us would feel sympathy for that woman, and instead of taking her last little bit, we would shell out and give to her.
 - B. However, giving her some food might feed her one more day, but taking from her what she had would give her a supply that would last nearly three years!
 - C. Many times, our compassion is misdirected.
 - D. People don't need a hand out but a hand up.
 - E. Elijah was saving this widow woman's life by asking for her last little bit of food.
- VI. As ministers, we need to challenge God's people to give and then receive their offerings with the right attitude—it's one of the best things we can do for them!
- A. Ministers, myself included, haven't been bold in the area of finances because we don't want to be perceived as being after people's money.
 - B. We have let the devil intimidate us into thinking we are receiving the offering for us, when in reality, we're receiving it for them!
 - C. When we minister on finances and become bashful and apologetic, we'll lose the anointing and power of finances.
 - D. As ministers, it's our responsibility to challenge believers to step out in faith.
 - E. We need to push them to get out there and do what God has called them to do!

Teacher's Guide

1. God led Elijah to a new place:

Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

1 KINGS 17:9

The Lord had already spoken to this widow before He told Elijah about her, which was exactly the same thing He did with the ravens (1 Kin. 17:4). God sent Elijah to a *specific* woman—Jesus Himself said,

But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias [Elijah], when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; [26] But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta [Zarephath], a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

LUKE 4:25-26, BRACKETS MINE

Perhaps she had heard about Elijah's prophecy and knew that this drought had been caused by the man of God. She could have been believing the Lord to send Elijah her way, because she knew she was supposed to sustain him. It's also possible that God had just shown her that somehow or another, He was going to miraculously provide for her through the drought.

- 1a. Read 1 Kings 17:9. "*Behold, I have commanded a widow woman _____ to sustain thee.*"
(**There**)
- 1b. Read Luke 4:25-26. True or false: God sent Elijah to a random woman.
(**False**)

2. Elijah knew this wasn't just any woman but "*the*" woman:

So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman...

1 KINGS 17:10a, UNDERLINE MINE

God had a place called "there" for the widow woman, too, and that's where she was!

The widow woman was there gathering of sticks.

1 KINGS 17:10b, UNDERLINE MINE

This woman wasn't out there praying, laying hands on the sick, or doing anything "holy"; she was just picking up sticks. This may not seem very significant, but she was "there"— doing what she knew to do, which put her in the right place at the right time. You might want to do all these super spiritual things, yet sometimes you'll encounter some of the most awesome miracles just doing the things God has called us to do. If you aren't living the Christian life in everyday things, you could miss out on your miracle because you are too "spiritual!" God has called you to do a lot of things that aren't necessarily super spiritual. Sometimes you might look down on those things and not do them with as much joy as all the spiritual stuff. Be faithful to do what God has called you to do; remember, this woman was "there," picking up sticks.

- 2a. *Discussion question:* How do you think Elijah knew this woman was "*the*" woman?
(Discussion question)
- 2b. God had a place called "there" for the widow woman _____.
(Too)
- 2c. True or false: If you're in your place called "there," you'll always be doing super spiritual things.
(False)
- 2d. If you aren't living the Christian life in everyday things, what could you miss out on?
 A. Something fun
 B. Your TV time
 C. A candy bar
 D. The next new thing
 E. Your miracle
(E. Your miracle)
- 2e. You need to be faithful to do what?
(What God has called you to do)

3. If you were getting ready to make your last little bit of food and then die, and somebody came to you and asked for a drink of water—would you give it to them?

And he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. [11] And as she was going to fetch it...

1 KINGS 17:10-11a

For this woman to go and actually serve Elijah first says a lot about her. I believe that's one of the reasons God chose her over everyone else. She was a giver. She was someone who didn't just only think of herself. Many of us aren't willing to serve anybody on a good day, much less a bad one.

- 3a. *Discussion question:* If you were getting ready to make your last little bit of food and then die, and somebody came to you and asked for a drink of water—why or why not would you give it to them?

(Discussion question)

- 3b. True or false: This woman was someone who didn't just think only of herself.

(True)

4. Remember, Elijah knew this was “*the*” woman.

He called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

1 KINGS 17:11b

He wasn’t just asking this randomly to check her out; he was doing this on purpose. This was a divine connection, and she already had a word from God, but I believe she was wavering in her faith a little bit:

And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

1 KINGS 17:12

She was believing Him for supernatural supply, but not strong enough to speak it. This is exactly the reason God led Elijah to ask for her last little bit of food: She needed to take a step of faith and get beyond that doubt and unbelief. You’ll find this truth also in the ministry of Jesus. When someone was pointed out to Jesus, He told them to go do something. If you study this out, you will find that the people who didn’t make a step toward Him were given something to do. To those who took steps toward Him, He said things like, “*According to your faith be it unto you*” (Matt. 9:29). Ministers need to do the same thing when they receive offerings and encourage people to give.

- 4a. Read 1 Kings 17:11-12. Why did Elijah ask for this widow’s last bit of food?
- A. Because he had only been eating meat that the ravens brought him and longed for bread
 - B. Because he was famished—why else!?
 - C. Because she needed to take a step of faith and get beyond that doubt and unbelief
 - D. Because he didn’t care about her
 - E. Because he knew she was lying about it being her last bit
- (C. Because she needed to take a step of faith and get beyond that doubt and unbelief)**
- 4b. What did Jesus do when someone was pointed out to Him?
- (He told them to go do something)**
- 4c. Read Matthew 9:29. What about those who took steps toward Him?
- (He said things like, “According to your faith be it unto you”)**
- 4d. *Discussion question:* Why do ministers need to do the same thing when they receive offerings and encourage people to give?
- (Discussion question)**

5. Elijah knew he had the widow woman's miracle, but if he didn't become aggressive and get her out of her negative attitude, she was going to miss God's provision. Most of us would feel sympathy for that woman, and instead of taking her last little bit, we would shell out and give to her. However, giving her some food might feed her one more day, but taking from her what she had would give her a supply that would last nearly three years! Many times, our compassion is misdirected. People don't need a hand out but a hand up. Elijah was saving this widow woman's life by asking for her last little bit of food.

5a. What did Elijah have to do to get the widow woman out of her negative attitude?

(Become aggressive)

5b. What would have happened if he hadn't?

(She was going to miss God's provision)

5c. Many times, what do people need instead of a hand out?

- A. A kind word
 - B. A hand up
 - C. A reality check
 - D. A place to stay
 - E. A harsh rebuke
- (B. A hand up)***

6. As ministers, we need to challenge God's people to give and then receive their offerings with the right attitude—it's one of the best things we can do for them! Ministers, myself included, haven't been bold in the area of finances because we don't want to be perceived as being after people's money. We have let the devil intimidate us into thinking we are receiving the offering for us, when in reality, we're receiving it for them! When we minister on finances and become bashful and apologetic, we'll lose the anointing and power of finances. As ministers, it's our responsibility to challenge believers to step out in faith. We need to push them to get out there and do what God has called them to do!

6a. True or false: Ministers, Andrew included, haven't been bold in the area of finances because they want to be perceived as being after people's money.

(False)

6b. In reality, who are ministers receiving offerings for?

- A. The people
- B. The guest minister
- C. Themselves
- D. Whomever the pastor chooses
- E. No one

(A. The people)

6c. Why shouldn't those who minister on finances be bashful and apologetic?

(Because they'll lose the anointing and power of finances)

6d. *Discussion question:* Why is it ministers' responsibility to challenge believers to step out in faith?

(Discussion question)

Discipleship Questions

1. Read 1 Kings 17:9. “Behold, I have commanded a widow woman _____ to sustain thee.”
2. Read Luke 4:25-26. True or false: God sent Elijah to a random woman.
3. How do you think Elijah knew this woman was “the” woman?
4. God had a place called “there” for the widow woman _____.
5. True or false: If you’re in your place called “there,” you’ll always be doing super spiritual things.
6. If you aren’t living the Christian life in everyday things, what could you miss out on?
 - A. Something fun
 - B. Your TV time
 - C. A candy bar
 - D. The next new thing
 - E. Your miracle
7. You need to be faithful to do what?

8. *Discussion question:* If you were getting ready to make your last little bit of food and then die, and somebody came to you and asked for a drink of water—why or why not would you give it to them?

9. True or false: This woman was someone who didn't just think only of herself.

10. Read 1 Kings 17:11-12. Why did Elijah ask for this widow's last bit of food?
 - A. Because he had only been eating meat that the ravens brought him and longed for bread
 - B. Because he was famished—why else!?
 - C. Because she needed to take a step of faith and get beyond that doubt and unbelief
 - D. Because he didn't care about her
 - E. Because he knew she was lying about it being her last bit

11. What did Jesus do when someone was pointed out to Him?

12. Read Matthew 9:29. What about those who took steps toward Him?

13. *Discussion question:* Why do ministers need to do the same thing when they receive offerings and encourage people to give?

14. What did Elijah have to do to get the widow woman out of her negative attitude?

15. What would have happened if he hadn't?
16. Many times, what do people need instead of a hand out?
- A. A kind word
 - B. A hand up
 - C. A reality check
 - D. A place to stay
 - E. A harsh rebuke
17. True or false: Ministers, Andrew included, haven't been bold in the area of finances because they want to be perceived as being after people's money.
18. In reality, who are ministers receiving offerings for?
- A. The people
 - B. The guest minister
 - C. Themselves
 - D. Whomever the pastor chooses
 - E. No one
19. Why shouldn't those who minister on finances be bashful and apologetic?
20. *Discussion question:* Why is it ministers' responsibility to challenge believers to step out in faith?

Answer Key

1. There
2. False
3. *Discussion question*
4. Too
5. False
6. E. Your miracle
7. What God has called you to do
8. *Discussion question*
9. True
10. C. Because she needed to take a step of faith and get beyond that doubt and unbelief
11. He told them to go do something
12. He said things like, "According to your faith be it unto you"
13. *Discussion question*
14. Become aggressive
15. She was going to miss God's provision
16. B. A hand up
17. False
18. A. The people
19. Because they'll lose the anointing and power of finances
20. *Discussion question*

Scriptures

1 KINGS 17:9-12

Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. [10] So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. [11] And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. [12] And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

1 KINGS 17:4

And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

LUKE 4:25-26

But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; [26] But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

GENESIS 18:1

And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day.

GENESIS 28:11-16

And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. [12] And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. [13] And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; [14] And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. [15] And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. [16] And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not.

EXODUS 3:1-2

Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. [2] And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

JUDGES 6:11

And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.

1 SAMUEL 9:2-4

And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people. [3] And the asses of Kish Saul's father were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses. [4] And he passed through mount Ephraim, and passed through the land of Shalisha, but they found them not: then they passed through the land of Shalim, and there they were not: and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found them not.

1 SAMUEL 16:11

And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

HEBREWS 13:2

Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

MARK 10:47

And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

MARK 10:52

And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

MATTHEW 9:29

Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.

MARK 5:25-34

And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, [26] And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, [27] When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. [28] For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. [29] And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. [30] And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? [31] And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? [32] And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. [33] But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. [34] And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

Step Out in Faith!

The Word says that Elijah didn't just tell this widow woman "Give me your food"; he gave her a promise, or a word from God, to go with it:

And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. [14] For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

1 KINGS 17:13-14

Elijah gave her the word of God—the same word he had been living under and that had been meeting his need. You don't just ask people for money without giving them something to stand on. You don't encourage people to give without giving them the Word of God to anchor their faith. People shouldn't be giving because of your charisma or need. They should be giving because they've been given God's Word and have been challenged to step out in faith.

GOD'S BEST

Elijah challenged this woman's faith and gave her the word of the Lord to stand on.

And she went and did.

1 KINGS 17:15

She obeyed the word of God. Notice how Elijah said, "*Make me thereof a little cake first*" (1 Kin. 17:13, underline mine).

You need to challenge folks to give God their best. People say, "Well, I want to give. I really desire to give, and as soon as God prospers me and I get anything extra, I'm going to give!" In other words, they're giving God what they can afford—what's left over after their needs are taken care of. They aren't putting the Lord and His kingdom first (Matt. 6:33).

I'm not legalistic with this. There have actually been times when someone has come up to me and asked, "My rent is due and I just received a \$500 check. Do I give off this first or pay my rent?" It depends on where they are. I've told people before, "Pay your rent. It's a miracle!" However, I wouldn't personally do that. It didn't matter how bad our need was, every time Jamie and I received provision, we would give off it first. But I'm not going to condemn someone else for not doing this.

When you give God your best, He begins to give you His best. As long as you are just giving what you can afford after all your bills are paid, you aren't ever going to see God's best.

DAILY BREAD

Elijah said, "Give to me first." This wasn't just a one-time deal. She had to do this every day until the drought ended. The Bible doesn't tell us the exact length of time, but it was probably around two-and-a-half to three years that this little bit of oil and meal sustained them. She didn't give to Elijah once and get three years' supply of oil and meal. There was always that tiny little bit, but it never failed!

There was never a great supply, but there was always enough. There was never so much that she could just coast and say, "Well, I don't have to believe God today." No! Every morning, she faced this choice—make for the man of God first and believe that there will be enough for her and her son, or not. She had to exercise her faith every day to obey the word of the Lord.

That's a great miracle, but most of us wouldn't like this miracle at all. The Bible says:

Give us this day our daily bread.

MATTHEW 6:11

We don't like daily bread. We like to get enough to set two or three years' worth aside, so we can feel safe and secure. Yet the Lord said, "*Daily bread.*"

This was a miracle that had to take place every single day—every day. And every day, she was probably tempted to say, "This is our last little bit. I think I'll make for us first." But she stepped out in faith and made for the man of God first. This is how the Lord met her need. What a tremendous lesson!

You don't have to experience everything on your own; you can learn from the examples recorded in God's Word. You can learn from how God dealt with this woman through Elijah.

RAISED FROM THE DEAD!

This woman's giving not only affected her, but it also affected her son. By the time he died later in this chapter (1 Kin. 17:17-23), she had been walking by faith and giving to the man of God first every day for quite some time. She had been giving; therefore, she could expect to receive. She had a right to make a demand on him to raise up her son.

This is the first instance in Scripture of anyone being raised from the dead. It hadn't been done prior to this time. There was no precedent for it. Seeing someone raised from the dead today is still unusual.

Once I met a minister from Salt Lake City who had raised eight people from the dead—two of those were in one service! I've personally seen several people raised from the dead, including my own son. Even though it's unusual, we have a precedent for it.

However, Elijah didn't have Scripture like we do today. There had never been a real miracle ministry before him, other than Moses. Most of his miracles were just to get the children of Israel out of Egypt. So, there was no precedent for this, nothing to encourage him. Yet Elijah went in and raised this woman's son from the dead. This was a result of the faith she demonstrated through her giving.

FAITHFUL IN THE LEAST

Faithful giving won't just open a door for you in your finances; it will open a door for you in many other areas of your life and ministry.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. [11] If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon [money], who will commit to your trust the true riches?

LUKE 16:10-11, BRACKETS MINE

Jesus called money the “*least*” area of stewardship. If you can’t trust God in finances, you’re not operating in enough faith to really trust Him in healing, deliverance, and other things either. If you can’t jump ten feet, then you certainly can’t jump thirty. If you can’t do the lesser, you certainly can’t do the greater. Everyone understands this in the natural realm.

If you can’t trust God with your money, how are you ever going to trust Him with your eternal salvation, health, family, church, ministry, or anything else? When you start being faithful in the area of finances, it will open up doors to you in other areas of your life. Faithfulness in finances is the starting place.

DESTINED FOR SUCCESS!

Everyone in the body of Christ is at varying stages of growth, ministry, and God working in their lives. However, the Lord’s thoughts and plans for each of us are “*thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end*” (Jer. 29:11). God hasn’t destined anyone for failure. He never makes a dud, junk, or a mistake. The Lord has destined us for success!

Success with God isn’t the same as worldly success. My friend, Lawson Perdue, began his ministry in a town of 250 people, and had 100 of them coming to their church. Some people may think, *Well, that’s only 100 people in their church.* But that’s 40 percent of the population. If we could get that percent in Colorado Springs, that would be 200,000 people! You need to be careful how you evaluate success. It’s not just dependent on numbers, finances, and other such things.

God wills for every one of us to succeed in whatever area He’s planted us in. There’s a perfect plan, but there’s also our part—some things we need to go and do. We need to be faithful and take those steps. This widow of Zarephath was faithful to do what the man of God told her to do at the word of the Lord. We can’t receive God’s provision if we won’t step out in faith and do what He tells us to do.

Many times we struggle because we aren’t “there,” because we are not doing what the Lord has called us to do. We have a word from God. It’s time we stepped out in faith!

ANDREW'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY:

For additional insights on this important principle, please refer to my teaching entitled, "The Least of These."

Outline

- I. The Word says that Elijah didn't just tell this widow woman "Give me your food"; he gave her a promise, or a word from God, to go with it:

And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. [14] For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

1 KINGS 17:13-14

- A. Elijah gave her the word of God—the same word he had been living under and that had been meeting his need.
 - B. You don't encourage people to give without giving them the Word of God to anchor their faith.
- II. Notice how Elijah said, "*Make me thereof a little cake first*" (1 Kin. 17:13, underline mine).
- A. You need to challenge folks to give God their best, because they want to give what they can afford—what's left over after their needs are taken care of.
 - B. They aren't putting the Lord and His kingdom first (Matt. 6:33).
 - C. I'm not legalistic with this, but when you give God your best, He begins to give you His best.
- III. This widow woman had to give to Elijah first every day until the drought ended.
- A. She didn't give to Elijah once and get three years' supply of oil and meal.
 - B. There was always that tiny little bit, but it never failed!
 - C. There was never so much that she could just coast and say, "Well, I don't have to believe God today."
 - D. Every morning, she faced this choice—make for the man of God first and believe that there will be enough for her and her son, or not.
 - E. She had to exercise her faith every day to obey the word of the Lord.
 - F. Most of us would like to get enough to set two or three years' worth aside, so we can feel safe and secure.
 - G. But the Bible says,

Give us this day our daily bread.

MATTHEW 6:11

- H. This is how the Lord met her need.
 - I. What a tremendous lesson!
 - J. You don't have to experience everything on your own; you can learn from the examples recorded in God's Word.
- IV. This woman's giving not only affected her but also her son who died later in this chapter (1 Kin. 17:17-23).
- A. She had been giving, so she had a right to make a demand on Elijah to raise up her son.
 - B. There was no precedent for this, nothing to encourage Elijah, yet he went in and raised this woman's son from the dead.
 - C. This was a result of the faith she demonstrated through her giving.
- V. Faithful giving won't just open a door for you in your finances; it will open a door for you in many other areas of your life and ministry.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. [11] If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon [money], who will commit to your trust the true riches?

LUKE 16:10-11, BRACKETS MINE

- A. Jesus called money the "least" area of stewardship.
 - B. If you can't trust God in finances, you're not operating in enough faith to really trust Him in healing, deliverance, and other things either.
 - C. If you can't trust God with your money, how are you ever going to trust Him with your eternal salvation, health, family, church, ministry, or anything else?
 - D. Faithfulness in finances is the starting place.
- VI. Everyone in the body of Christ is at varying stages of growth, ministry, and God working in their lives.
- A. However, the Lord's thoughts and plans for each of us are "*thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end*" (Jer. 29:11).
 - B. The Lord has destined us for success!
 - C. Success with God isn't the same as worldly success.
 - D. We need to be careful how you evaluate success.
 - E. It's not just dependent on numbers, finances, and other such things.
- VII. God wills for every one of us to succeed in whatever area He's planted us in.

- A. There's a perfect plan, but there are some things we need to go and do.
- B. We need to be faithful and take those steps, just like the widow of Zarephath.
- C. We can't receive God's provision if we won't step out in faith and do what He tells us to do.
- D. Many times we struggle because we aren't "there."
- E. We have a word from God—it's time we stepped out in faith!

ANDREW'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY:

For additional insights on this important principle, please refer to my teaching entitled "The Least of These."

Teacher's Guide

1. The Word says that Elijah didn't just tell this widow woman "Give me your food"; he gave her a promise, or a word from God, to go with it:

And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. [14] For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

1 KINGS 17:13-14

Elijah gave her the word of God—the same word he had been living under and that had been meeting his need. You don't encourage people to give without giving them the Word of God to anchor their faith.

- 1a. Read 1 Kings 17:13-14. What did Elijah do after he told the widow woman to give him her food?
- A. He sent her away
 - B. He gave her a word from God
 - C. He told her to take her concerns to God
 - D. He offered to do handiwork around the house
 - E. He marveled that she went and did it
- (B. He gave her a word from God)**
- 1b. Elijah only gave her what he had been _____ under himself.
- (Living)**
- 1c. If you don't give people the Word of God to anchor their faith, you shouldn't encourage them to what?
- A. Clap
 - B. Trust you
 - C. Give
 - D. Care
 - E. Stay
- (C. Give)**

2. Notice how Elijah said, “*Make me thereof a little cake first*” (1 Kin. 17:13, underline mine). You need to challenge folks to give God their best, because they want to give what they can afford—what’s left over after their needs are taken care of. They aren’t putting the Lord and His kingdom first (Matt. 6:33). I’m not legalistic with this, but when you give God your best, He begins to give you His best.

2a. *Discussion question:* Why does God give you His best when you give your best?
(Discussion question)

3. This widow woman had to give to Elijah first every day until the drought ended. She didn’t give to Elijah once and get three years’ supply of oil and meal. There was always that tiny little bit, but it never failed! There was never so much that she could just coast and say, “Well, I don’t have to believe God today.” Every morning, she faced this choice—make for the man of God first and believe that there will be enough for her and her son, or not. She had to exercise her faith every day to obey the word of the Lord. Most of us would like to get enough to set two or three years’ worth aside, so we can feel safe and secure. But the Bible says,

Give us this day our daily bread.

MATTHEW 6:11

This is how the Lord met her need. What a tremendous lesson! You don’t have to experience everything on your own; you can learn from the examples recorded in God’s Word.

3a. True or false: This woman gave to Elijah once and received three years’ supply of oil and meal.

(False)

3b. True or false: This woman had to give to Elijah first every day to have enough for herself and her son.

(True)

3c. It was an exercise of her _____.

(Faith)

3d. *Discussion question:* How have examples recorded in God’s Word helped you?

(Discussion question)

4. This woman's giving not only affected her but also her son who died later in this chapter (1 Kin. 17:17-23). She had been giving, so she had a right to make a demand on Elijah to raise up her son. There was no precedent for this, nothing to encourage Elijah, yet he went in and raised this woman's son from the dead. This was a result of the faith she demonstrated through her giving.

4a. This widow woman's son was raised from the dead as a result of what?
(The faith she demonstrated through her giving)

5. Faithful giving won't just open a door for you in your finances; it will open a door for you in many other areas of your life and ministry.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. [11] If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon [money], who will commit to your trust the true riches?

LUKE 16:10-11, BRACKETS MINE

Jesus called money the "least" area of stewardship. If you can't trust God in finances, you're not operating in enough faith to really trust Him in healing, deliverance, and other things either. If you can't trust God with your money, how are you ever going to trust Him with your eternal salvation, health, family, church, ministry, or anything else? Faithfulness in finances is the starting place.

5a. Read Luke 16:10-11. What is the least area of stewardship?

- A. Money
- B. Bible reading
- C. Cleanliness
- D. Prayer
- E. Church attendance

(A. Money)

5b. If you can't trust God with your money, how are you ever going to trust Him with your eternal salvation, health, family, church, ministry, or anything else?

(You can't)

5c. Faithfulness in finances is the _____ place.

(Starting)

6. Everyone in the body of Christ is at varying stages of growth, ministry, and God working in their lives. However, the Lord's thoughts and plans for each of us are "*thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end*" (Jer. 29:11). The Lord has destined us for success! Success with God isn't the same as worldly success. We need to be careful how you evaluate success. It's not just dependent on numbers, finances, and other such things.

6a. Read Jeremiah 29:11. What has God destined you for?

(Success)

6b. *Discussion question:* How do you evaluate success?

(Discussion question)

7. God wills for every one of us to succeed in whatever area He's planted us in. There's a perfect plan, but there are some things we need to go and do. We need to be faithful and take those steps, just like the widow of Zarephath. We can't receive God's provision if we won't step out in faith and do what He tells us to do. Many times we struggle because we aren't "there." We have a word from God—it's time we stepped out in faith!

7a. True or false: God wills for every one of us to succeed in whatever area He's planted us in.

(True)

7b. You have a word from God, so it's time to step out in what?

- A. Pride
- B. Power
- C. Giving
- D. Faith
- E. Caution

(D. Faith)

Discipleship Questions

1. Read 1 Kings 17:13-14. What did Elijah do after he told the widow woman to give him her food?
 - A. He sent her away
 - B. He gave her a word from God
 - C. He told her to take her concerns to God
 - D. He offered to do handiwork around the house
 - E. He marveled that she went and did it
2. Elijah only gave her what he had been _____ under himself.
3. If you don't give people the Word of God to anchor their faith, you shouldn't encourage them to what?
 - A. Clap
 - B. Trust you
 - C. Give
 - D. Care
 - E. Stay
4. *Discussion question:* Why does God give you His best when you give your best?
5. True or false: This woman gave to Elijah once and received three years' supply of oil and meal.
6. True or false: This woman had to give to Elijah first every day to have enough for herself and her son.

7. It was an exercise of her _____.

8. *Discussion question:* How have examples recorded in God's Word helped you?

9. This widow woman's son was raised from the dead as a result of what?

10. Read Luke 16:10-11. What is the least area of stewardship?
 - A. Money
 - B. Bible reading
 - C. Cleanliness
 - D. Prayer
 - E. Church attendance

11. If you can't trust God with your money, how are you ever going to trust Him with your eternal salvation, health, family, church, ministry, or anything else?

12. Faithfulness in finances is the _____ place.

13. Read Jeremiah 29:11. What has God destined you for?

14. *Discussion question:* How do you evaluate success?

15. True or false: God wills for every one of us to succeed in whatever area He's planted us in.

16. You have a word from God, so it's time to step out in what?

- A. Pride
- B. Power
- C. Giving
- D. Faith
- E. Caution

Answer Key

1. B. He gave her a word from God
2. Living
3. C. Give
4. *Discussion question*
5. False
6. True
7. Faith
8. *Discussion question*
9. The faith she demonstrated through her giving
10. A. Money
11. You can't
12. Starting
13. Success
14. *Discussion question*
15. True
16. D. Faith

Scriptures

1 KINGS 17:13-15

And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. [14] For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. [15] And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

MATTHEW 6:33

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

MATTHEW 6:11

Give us this day our daily bread.

1 KINGS 17:17-23

And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. [18] And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son? [19] And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. [20] And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? [21] And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. [22] And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. [23] And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.

LUKE 16:10-11

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. [11] If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

JEREMIAH 29:11

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Where the Fruit Is

Every year I take a team of our Bible college students with me to minister over in the U.K. Last year, a woman with multiple sclerosis came to the meetings in her wheelchair. She had only been born again for two months but had been listening to my tapes. She told me, “I came to be healed. I’m getting out of this wheelchair before the week is over!”

During my message, I referred to her and said, “We’re agreeing with you and believing.” As soon as I finished preaching, the students were down there ministering to this woman. They prayed for her, and she got out of that wheelchair. Before the week was over, she was walking up and down the stairs and pushing her wheelchair. She got baptized and healed. It was awesome!

Every day on the bus, the students would share what happened, and how God had asked them to do what they felt inadequate to do. Some didn’t feel adequate to lead someone to the Lord so they would pray, “O God, don’t let anyone come up to me in the prayer line who needs salvation. Let me pray for something else!”

Others felt inadequate to minister the baptism in the Holy Spirit or healing. Whatever they felt inadequate to do—was exactly the thing they had to do—every time without exception! If they would say, “I don’t want to pray for someone to be healed so just let it be a headache, nothing big,” then someone blind would come up to them. Then they would lay hands on them, and their blind eyes would open!

The reason why these students saw God do things they had never seen Him do before was because they put themselves in a position where they needed the Lord to do something supernatural. The truth is that most of us never stretch ourselves out in faith. Therefore, we don’t need God to do anything.

Most of us don’t ever go out and lay hands on somebody because we’re afraid it won’t work. Guess what? Nothing will happen! If you don’t lay hands on them, they won’t be healed. However, you can put yourself in a position where you’re standing up front, and you’re the one who is supposed to be ministering. People will come and make a demand on you. Just close your eyes and before you know it, God will do a miracle in spite of you. Most of us have never allowed ourselves to get in a position where we need a supernatural manifestation of the power of God. We play it too safe.

The fruit is out on the limb, but we're all hugging the trunk. We need to get out on the limb and bob up and down in the breeze a little bit. Get out there where it feels a little insecure. That's where the fruit is—out on a limb! You must take a step of faith. Until you get to where you're doing something beyond your ability, there's no reason for God to show up. There's no reason for a miracle.

God will always cause you to do the thing that seems impossible. If it's possible, it's not God. The Lord will lead you to do something strange, uncomfortable, and different. He will tell you to take a widow woman's last little bit of food, knowing that it's the only way she'll ever make it. Most of us would rather do it some other way, but this is how to prosper (Luke 6:38).

"MY LAST QUARTER"

When I first started ministering in Seagoville, Texas, a guy came through town asking for a handout. He needed something to eat and a place to sleep. It was pitiful. This fellow had left his wife and kids back in Michigan while he came down to Texas to look for work.

He had been there two months, spent all his money, and was facing foreclosure on his home. He was down to a quarter, which he was saving to call his wife if something came up. I could tell this guy was a hard worker, but he was discouraged and was having trouble finding a job.

He came by our church while my friend and I were there. I was preparing to shell out the money for a motel room and something to eat, when my friend asked him, "How much do you have?"

He replied, "I have one quarter left so I can make a phone call."

"Give it to me," my friend said, "We're going to agree with you and pray and believe God for a miracle."

When he did that, I became really embarrassed, thinking, *He's going to take this guy's last little bit of money!* I felt so bad about it, because my friend didn't give him anything. This guy slept outside that night on the street. We didn't give him any food, but we took his quarter as an offering. That didn't satisfy me. I felt terrible, and struggled with this all night long.

However, first thing in the morning, this guy was knocking on our door. A fellow from one of the places he had put in a job application a month or two earlier, came up to him on the street

that night and exclaimed, “I’ve finally found you! I’m going to make you the foreman of my ranch. You’ll have good pay and a three-bedroom home. I’ll even send for your family and bring them here.” By the end of the morning, this guy had a job, a new home, a big salary, and his family on the way. Praise God!

I would have given him a meal and one night’s lodging, thinking I was doing something awesome for him. But my friend took this guy’s last quarter and gave him a brand-new job, a place to live, and brought his family together. God is awesome!

GODLY CONFIDENCE

We have a word from God, but we’ve been timid and shy about it. None of these things would have happened if Elijah had been bashful with what God had spoken to him. He went right to the top—to the king—and declared, “According to my word.” Most of us would immediately say, “Well, you arrogant thing!” But you need to have that kind of attitude—not arrogance, but confidence, knowing what God has done in your life.

There’s a fine line between godly confidence and arrogance. However, the greatest step of humility is to actually stand up and declare to people, “I’m your answer. I’m the one. I have a word from God for you!” It takes a lot of humility to say something like that. It takes a lot of humility to really declare what the Lord has put in your heart and get beyond the fear of man and thinking, *What will they think of me? What are they going to say?*

God has probably spoken some things to you that you haven’t seen manifest yet, and you’re afraid to speak it. You’re afraid to act on it. You’re afraid to do the things that God has put in your heart because of what other people will say. If Elijah had been like that, none of these things would have ever taken place.

Some people could misuse what I’m sharing. But I believe that you are someone who is seeking first God’s kingdom. You don’t minister to others for selfish reasons or to promote yourself. You genuinely love God and want to see other people blessed. Therefore, it’s time you recognized that you have a word from God. That word is what gives you authority and power—not the recognition of people, your theological training, etc.

Elijah didn’t come and introduce himself. He didn’t tell who he was, or show the miracles he had done before to give verification and authority to what he said. He just spoke the word of God

and let it have its work. That's what we're all called to do. God is the one who confirms the Word. He's the one who brings it to pass. Our responsibility is to speak it forth in faith. Many of us just haven't been bold in speaking the Word. We need to believe the word that God has given us!

"PREACH YOUR WORD!"

While in Kansas City, I went over to someone's house for a meal. There may have been a dozen people sitting at the table, but this one woman never said a word. Throughout the entire time, I tried to be polite and engage her in conversation but she wouldn't talk. She just sat there. So, finally, I singled her out in front of everyone and asked, "Who are you?"

This woman was on a mission from God! She turned toward me, stated her name, and said, "A year ago, I was in a mental institution—condemned to be there for life. I was totally out of my mind and had lost it. Then someone gave me your message entitled *Grace and Faith*. I listened to that tape at least a hundred times, and it's totally revolutionized my life. I'm transformed, and I'm completely free today!"

Then she got right up in my face and declared, "You have a revelation of grace that would set every person in a mental institution free if they could hear it. You need to be preaching grace!" She just jumped all over my case! God spoke to me through her. All of a sudden, I realized that I hadn't fully esteemed and valued what God had given me to the degree that I should have. Although I had been preaching grace, I saw that this woman believed the word I was preaching even more than I did—and I got convicted!

You need to go back and reevaluate some things. God has done some awesome things in your life. He's changed you from the inside out. You need to believe the Word of God and do something with it. You have a message that would change millions of people. Appreciate what you have. Don't let the devil talk you out of it. Stand on, act on, and confidently proclaim the Word of God in your heart. Go out on the limb—that's where the fruit is!

Outline

- I. The truth is that most of us never stretch ourselves out in faith; therefore, we don't need God to do anything.
 - A. We don't ever go out and lay hands on somebody to be healed, because we're afraid it won't work, but if we don't lay hands on them, nothing will happen for sure!
 - B. Most of us have never allowed ourselves to get in a position where we need a supernatural manifestation of the power of God—we play it too safe.
 - C. The fruit is out on the limb, but we're all hugging the trunk.
 - D. We need to get out there where it feels a little insecure.
 - E. Until we get to where we're doing something beyond our ability, there's no reason for God to show up and do a miracle.
 - F. God will always cause us to do the thing that seems impossible.
 - G. The Lord will lead us to do something strange, uncomfortable, and different.

- II. We have a word from God, but we've been timid and shy about it.
 - A. We need to have the same kind of attitude as Elijah—not arrogance, but confidence, knowing what God has done in our lives.
 - B. There's a fine line between godly confidence and arrogance.
 - C. The greatest step of humility is to actually get beyond the fear of man and declare to people, "I'm your answer. I have a word from God for you!"

- III. Some people could misuse what I'm sharing, but I believe that you are someone who is seeking first God's kingdom.
 - A. You don't minister to others for selfish reasons or to promote yourself.
 - B. You genuinely love God and want to see other people blessed.
 - C. The word God has given is what gives you authority and power—not the recognition of people, your theological training, etc.
 - D. Elijah just spoke the word of God and let it have its work—that's what you're called to do.
 - E. God is the one who brings it to pass.

- IV. There was one time that this woman got right up in my face and declared, "You have a revelation of grace that would set every person in a mental institution free if they could hear it. You need to be preaching grace!"

- A. God spoke to me through her.
 - B. I realized that I hadn't fully esteemed and valued what God had given me to the degree that I should have.
 - C. Although I had been preaching grace, I saw that this woman believed the word I was preaching even more than I did—and I got convicted!
- V. You need to go back and reevaluate some things.
- A. You need to believe the Word of God and do something with it.
 - B. You have a message that would change millions of people—appreciate what you have.
 - C. Don't let the devil talk you out of it.
 - D. Stand on, act on, and confidently proclaim the Word of God in your heart.
 - E. Go out on the limb—that's where the fruit is!

Teacher's Guide

1. The truth is that most of us never stretch ourselves out in faith; therefore, we don't need God to do anything. We don't ever go out and lay hands on somebody to be healed, because we're afraid it won't work, but if we don't lay hands on them, nothing will happen for sure! Most of us have never allowed ourselves to get in a position where we need a supernatural manifestation of the power of God—we play it too safe. The fruit is out on the limb, but we're all hugging the trunk. We need to get out there where it feels a little insecure. Until we get to where we're doing something beyond our ability, there's no reason for God to show up and do a miracle. God will always cause us to do the thing that seems impossible. The Lord will lead us to do something strange, uncomfortable, and different.

1a. If you don't ever stretch yourself out in faith, you don't need God to do _____.

(Anything)

1b. If you don't go lay hands on somebody to be healed, what will happen for sure?

A. They'll be healed

B. God's will

C. A miracle

D. All of the above

E. None of the above

(E. None of the above)

1c. True or false: Until we get to where you're doing something beyond our ability, there's no reason for God to show up and do a miracle.

(True)

2. We have a word from God, but we've been timid and shy about it. We need to have the same kind of attitude as Elijah—not arrogance, but confidence, knowing what God has done in our lives. There's a fine line between godly confidence and arrogance. The greatest step of humility is to actually get beyond the fear of man and declare to people, "I'm your answer. I have a word from God for you!"

2a. *Discussion question:* What happened in your life when you took a step of confidence and humility?

(Discussion question)

3. Some people could misuse what I'm sharing, but I believe that you are someone who is seeking first God's kingdom. You don't minister to others for selfish reasons or to promote yourself. You genuinely love God and want to see other people blessed. The word God has given is what gives you authority and power—not the recognition of people, your theological training, etc. Elijah just spoke the word of God and let it have its work—that's what you're called to do. God is the one who brings it to pass.

3a. What gives you authority and power?

- A. Your theological training
- B. The word God has given
- C. The recognition of people
- D. Your status
- E. The bank balance

(B. The word God has given)

3b. Who is the one who brings the spoken word to pass?

- A. Elijah
- B. You
- C. Others
- D. God
- E. The widow woman

(D. God)

4. There was one time that this woman got right up in my face and declared, "You have a revelation of grace that would set every person in a mental institution free if they could hear it. You need to be preaching grace!" God spoke to me through her. I realized that I hadn't fully esteemed and valued what God had given me to the degree that I should have. Although I had been preaching grace, I saw that this woman believed the word I was preaching even more than I did—and I got convicted!

4a. Andrew got convicted that he hadn't fully what?

(Esteemed and valued what God had given him)

4b. *Discussion question:* What happened when you esteemed and valued what God has given you?

(Discussion question)

5. You need to go back and reevaluate some things. You need to believe the Word of God and do something with it. You have a message that would change millions of people—appreciate what you have. Don't let the devil talk you out of it. Stand on, act on, and confidently proclaim the Word of God in your heart. Go out on the limb—that's where the fruit is!

5a. Who needs to believe the Word of God and do something with it?

(You)

5b. You have a message that would change _____ of people.

(Millions)

5c. Who's going to try to talk you out of it?

A. Your parents

B. The devil

C. An angel

D. A friend

E. Your boss

(B. The devil)

5d. True or false: You have to go out on the limb if you want the fruit.

(True)

Discipleship Questions

1. If you don't ever stretch yourself out in faith, you don't need God to do _____.

2. If you don't go lay hands on somebody to be healed, what will happen for sure?
 - A. They'll be healed
 - B. God's will
 - C. A miracle
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

3. True or false: Until we get to where you're doing something beyond our ability, there's no reason for God to show up and do a miracle.

4. *Discussion question:* What happened in your life when you took a step of confidence and humility?

5. What gives you authority and power?
 - A. Your theological training
 - B. The word God has given
 - C. The recognition of people
 - D. Your status
 - E. The bank balance

6. Who is the one who brings the spoken word to pass?
 - A. Elijah
 - B. You
 - C. Others
 - D. God
 - E. The widow woman

7. Andrew got convicted that he hadn't fully what?

8. *Discussion question:* What happened when you esteemed and valued what God has given you?

9. Who needs to believe the Word of God and do something with it?

10. You have a message that would change _____ of people.

11. Who's going to try to talk you out of it?
 - A. Your parents
 - B. The devil
 - C. An angel
 - D. A friend
 - E. Your boss

12. True or false: You have to go out on the limb if you want the fruit.

Answer Key

1. Anything
2. E. None of the above
3. True
4. *Discussion question*
5. B. The word God has given
6. D. God
7. Esteemed and valued what God had given him
8. *Discussion question*
9. You
10. Millions
11. B. The devil
12. True

Scriptures

LUKE 6:38

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Listen to God

And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.

1 KINGS 18:1

This all began when Elijah heard the voice of God. The Lord said to tell King Ahab there would be a drought (1 Kin. 17:1). Then Elijah heard the word of the Lord to go to the Brook Cherith (1 Kin. 17:2-4). Then God told him to go to a widow in Zarephath (1 Kin. 17:8-9). All of this goes back to Elijah hearing and obeying God's voice.

Elijah didn't do anything for three years until the word of the Lord came to him. It's amazing how impatient we can become when we don't hear anything new from God. Many times, we just go out and do things on our own. Like Abraham, we create Ishmaels (Gen. 16). The Lord might have given us a promise and it doesn't seem like it's coming to pass, so we try to help Him out in the flesh. Elijah didn't do that. He chose to stay in tune with God. He lived his life at the word of the Lord.

PAY ATTENTION

Jesus said *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me"* (John 10:27) and *"A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers"* (John 10:5). However, that's not the experience of many Christians. In fact, it's exactly the opposite. Many Christians complain about not being able to hear the voice of God, but then they'll turn around in the next breath and say, "The devil told me I'm never going to hear God's voice. Satan says this and Satan says that."

They hear the devil with no problem at all, but they have trouble hearing God. Yet the Word says, "My sheep hear My voice and a stranger they will not follow!" We are simply living below our privileges. We need to tune in and start listening to God's voice!

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

JOHN 16:13

While reading this verse several years ago, I started wondering, *What would it be like if the Lord actually showed us things to come? How would knowing what was going to happen impact the wisdom you could have, financial investments, and others things like this?* As I meditated on this, I decided to start focusing on it and listening. Most of the time, we don't hear what God is saying to us because we aren't inclining our ears and paying attention.

THINGS TO COME

I began listening for the Lord to speak to me of things to come. At the time, we had our horses in a little mountain community called Green Mountain Falls. A friend of ours allowed me to keep my horses on his property, free of charge. He loved having them there. Every time we saw him, he would say, "It's so wonderful having your horses. I don't have to mow anymore. They're great!"

Then the Lord spoke to me and said, "You're going to lose that place for your horses soon. You need to find another one." At first I thought, *This is weird! This guy loves having our horses there. He thanks me every time I see him.* But I recognized the voice of the Lord, and after a week or so, I started looking for another place for them. I didn't have any reason to do so other than the prompting of God in my heart. I was actually going to have to pay some money at this other place, whereas this guy was letting me use his pasture for free.

I found another place for my horses and planned to move them on Wednesday. I hadn't said anything about this to my friend. But he came up to me on Sunday and declared, "I can't stand it one minute longer! Those horses have to be off my property by Tuesday!" This was the first time he had ever given me any indication that he wasn't pleased. That was Sunday, and Tuesday they had to be gone.

I thought, *God was really speaking to me. He told me of things to come!* So, instead of being upset or surprised, I was actually blessed. The Holy Spirit had shown me things to come. So, I started praying about some other things, and it opened up a number of doors for the ministry. We don't draw on the word of the Lord enough! It's available, but we have to appropriate it.

Elijah didn't do anything until he heard a word from God. Many of the problems we get into today are totally self-created. We blame the devil, saying, "Satan did this and that." Of course, the Enemy takes advantage of everything we give him. He may be the one taking shots at us, but we're the ones giving him all the ammunition. We can save ourselves a lot of problems by just getting to the place where we hear the voice of the Lord.

“SHOW YOURSELF TO AHAB”

So, there Elijah was, three years later. He didn't do anything until the word of the Lord came to him and said, “Go show yourself to Ahab.” So, that's what he did.

And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria. [3] And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: [4] For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.) [5] And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.

1 KINGS 18:2-5

This famine was so severe that it looked like they were going to start losing their livestock.

So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself. [7] And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah? [8] And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.

1 KINGS 18:6-8

“I'M THE ONLY ONE”

And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? [10] As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. [11] And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. [12] And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth. [13] Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?

1 KINGS 18:9-13

Notice what Obadiah told Elijah. Most people think Elijah was sincere when he said a few days later, “But, Lord, I’m the only one left!” (1 Kin. 19:10). But he wasn’t sincere. Obadiah told him right here that he had hid and fed a hundred of the Lord’s ministers. This will be an important factor later.

And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here: and he shall slay me. [15] And Elijah said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him today. [16] So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

1 KINGS 18:14-16

SATAN TRIES TO INTIMIDATE

And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

1 KINGS 18:17

Notice Elijah’s response to Ahab’s accusation:

And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

1 KINGS 18:18

Elijah had a word from God. He came back to tell Ahab that the Lord was going to send rain. And the very first thing Ahab said was, “Are you the one who’s troubling Israel?” He tried to make Elijah responsible for all of his problems.

Satan is an intimidator. He’s an accuser who, sooner or later, will twist things around so that you’re the problem. He will bring thoughts like: *These people would have been better off if you had never been here.* He’ll try to tell you all kinds of things. We see this big time in our society today.

In the last days, people will call evil “good,” and good “evil” (Is. 5:20). When you stand up today and say that homosexuality is wrong—without being mad at anyone or condemning anyone, and being motivated by a genuine desire to see people set free by the truth (John 8:32)—it will turn out that you’re the “bigot,” the one who’s “prejudiced” and “closed-minded.”

Have you ever noticed that the only people who can be openly criticized in our society today are Christians? We're the only ones whose case it's politically correct to get on. You can't criticize any other group. You have to call them weight-challenged, vertically-challenged, etc., but you can't offend anyone. However, you can call Christians anything you want.

It's amazing how the devil has turned this thing around. Because of his intimidation, most Christians are afraid to speak the truth. They're afraid to act on the word God has given them.

This was exactly what Ahab was trying to do to the prophet. But Elijah answered, "I haven't troubled Israel. It's you and your house who have brought all this upon yourselves!"

REFUSE TO RECEIVE IT!

The same thing happened with Jesus. When He came down off the Mount of Transfiguration, they brought a demonized boy to Him. The father said, "If you can do anything, please have mercy on us" (Mark 9:22). The way he said it basically put the ball entirely in Jesus' court. But Jesus wouldn't accept this, and neither should we. Jesus immediately turned around and said.

If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

MARK 9:23

The Lord wasn't going to accept responsibility that wasn't His. He knew this boy's father could believe God, so He turned it back onto him saying, "It's you. You have to believe! If you can believe, this will happen."

The devil will constantly try to put all of the burden and responsibility on you. Elijah just refused to receive it. He boldly declared, "It's not my fault all this happened—it's yours! You're the one who brought this whole thing on yourself." He wasn't about to be intimidated by the devil. And neither should you!

Outline

- I. Elijah didn't do anything for three years until the word of the Lord came to him.
 - A. It's amazing how impatient we can become when we don't hear anything new from God.
 - B. Many times, we just go out and do things on our own.
 - C. The Lord might have given us a promise and it doesn't seem like it's coming to pass, so we try to help Him out in the flesh.
 - D. Elijah didn't do that—he chose to stay in tune with God and lived his life at the word of the Lord.

- II. Jesus said “*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me*” (John 10:27) and “*A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers*” (John 10:5).
 - A. This is not the experience of many Christians.
 - B. They complain about not being able to hear the voice of God, but then they'll turn around in the next breath and say, “The devil told me I'm never going to hear God's voice. Satan says this and Satan says that.”
 - C. We need to tune in and start listening to God's voice!
 - D. Most of the time, we don't hear what God is saying to us because we aren't inclining our ears and paying attention.

- III. We don't draw on the word of the Lord enough—it's available, but we have to appropriate it!
 - A. Elijah didn't do anything until he heard a word from God.
 - B. Many of the problems we get into today are totally self-created.
 - C. We blame the devil, and of course, the Enemy takes advantage of everything we give him, but we can save ourselves a lot of problems by just getting to the place where we hear the voice of the Lord.

- IV. When the word of the Lord came to Elijah and said “Go show yourself to Ahab,” that's what he did.

And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria. [3] And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: [4] For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.) [5] And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.

1 KINGS 18:2-5

- A. This famine had been so severe that it looked like they were going to start losing their livestock.

And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

1 KINGS 18:17

- B. Ahab tried to make Elijah responsible for all of his problems, but notice Elijah's response:

And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

1 KINGS 18:18

- C. Satan is an intimidator, an accuser who, sooner or later, will twist things around so that you're the problem.
- D. You can see this big time in society today.
- E. Because of his intimidation, most Christians are afraid to speak the truth and act on the word God has given them.
- F. This was exactly what Ahab was trying to do to the prophet, but Elijah answered, "I haven't troubled Israel. It's you and your house who have brought all this upon yourselves!"
- i. The same thing happened with Jesus when they brought a demonized boy to Him.
 - ii. The father said put the ball entirely in Jesus' court (Mark 9:22).
 - iii. But the Lord wasn't going to accept responsibility that wasn't His.
 - iv. He knew this boy's father could believe God, so He turned it back onto him (Mark 9:23).
- G. The devil will constantly try to put all of the burden and responsibility on you.
- H. Elijah just refused to receive it.
- I. He wasn't about to be intimidated by the devil, and neither should you!

Teacher's Guide

1. Elijah didn't do anything for three years until the word of the Lord came to him. It's amazing how impatient we can become when we don't hear anything new from God. Many times, we just go out and do things on our own. The Lord might have given us a promise and it doesn't seem like it's coming to pass, so we try to help Him out in the flesh. Elijah didn't do that—he chose to stay in tune with God and lived his life at the word of the Lord.

1a. What happens when people don't hear anything new from God?

- A. They can become impatient
- B. They stir and stir but ultimately do nothing
- C. They can go out and do things on their own
- D. A. and B.
- E. A. and C.

(E. A. and C.)

1b. What did Elijah do?

(He chose to stay in tune with God and lived his life at the word of the Lord)

2. Jesus said “*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me*” (John 10:27) and “*A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers*” (John 10:5). This is not the experience of many Christians. They complain about not being able to hear the voice of God, but then they'll turn around in the next breath and say, “The devil told me I'm never going to hear God's voice. Satan says this and Satan says that.” We need to tune in and start listening to God's voice! Most of the time, we don't hear what God is saying to us because we aren't inclining our ears and paying attention.

2a. Read John 10:27 and 5. As a Christian, you should be able to _____ God's voice.

(Hear)

2b. What do you need to do to hear God's voice?

(Incline your ear and pay attention)

2c. *Discussion question:* When God has spoken to you, how did you know it was Him?

(Discussion question)

3. We don't draw on the word of the Lord enough—it's available, but we have to appropriate it! Elijah didn't do anything until he heard a word from God. Many of the problems we get into today are totally self-created. We blame the devil, and of course, the Enemy takes advantage of everything we give him, but we can save ourselves a lot of problems by just getting to the place where we hear the voice of the Lord.

3a. *Discussion question:* What do you do when you get a word from the Lord?

(Discussion question)

3b. True or false: Everything that happens to you is the devil's fault.

(False)

4. When the word of the Lord came to Elijah and said “Go show yourself to Ahab,” that’s what he did.

And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria. [3] And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: [4] For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.) [5] And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.

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Ahab tried to make Elijah responsible for all of his problems, but notice Elijah’s response:

And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

1 KINGS 18:18

Satan is an intimidator, an accuser who, sooner or later, will twist things around so that you’re the problem. You can see this big time in society today. Because of his intimidation, most Christians are afraid to speak the truth and act on the word God has given them. This was exactly what Ahab was trying to do to the prophet, but Elijah answered, “I haven’t troubled Israel. It’s you and your house who have brought all this upon yourselves!” The same thing happened with Jesus when they brought a demonized boy to Him. The father said put the ball entirely in His court (Mark 9:22). But the Lord wasn’t going to accept responsibility that wasn’t His. He knew this boy’s father could believe God, so He turned it back onto him (Mark 9:23). The devil will constantly try to put all of the burden and responsibility on you. Elijah just refused to receive it. He wasn’t about to be intimidated by the devil, and neither should you!

- 4a. Elijah obeyed the word of the Lord, but Ahab still tried to make him _____ for his problems.
(Responsible)

- 4b. *Discussion question:* How would you respond in this situation?
(Discussion question)
- 4c. Who tries to intimidate and accuse you?
(The devil)
- 4d. Read Mark 9:22-23. What did Jesus do when the father wanted to make Jesus responsible for healing his demonized son?
- A. Jesus refused to heal his son
 - B. Jesus accepted the responsibility
 - C. Jesus put the responsibility back onto him
 - D. Jesus asked God if it was His will to heal him
 - E. Jesus asked him for an offering
- (C. Jesus put the responsibility back onto him)**
- 4e. *Discussion question:* What is your plan to not be intimidated by the devil?
(Discussion question)

Discipleship Questions

1. What happens when people don't hear anything new from God?
 - A. They can become impatient
 - B. They stir and stir but ultimately do nothing
 - C. They can go out and do things on their own
 - D. A. and B.
 - E. A. and C.

2. What did Elijah do?

3. Read John 10:27 and 5. As a Christian, you should be able to _____ God's voice.

4. What do you need to do to hear God's voice?

5. *Discussion question:* When God has spoken to you, how did you know it was Him?

6. *Discussion question:* What do you do when you get a word from the Lord?

7. True or false: Everything that happens to you is the devil's fault.

8. Elijah obeyed the word of the Lord, but Ahab still tried to make him _____ for his problems.

9. *Discussion question:* How would you respond in this situation?

10. Who tries to intimidate and accuse you?

11. Read Mark 9:22-23. What did Jesus do when the father wanted to make Jesus responsible for healing his demonized son?
 - A. Jesus refused to heal his son
 - B. Jesus accepted the responsibility
 - C. Jesus put the responsibility back onto him
 - D. Jesus asked God if it was His will to heal him
 - E. Jesus asked him for an offering

12. *Discussion question:* What is your plan to not be intimidated by the devil?

Answer Key

1. E. A. and C.
2. He chose to stay in tune with God and lived his life at the word of the Lord
3. Hear
4. Incline your ear and pay attention
5. *Discussion question*
6. *Discussion question*
7. False
8. Responsible
9. *Discussion question*
10. The devil
11. C. Jesus put the responsibility back onto him
12. *Discussion question*

Scriptures

1 KINGS 18:1-18

And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. [2] And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria. [3] And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly: [4] For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.) [5] And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts. [6] So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself. [7] And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah? [8] And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. [9] And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? [10] As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. [11] And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. [12] And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the Lord shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth. [13] Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord, how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? [14] And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here: and he shall slay me. [15] And Elijah said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to day. [16] So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah. [17] And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? [18] And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.

1 KINGS 17:1-4

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. [2] And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [3] Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. [4] And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

1 KINGS 17:8-9

And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [9] Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

JOHN 10:27

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

JOHN 10:5

And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

JOHN 16:13

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

1 KINGS 19:10

And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

ISAIAH 5:20

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

JOHN 8:32

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

MARK 9:22-23

And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. [23] Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

Boldly Speak His Word

Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. [20] So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

1 KINGS 18:19-20

Elijah just showed up on the scene, and the word from God put him in control. At first, nobody knew who he was. The Bible doesn't record how Ahab initially responded. But by this time—three drought-filled years later—Elijah had the king's attention. Since Elijah was bold enough to speak the word the Lord had given him—even when nothing at the time was happening—it gave him credibility when things came to pass.

Some people really got into that Y2K computer thing. They were literally prophesying the beginning of the Tribulation and the end of civilization as we know it. In the fall of 1999, I sent a letter to my mailing list, stating, "Prophecy is not my thing, but I don't believe all this Y2K stuff is credible." Then I listed my points and said, "Remember *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988*, *The Jupiter Effect*, and all these other things? None of them came to anything. Neither will Y2K!" People are always "prophesying" doom and gloom, but I just don't buy into it. So, I decided to stick my neck out and go on record before it happened. Although I received some criticism, most of the initial response was positive. However, after Y2K passed and nothing happened, I gained a lot of credibility with many people who had previously written me off.

That's exactly what Elijah did right here. Due to his boldness to proclaim the Word of God, the king had sought him in every nation on the face of the earth (1 Kin. 18:10).

If you stick around long enough, you'll see the Word of God put you in a position of authority every single time. However, you must be truly speaking God's Word—not just your own doctrines and social issues. Sooner or later, the Word of God will *always* exalt you.

MIX WITH FAITH

God doesn't actually exalt ministers—He exalts His Word. It's the Word of God He's after. That's what will truly change people. We put so much emphasis on our actions and charisma, but if we look at the people God has used throughout history, many of them had nothing going for them. All they had was the Word of the Lord and genuine faith in it.

Speaking specifically of the Jews who had rejected the Gospel, Hebrews 4:2 says,

The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

You need to mix the Word you've heard with faith. Then—once you really believe the word He's given you—it will put you over. Speak the word God has put in your mouth, and it'll give you authority in the lives of people.

Jonathan Edwards sparked the Great Awakening in the United States. An extreme introvert, this guy could barely see. He wore big old Coke-bottle type glasses. Edwards wrote out his messages in large letters. To deliver them, all he would do was stand up, hold the paper in front of his face, read the message, and every once in a while, point. That's all he did. Because of the faith he had in the word God had given him to preach, Edwards spoke with power and authority and basically led the struggling colonies to a great revival.

PROPHETS SPEAK TO KINGS

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.

1 PETER 4:11

Elijah was bold. He confidently spoke the word the Lord had given him, and here was the king, coming his way. Elijah told Ahab, "Call all the prophets of Baal and the groves together. Assemble the whole nation. Meet me at Mount Carmel!"

And the king, bowing to the man of God, answered, "Yes, sir. Right away!"

The word of the Lord in Elijah's mouth had been proven. It came to pass. The king saw the power of the word from God. Therefore, it put Elijah in the driver's seat. A prophet told the king what to do—and he did it. That's the way it ought to be.

The officials in your town ought to go to the leaders of the body of Christ there and ask, "What would you like done?" We're the ones with the Word of God! There was a time in the United States when it was like that. You couldn't schedule a sports event on a Sunday, a Wednesday night, or at any other "church time." Why? The church commanded an authority in people's lives. The breakdown started in the pulpit. We've become apologetic and substituted other things. We need to be authoritative with the Word of God. I'm not talking about authority and boldness in yourself, but in believing the word God has given you.

You ought to be going up to some government officials and saying, "What you're doing is wrong. This is wrong. Change! Repent!" You don't have to condemn them. You can do it in love, but be bold and speak the Word of God. It's not the Word that's changed; it's the people who represent the Word who have changed!

MAKE A DECISION!

And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

1 KINGS 18:21

As ministers, we're supposed to challenge people to make a decision. But many times, we're afraid to do this because they might make a wrong choice and it'll work against us. People may leave, but we must bring them to a place of commitment. These people didn't answer Elijah one word!

YOU CUT YOURSELF OFF

Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

1 KINGS 18:22

Elijah knew better than that. Remember, he'd just been told that there were still a hundred prophets being hid out in caves (1 Kin. 18:13). Although this was a lie, it ought to encourage you and me. God used Elijah to call down fire from heaven—and he was in deception, arrogance, and pride. He thought he was the only one left serving God, but the Lord still used him.

You don't have to be perfect for God to use you. Elijah had a word from God, was faithful to that word and acted on it—but he had some problems. This doesn't mean it's okay to have problems. These same issues caused him to crash and burn in 1 Kings 19. Elijah really cut short his ministry. He didn't even fulfill a third of what God wanted him to do. The Lord had much more for Elijah than what he accomplished.

Even though these wrong attitudes and mistakes in our lives are deadly and we need to deal with them, the Lord will still use us. It's not God who rejects us; we destroy ourselves.

They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

JONAH 2:8

We cut ourselves off—not God! When we observe lying vanities, we open ourselves up to the devil.

DOCTRINE OR PROOF?

Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: [24] And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

1 KINGS 18:23-24

In other words, Elijah called for a test, saying, “Let's see who the real God is!” This is so simple. We're the ones who have the power, reality, and anointing of the Lord. We're the ones who can lay hands on the sick and they will recover. However, most ministers are preaching words but not manifesting the supernatural evidence of God with signs and wonders following. If we would just operate in the full Gospel—with supernatural attestation to God's Word—and lay hands on people and see people raised from the dead, it would stop a lot of mouths. We would silence many people if we just started demonstrating things.

I've actually done this before. I've told people, "All right! You say your god is true. I say my God is true. Let's try it! Let's see who can do what!" And we just put them to a test. It works!

Those people don't have any power. I remember when a Jehovah's Witness came to our door and was spilling all of their doctrine on me. I told him, "I know that God is real. I know the God I'm serving is the true God."

He asked, "How can you know that?"

So, I just started pointing around the room and saying, "See this? It was a miracle!" I pointed to everything we had. It was a miracle that God provided. Then I told him about the dead being raised and the blind eyes opened that I've personally seen. That's when he hit the door running! People like that have a doctrine, but they don't have an experience. They don't have any proof or reality to what they're saying.

PUT UP OR SHUT UP!

We're playing it too safe. We need to be bold! God doesn't mind being put on the spot. A minister friend of mine says, "The bolder I talk about what God is going to do, the bigger He shows up!" God is bigger than we've ever thought about, yet we're afraid we're going to say something and promise something that the Lord can't deliver. That's not true—God is more than able to deliver!

It's not really putting the Lord on the spot—it's putting *me* on the spot. God is willing and able. He's more than capable. It's me who's getting out there when I say God is going to do this and that. We need to stretch ourselves. We need to believe God for some supernatural miracles.

I remember one service where I was teaching, and the people just weren't receptive to what I was sharing. It was obvious from the beginning that this wasn't a good situation. Do you know what I did? Two or three minutes in, I just said, "Let's have show and tell. We're going to demonstrate, and then I'll explain it to you. The first person who stands up here is going to be healed." People came forward, I prayed for them, and God healed them and set them free. You get people's attention after something like that. You can do that!

You might say, "But, Andrew, I don't have a gift of healing." Neither do I! I don't have a gift of miracles either, but I've seen blind eyes and deaf ears opened. I've seen the dead raised. When

I pray for people, I am doing nothing but operating as a believer. I don't have a supernatural "anointing" or ministry gift for healing. It's just a prayer of faith based on God's Word, and I see miracles happen all the time. Every believer can do this. The Bible says that God confirms His Word with signs and wonders following (Mark 16:20). If you're truly sharing the Word, there should be signs and wonders following.

In a sense, Elijah was saying, "All right—put up or shut up! You have a doctrine. I have a doctrine. Let's see which one has any power in it."

NOT IN WORD BUT POWER

Paul wrote the same thing to the Corinthians. Some were saying "I'm of Paul," others were claiming "I'm of Cephas," and still others "I'm of Apollos" (1 Cor. 1:12). Finally, Paul declared,

But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. [20] For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

1 CORINTHIANS 4:19-20

Basically, Paul was saying, "We're going to solve this problem when I come. Those of you who have any power operating in your life can talk. But if you haven't healed any sick, cleansed any lepers, ministered sight to the blind, or raised someone from the dead in the last month or two, then you have to sit down and shut up!" That's good!

My friend and I went to Roswell, New Mexico, and ministered in a Baptist church. This was back when I was still Baptist. It was the first meeting we ever held. We got in trouble with what we were sharing, so they invited us over to the Baptist Student Union building instead. After we stood up and gave our testimonies, they started yelling at us, saying, "God doesn't do miracles like that today! Besides, the children of Israel crossed the 'Reed' Sea, not the Red Sea." My friend answered, "Well, if all those Egyptians and horses drowned in six inches of water, then that's an even greater miracle than I thought!"

Anyway, this "meeting" degenerated fast. They were yelling at us—spouting all kinds of arguments and unbelief. Finally, my friend stood up and declared, "All right! If your way of doing things is any better than ours, prove it. Those of you who have led someone to the Lord this week can make a statement or ask another question. But if you haven't led anyone to the Lord, then shut

up!” Silence. Out of 150 people, nobody was able to say anything. So, we just walked right out through the midst of them.

SET THE TONE

We need to be more aggressive in our faith. We’re so afraid of offending someone. Elijah wouldn’t have been politically correct. In fact, if he came to your church, most folks would criticize and reject him. He was abrasive, saying, “Let’s see who the real God is. Let’s put God to a test!”

And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

1 KINGS 18:24

The people are ready for this. It’s the preachers who aren’t. They’re the ones playing it safe. Why? They’re afraid to preach it because then they’ll have to manifest it. If they don’t, it’ll look like they’re just saying words. They’re the ones the fear originates from. Preachers are the ones who set the tone for their churches.

As a minister, if you don’t like what’s happening in your church, you’re probably the one who made it that way. I know this isn’t always the case: Satan can hinder, and you go through dry spells. But on the whole, you are the one who sets the tone in your ministry. If you aren’t seeing the miraculous power of God operate, then you don’t have to look for your problem any further than your mirror.

Outline

I. Elijah just showed up on the scene, and the word from God put him in control.

Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. [20] So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

1 KINGS 18:19-20

- A. At first, nobody knew who he was.
- B. But since Elijah was bold enough to speak the word the Lord had given him—even when nothing at the time was happening—it gave him credibility when things came to pass.
- C. If you stick around long enough, you'll see the Word of God put you in a position of authority every single time.
- D. However, you must be truly speaking God's Word—not just your own doctrines and social issues.
- E. Sooner or later, the Word of God will *always* exalt you.

II. God doesn't actually exalt ministers—He exalts His Word.

- A. We put so much emphasis on our actions and charisma, but if we look at the people God has used throughout history, many of them had nothing going for them.
- B. All they had was the word of the Lord and genuine faith in it.
- C. Speaking specifically of the Jews who had rejected the Gospel, Hebrews 4:2 says,

The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

- D. We need to mix the Word we've heard with faith.
- E. If we speak the word God has put in our mouths, it will give us authority in the lives of people.

III. The word of the Lord in Elijah's mouth had been proven—it came to pass.

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.

1 PETER 4:11

- A. Elijah, a prophet, told the king what to do, and he did it—that’s the way it ought to be.
- B. There was a time when the church commanded an authority in people’s lives.
- C. We’ve become apologetic and substituted other things.
- D. We need to be authoritative with the Word of God.
- E. We don’t have to condemn people—we can do it in love, but we must be bold and speak the Word of God.
- F. As ministers, we’re supposed to challenge people to make a decision.

And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

1 KINGS 18:21

- G. But many times, we’re afraid to do this because they might make a wrong choice and it’ll work against us.
- H. People may leave, but we must bring them to a place of commitment.

IV. Elijah knew better than this:

Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

1 KINGS 18:22

- A. Remember, he’d just been told that there were still a hundred prophets being hid out in caves (1 Kin. 18:13).
- B. He thought he was the only one left serving God, but the Lord still used him.
- C. We don’t have to be perfect for God to use us.
- D. This doesn’t mean it’s okay to have problems.
- E. But even though these wrong attitudes and mistakes in our lives are deadly and we need to deal with them, the Lord will still use us.
- F. We cut ourselves off—not God!

They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

JONAH 2:8

- G. When we observe lying vanities, we open ourselves up to the devil.

V. Elijah called for a test, saying, “Let’s see who the real God is!”

Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: [24] And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

1 KINGS 18:23-24

- A. We're the ones who have the power, reality, and anointing of the Lord.
- B. We would silence many people if we just started demonstrating things.
- C. We need to be bold—God is bigger than we've ever thought about, yet we're afraid we're going to say something and promise something that the Lord can't deliver.
- D. It's not really putting the Lord on the spot—it's putting *us* on the spot.
- E. God is willing and able; He's more than capable.
- F. When I pray for people, I am doing nothing but operating as a believer.
- G. It's just a prayer of faith based on God's Word, and I see miracles happen all the time.
- H. Every believer can do this (Mark 16:20).

VI. Paul declared in 1 Corinthians 4:19-20,

But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. [20] For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

- A. Basically, Paul was saying, "We're going to solve this problem when I come. Those of you who have any power operating in your life can talk. But if you haven't healed any sick, cleansed any lepers, ministered sight to the blind, or raised someone from the dead in the last month or two, then you have to sit down and shut up!"
- B. We need to be more aggressive in our faith.
- C. The people are ready for this; we're the ones playing it safe.
- D. Why? We're afraid to preach it because then we'll have to manifest it.
- E. We're the ones the fear originates from.
- F. On the whole, we are the ones who set the tone in our ministries.
- G. If we aren't seeing the miraculous power of God operate, then we don't have to look for our problem any further than our mirror.

Teacher's Guide

1. Elijah just showed up on the scene, and the word from God put him in control.

Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. [20] So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

1 KINGS 18:19-20

At first, nobody knew who he was. But since Elijah was bold enough to speak the word the Lord had given him—even when nothing at the time was happening—it gave him credibility when things came to pass. If you stick around long enough, you'll see the Word of God put you in a position of authority every single time. However, you must be truly speaking God's Word—not just your own doctrines and social issues. Sooner or later, the Word of God will *always* exalt you.

- 1a. What put Elijah in control?

(The word from God)

- 1b. *Discussion question:* Why did Elijah's boldness give him credibility? In what ways have you seen that principle in your life?

(Discussion question)

- 1c. If you stick around long enough, you'll see the Word of God do what?

- A. Grow legs and walk around in circles
- B. Put you in a position of authority every single time
- C. Justify all your opinions and ideologies
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(B. Put you in a position of authority every single time)

- 1d. *Discussion question:* Have you experienced others—or yourself—speaking their own doctrines and social issues? How did/do you handle this?

(Discussion question)

2. God doesn't actually exalt ministers—He exalts His Word. We put so much emphasis on our actions and charisma, but if we look at the people God has used throughout history, many of them had nothing going for them. All they had was the Word of the Lord and genuine faith in it. Speaking specifically of the Jews who had rejected the Gospel, Hebrews 4:2 says,

The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

We need to mix the Word we've heard with faith. If we speak the word God has put in our mouths, it will give us authority in the lives of people.

2a. God doesn't actually exalt _____—He exalts _____.

(Ministers / His Word)

2b. *Discussion question:* Give some examples of people God has used who have had nothing going for them.

(Discussion question)

2c. *Discussion question:* Do you agree with the statement "If we speak the word God has put in our mouths, it will give us authority in the lives of people"? Why or why not?

(Discussion question)

3. The word of the Lord in Elijah's mouth had been proven—it came to pass.

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.

1 PETER 4:11

Elijah, a prophet, told the king what to do, and he did it—that's the way it ought to be. There was a time when the church commanded an authority in people's lives. We've become apologetic and substituted other things. We need to be authoritative with the Word of God. We don't have to condemn people—we can do it in love, but we must be bold and speak the Word of God. As ministers, we're supposed to challenge people to make a decision.

And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

1 KINGS 18:21

But many times, we're afraid to do this because they might make a wrong choice and it'll work against us. People may leave, but we must bring them to a place of commitment.

3a. True or false: Elijah, a prophet, told the king what to do—but it shouldn't be that way.

(False)

3b. Do you have to condemn people in order to be authoritative with the Word of God?

(No)

3c. *Discussion question:* What do you think it means to bring people to a place of commitment?

(Discussion question)

4. Elijah knew better than this:

Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

1 KINGS 18:22

Remember, he'd just been told that there were still a hundred prophets being hid out in caves (1 Kin. 18:13). He thought he was the only one left serving God, but the Lord still used him. We don't have to be perfect for God to use us. This doesn't mean it's okay to have problems. But even though these wrong attitudes and mistakes in our lives are deadly and we need to deal with them, the Lord will still use us. We cut ourselves off—not God!

They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

JONAH 2:8

When we observe lying vanities, we open ourselves up to the devil.

4a. *Discussion question:* Even though Elijah was in error, thinking he was the only one left serving God, the Lord still used him. In what ways can you apply this to your life?

(Discussion question)

4b. You don't have to be _____ for God to use you.

- A. Right-handed
- B. American
- C. Baptist
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(E. None of the above)

4c. Who cuts you off from God?

(You cut yourself off from God)

5. Elijah called for a test, saying, “Let’s see who the real God is!”

Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: [24] And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

1 KINGS 18:23-24

We’re the ones who have the power, reality, and anointing of the Lord. We would silence many people if we just started demonstrating things. We need to be bold—God is bigger than we’ve ever thought about, yet we’re afraid we’re going to say something and promise something that the Lord can’t deliver. It’s not really putting the Lord on the spot—it’s putting *us* on the spot. God is willing and able; He’s more than capable. When I pray for people, I am doing nothing but operating as a believer. It’s just a prayer of faith based on God’s Word, and I see miracles happen all the time. Every believer can do this (Mark 16:20).

- 5a. *Discussion question:* Why do you think that demonstrating the power, reality, and anointing of the Lord would silence many people?
(Discussion question)
- 5b. True or false: God is willing and able; He’s more than capable.
(True)
- 5c. How does Andrew see miracles happen all the time?
(He operates as a believer and prays a prayer of faith based on God’s Word)

6. Paul declared in 1 Corinthians 4:19-20,

But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. [20] For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

Basically, Paul was saying, “We’re going to solve this problem when I come. Those of you who have any power operating in your life can talk. But if you haven’t healed any sick, cleansed any lepers, ministered sight to the blind, or raised someone from the dead in the last month or two, then you have to sit down and shut up!” We need to be more aggressive in our faith. The people are ready for this; we’re the ones playing it safe. Why? We’re afraid to preach it because then we’ll have to manifest it. We’re the ones the fear originates from. On the whole, we are the ones who set the tone in our ministries. If we aren’t seeing the miraculous power of God operate, then we don’t have to look for our problem any further than our mirror.

6a. *Discussion question:* Meditate on 1 Corinthians 4:19-20. What do these verses mean to you?

(Discussion question)

6b. On the whole, do you set the tone for your ministry?

(Yes)

Discipleship Questions

1. What put Elijah in control?

2. *Discussion question:* Why did Elijah's boldness give him credibility? In what ways have you seen that principle in your life?

3. If you stick around long enough, you'll see the Word of God do what?
 - A. Grow legs and walk around in circles
 - B. Put you in a position of authority every single time
 - C. Justify all your opinions and ideologies
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

4. *Discussion question:* Have you experienced others—or yourself—speaking their own doctrines and social issues? How did/do you handle this?

5. God doesn't actually exalt _____—He exalts _____.

6. *Discussion question:* Give some examples of people God has used who have had nothing going for them.

7. *Discussion question:* Do you agree with the statement “If we speak the word God has put in our mouths, it will give us authority in the lives of people”? Why or why not?
8. True or false: Elijah, a prophet, told the king what to do—but it shouldn’t be that way.
9. Do you have to condemn people in order to be authoritative with the Word of God?
10. *Discussion question:* What do you think it means to bring people to a place of commitment?
11. *Discussion question:* Even though Elijah was in error, thinking he was the only one left serving God, the Lord still used him. In what ways can you apply this to your life?
12. You don’t have to be _____ for God to use you.
 - A. Right-handed
 - B. American
 - C. Baptist
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above
13. Who cuts you off from God?

14. *Discussion question:* Why do you think that demonstrating the power, reality, and anointing of the Lord would silence many people?

15. True or false: God is willing and able; He's more than capable.

16. How does Andrew see miracles happen all the time?

17. *Discussion question:* Meditate on 1 Corinthians 4:19-20. What do these verses mean to you?

18. On the whole, do you set the tone for your ministry?

Answer Key

1. The word from God
2. *Discussion question*
3. B. Put you in a position of authority every single time
4. *Discussion question*
5. Ministers / His Word
6. *Discussion question*
7. *Discussion question*
8. False
9. No
10. *Discussion question*
11. *Discussion question*
12. E. None of the above
13. You cut yourself off from God
14. *Discussion question*
15. True
16. He operates as a believer and prays a prayer of faith based on God's Word
17. *Discussion question*
18. Yes

Scriptures

1 KINGS 18:19-24

Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. [20] So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. [21] And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. [22] Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. [23] Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: [24] And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

1 KINGS 18:10

As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not.

HEBREWS 4:2

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

1 PETER 4:11

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 KINGS 18:13

Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?

JONAH 2:8

They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

MARK 16:20

And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:12

Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS 4:19-20

But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. [20] For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

Holy Fire

And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. [26] And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. [27] And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.

1 KINGS 18:25-27

Elijah mocked these people. That wasn't very politically correct. We don't want to offend anyone today. We don't want to say anything about any other group or religion because we're so afraid of offending them. Elijah made fun of them, saying, "Maybe you need to yell louder. Either Baal can't hear you or he's asleep!" This is awesome! Elijah knew the power of God.

DOUBTING GOD'S WILLINGNESS

Most of us honestly just aren't that confident in God's power. We don't really doubt that He *can*; we doubt that He *will*. We don't doubt His ability; we doubt His willingness to use it. Why? Because we know that we aren't everything that we should be.

Elijah's example should be an encouragement to us. He had just told a lie, saying, "I'm the only one left!" Yet he was still up there proclaiming God's power, and the Lord backed him up because he was speaking His word. We don't have to be perfect for God to use us! We let the devil talk us out of our miracles—not because we doubt that God has the power, but because we doubt His willingness to use it. We know we don't deserve it.

When Peter walked on the water, he didn't doubt that Jesus could do it. When he sank, he called out to the Lord for help. Peter didn't doubt Jesus, but when he saw the wind and the waves, he started thinking, *What am I doing out here?* He doubted that *he* could walk on the water (Matt. 14:28-31).

Really, we doubt ourselves because we don't understand the grace and mercy of God. We think we must be perfect before the Lord can use us. Elijah wasn't perfect; he made many mistakes. However, he was so confident and bold that he mocked those false prophets. That's a good attitude!

NOTHING HAPPENED

And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

1 KINGS 18:28

Do you know what they were doing by leaping on the altar and cutting themselves? They were offering their works as a sacrifice. By their actions, they were saying, "Send fire now and we'll be part of the sacrifice!"

This same attitude operates in many Christians today. They think God will use them because of their great sacrifice and the things they do. However, it's only by the grace of God!

We need to extract ourselves out of these things. We can't make it personal, saying, "Such and such is going to happen because I'm a man (or woman) of God, and this will prove it to you!" Instead, we need to constantly remind the people, "This is happening because God is almighty!" We need to put all the pressure and responsibility on Him—He can handle it!

That's not what these priests and prophets were doing by yelling, leaping, and cutting themselves. They thought that somehow their works would cause Baal to answer. And of course, nothing happened.

And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

1 KINGS 18:29

“SHOOT YOUR BEST SHOT!”

And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down. [31] And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: [32] And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. [33] And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. [34] And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. [35] And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

1 KINGS 18:30-35

This whole test was supernatural. There was a bullock and wood, but no fire. However, just so nobody misunderstood and claimed “spontaneous combustion,” Elijah had all this water poured over it. Although it was hot and dry because of the drought, only God would be able to set fire to this sacrifice.

Most of us wouldn’t do something like that. We would struggle with our own unbelief. We certainly wouldn’t do anything to make it harder. But Elijah believed God.

Elijah believed he had a word from God. His attitude was *Devil, shoot your best shot! Do whatever, but what I’m doing is going to work!*

What has God called you to do? Is there opposition to you and your word from the Lord? Don’t be afraid. Anyone with a word from God is bigger than all of their opposition. Be like Elijah and make it so that only God can bring you through.

If you have faith in the word from God, nothing will shake you. You can actually get to a place where you can say, “Go ahead, devil. Do your worst. I’ll still come out smelling like a rose!” Instead of griping and complaining, just rest in the Lord. God has given you a word, so run with it. If the Lord has called you to do what you’re doing, then it will work. Just stay committed and believing. The only thing that can stop you is your unbelief.

Elijah was confident. He had faith. He poured water on the wood.

“AT THY WORD”

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

1 KINGS 18:36, UNDERLINE MINE

Elijah knew this drought was going to last years. He said so in 1 Kings 17:1 – “*There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word*” (underline mine).

During this drought, Elijah must have asked the Lord and meditated on how it would end. Perhaps God had shown him this showdown in a vision. Maybe this was just what he had in his heart. But somehow or another, Elijah had already seen all these things that would happen coming to pass. That’s what he was praying here in 1 Kings 18:36. He said, “I’ve done all these things at Your word.” God had planted all these things inside Elijah and instructed him in it.

If you can’t see it on the inside, you’ll never see it on the outside. If you can’t see your ministry prospering, if you can’t see yourself raising someone from the dead, if you can’t see blind eyes or deaf ears opening, if you don’t meditate on the Word until it becomes a real word to you that you have deep down on the inside—then you cannot have it on the outside! I see many people stumbling through ministry who have a word from God. They have a call, but they’ve never just sat down and let that word paint a picture on the inside of them of what’s going to happen. You must do that! You can’t function in faith without doing that.

PAINT A PICTURE

Although I’m not a builder, I occasionally do projects around my house. But before I get started on a project, I have to sit down and really think about it. I have to look at the barren ground until I can see the foundation and the support. Then, once I see it on the inside, I can do it on the outside. That’s what blueprints are for—to help you see it first on the inside.

Elijah had already seen these things happen. He saw himself challenging the prophets of Baal and knew what the outcome would be. He could see it!

Before I ever saw my first person raised from the dead, I took the Word of God that promised this and meditated on it until I could see it in my heart. I saw people raised from the dead on the inside before I ever saw it on the outside. I saw blind eyes and deaf ears opened on the inside before I ever saw it happen on the outside. You need to take God's Word and let it paint a picture. You need to get to where you can see it!

Elijah had already seen these things in his heart. So, he said that he was doing "*all these things at thy word*" (1 Kin. 18:36).

THE FIRE FELL!

Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. [38] Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

1 KINGS 18:37-38

This must have been awesome! I've visited this place on Mount Carmel and tried to imagine what it would have been like. This was a mighty miracle of God!

Nobody had ever called fire down before. Solomon had seen the fire of God fall and consume a sacrifice, but he didn't call it down. This was the very first time something like this had ever occurred. And it all happened because the word of the Lord came to this guy, and he meditated on it, spoke it boldly, and acted on it in obedience. That's awesome!

The same thing can happen with us. Everybody would like to have the results Elijah had, but not everybody wants to do what Elijah did. Not everybody wants to stand up and speak the Word first and then see the miracles follow. We want to see the miracles first, and then stand up and say, "I was praying and believing for that!"

You need to hear a word from God, get bold with it, and speak it. You'll go through some hard times. Anytime God does something supernatural in your life, there will be a dry, barren spell. Elijah went through the drought and suffered like everybody else. It took faith to get up every day and see that provision. But he believed God—and the fire fell!

Outline

- I. Elijah mocked these people (1 Kin. 18:25-27) because he knew the power of God.
 - A. Most of us honestly just aren't that confident in God's power.
 - B. We don't really doubt that He *can*; we doubt that He *will*.
 - C. Why? Because we know that we aren't everything that we should be.
 - D. We don't have to be perfect for God to use us!
 - E. We let the devil talk us out of our miracles—not because we doubt that God has the power, but because we doubt His willingness to use it.
 - F. Really, we doubt ourselves because we don't understand the grace and mercy of God.

- II. Do you know what they were doing by leaping on the altar and cutting themselves?

And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

1 KINGS 18:28

- A. They were offering their works as a sacrifice.
- B. This same attitude operates in many Christians today—they think God will use them because of their great sacrifice and the things they do.
- C. However, it's only by the grace of God!
- D. You need to extract ourselves out of these things.
- E. You need to put all the pressure and responsibility on Him—He can handle it!
- F. That's not what these priests and prophets were doing by yelling, leaping, and cutting themselves—they thought that somehow their works would cause Baal to answer.
- G. And of course, nothing happened.

And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

1 KINGS 18:29

- III. This whole test was supernatural.

And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down. [31] And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of

Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: [32] And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. [33] And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. [34] And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. [35] And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

1 KINGS 18:30-35

- A. There was a bullock and wood, but no fire; however, just so nobody misunderstood and claimed “spontaneous combustion,” Elijah had all this water poured over it.
 - B. Although it was hot and dry because of the drought, only God would be able to set fire to this sacrifice.
 - C. Most people wouldn’t do something like that—they would struggle with their own unbelief.
 - D. But Elijah believed God.
 - E. What has God called you to do? Is there opposition to you and your word from the Lord?
 - F. Don’t be afraid—anyone with a word from God is bigger than all of their opposition.
 - G. If you have faith in the word from God, nothing will shake you.
 - H. If the Lord has called you to do what you’re doing, then it will work.
 - I. The only thing that can stop you is your unbelief.
- IV. Elijah knew this drought was going to last years – “*There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word*” (1 Kin. 17:1, underline mine).
- A. During this drought, Elijah must have asked the Lord and meditated on how it would end.
 - B. But somehow or another, Elijah had already seen all these things that would happen coming to pass.
 - C. That’s what he was praying here in 1 Kings 18:36:

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

UNDERLINE MINE

- D. God had planted all these things inside Elijah and instructed him in it.
- E. If you can’t see it on the inside, you’ll never see it on the outside.
- F. Elijah had already seen these things happen—he saw himself challenging the prophets of Baal and knew what the outcome would be.

- G. You need to take God's Word and let it paint a picture.
- H. You need to get to where you can see it!
- I. Elijah had already seen these things in his heart, so he said that he was doing "*all these things at thy word*" (1 Kin. 18:36).

V. Nobody had ever called fire down before.

Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. [38] Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

1 KINGS 18:37-38

- A. And it all happened because the word of the Lord came to this guy, and he meditated on it, spoke it boldly, and acted on it in obedience.
- B. The same thing can happen with us.
- C. We need to hear a word from God, get bold with it, and speak it.
- D. We'll go through some hard times.
- E. Elijah went through the drought and suffered like everybody else.
- F. It took faith to get up every day and see that provision, but he believed God—and the fire fell!

Teacher's Guide

1. Elijah mocked these people (1 Kin. 18:25-27) because he knew the power of God. Most of us honestly just aren't that confident in God's power. We don't really doubt that He *can*; we doubt that He *will*. Why? Because we know that we aren't everything that we should be. We don't have to be perfect for God to use us! We let the devil talk us out of our miracles—not because we doubt that God has the power, but because we doubt His willingness to use it. Really, we doubt ourselves because we don't understand the grace and mercy of God.

1a. Why did Elijah mock the false prophets (1 Kin. 18:25-27)?

(Because he knew the power of God)

1b. *Discussion question:* Have you ever found yourself doubting not that God *can* but that He *will*? How have you dealt with this?

(Discussion question)

1c. True or false: You don't have to be perfect for God to use you!

(True)

1d. What do you do because you don't understand the grace and mercy of God?

(You doubt yourself)

2. Do you know what they were doing by leaping on the altar and cutting themselves?

And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

1 KINGS 18:28

They were offering their works as a sacrifice. This same attitude operates in many Christians today—they think God will use them because of their great sacrifice and the things they do. However, it's only by the grace of God! You need to extract ourselves out of these things. You need to put all the pressure and responsibility on Him—He can handle it! That's not what these priests and prophets were doing by yelling, leaping, and cutting themselves—they thought that somehow their works would cause Baal to answer. And of course, nothing happened.

And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

1 KINGS 18:29

- 2a. *Discussion question:* In what ways, if any, have you offered your works as a sacrifice to God?
(Discussion question)
- 2b. What happened when the priests and prophets yelled and leaped and cut themselves?
(Nothing)

3. This whole test was supernatural.

And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down. [31] And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: [32] And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. [33] And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. [34] And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. [35] And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

1 KINGS 18:30-35

There was a bullock and wood, but no fire; however, just so nobody misunderstood and claimed “spontaneous combustion,” Elijah had all this water poured over it. Although it was hot and dry because of the drought, only God would be able to set fire to this sacrifice. Most people wouldn’t do something like that—they would struggle with their own unbelief. But Elijah believed God. What has God called you to do? Is there opposition to you and your word from the Lord? Don’t be afraid—anyone with a word from God is bigger than all of their opposition. If you have faith in the word from God, nothing will shake you. If the Lord has called you to do what you’re doing, then it will work. The only thing that can stop you is your unbelief.

3a. Why would most people not do something like what Elijah did?

- A. Because he was an Old Testament prophet
- B. Because things like that don’t need to be done today
- C. Because they would struggle with their own unbelief
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(C. Because they would struggle with their own unbelief)

3b. *Discussion question:* Why does having a word from God make you bigger than all your opposition?

(Discussion question)

3c. True or false: If the Lord has called you to do what you’re doing, then it will probably work.

(False)

3d. The only thing that can stop you is your _____.

(Unbelief)

4. Elijah knew this drought was going to last years – “*There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word*” (1 Kin. 17:1, underline mine). During this drought, Elijah must have asked the Lord and meditated on how it would end. But somehow or another, Elijah had already seen all these things that would happen coming to pass. That’s what he was praying here in 1 Kings 18:36:

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

UNDERLINE MINE

God had planted all these things inside Elijah and instructed him in it. If you can’t see it on the inside, you’ll never see it on the outside. Elijah had already seen these things happen—he saw himself challenging the prophets of Baal and knew what the outcome would be. You need to take God’s Word and let it paint a picture. You need to get to where you can see it! Elijah had already seen these things in his heart, so he said that he was doing “*all these things at thy word*” (1 Kin. 18:36).

4a. *Discussion question:* What things has God planted inside you and instructed you in?

(Discussion question)

4b. *Discussion question:* Why is taking God’s Word and letting it paint a picture inside you so important?

(Discussion question)

5. Nobody had ever called fire down before.

Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. [38] Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

1 KINGS 18:37-38

And it all happened because the word of the Lord came to this guy, and he meditated on it, spoke it boldly, and acted on it in obedience. The same thing can happen with us. We need to hear a word from God, get bold with it, and speak it. We'll go through some hard times. Elijah went through the drought and suffered like everybody else. It took faith to get up every day and see that provision, but he believed God—and the fire fell!

5a. Why was Elijah able to call fire down from heaven?

(Because the word of the Lord came to him, and he meditated on it, spoke it boldly, and acted on it in obedience)

5b. Can the same thing happen with you?

(Yes)

5c. *Discussion question:* Have you faced hard times because of the word the Lord has given you? How did you handle those situations?

(Discussion question)

Discipleship Questions

1. Why did Elijah mock the false prophets (1 Kin. 18:25-27)?

2. *Discussion question:* Have you ever found yourself doubting not that God *can* but that He *will*? How have you dealt with this?

3. True or false: You don't have to be perfect for God to use you!

4. What do you do because you don't understand the grace and mercy of God?

5. *Discussion question:* In what ways, if any, have you offered your works as a sacrifice to God?

6. What happened when the priests and prophets yelled and leaped and cut themselves?

7. Why would most people not do something like what Elijah did?
 - A. Because he was an Old Testament prophet
 - B. Because things like that don't need to be done today
 - C. Because they would struggle with their own unbelief
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

8. *Discussion question:* Why does having a word from God make you bigger than all your opposition?

9. True or false: If the Lord has called you to do what you're doing, then it will probably work.

10. The only thing that can stop you is your _____.

11. *Discussion question:* What things has God planted inside you and instructed you in?

12. *Discussion question:* Why is taking God's Word and letting it paint a picture inside you so important?

13. Why was Elijah able to call fire down from heaven?

14. Can the same thing happen with you?

15. *Discussion question:* Have you faced hard times because of the word the Lord has given you? How did you handle those situations?

Answer Key

1. Because he knew the power of God
2. *Discussion question*
3. True
4. You doubt yourself
5. *Discussion question*
6. Nothing
7. C. Because they would struggle with their own unbelief
8. *Discussion question*
9. False
10. Unbelief
11. *Discussion question*
12. *Discussion question*
13. Because the word of the Lord came to him, and he meditated on it, spoke it boldly, and acted on it in obedience
14. Yes
15. *Discussion question*

Scriptures

1 KINGS 18:25-38

And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. [26] And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. [27] And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. [28] And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. [29] And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. [30] And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. [31] And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: [32] And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. [33] And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. [34] And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. [35] And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. [36] And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. [37] Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. [38] Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

MATTHEW 14:28-31

And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. [29] And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. [30] But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. [31] And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

1 KINGS 17:1

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

Power & Demonstration

The fire of God doesn't just fall anywhere. Elijah had to repair the altar (1 Kin. 18:30).

Everybody wants the fire of God in their lives, but do they have an altar? Do they have a place where they meet with God? Do they have a personal relationship? Do they spend time alone with the Lord?

People love a fire and will go to great lengths to follow it. If you catch on fire, the world will come watch you burn! If you repair your altar and spend time in the presence of the Consuming Fire Himself (Heb. 12:29), your life will be set ablaze with His glory and power.

And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

1 KINGS 18:39

This is the first revival recorded in Scripture. It's the first time there was a nationwide move of God. An entire nation's people fell on their faces, saying, "The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He alone is God!" Elijah turned the entire nation back to God through one awesome miracle!

DEMONSTRATE WHAT YOU PREACH

We cannot be effective ministers of God ministering in word only. There must be some power and demonstration to go with it.

T.L. Osborn probably saw more miracles, healings, and salvations in more countries all over the world than anyone else in history. However, he and Daisy began their missionary career trying to minister Christ in word only. After almost a year in India, they returned to the United States confused and disappointed, having been unable to persuade the Muslims and Hindus they came into contact with that the Bible reveals the true Word of God.

T.L. asked himself the question, "Why would these people believe my Bible more than their 'holy books'? What shows Christianity to be true?" Through a series of profound, life-changing

events, the Lord told him, “You must demonstrate the Word you preach!” That’s when T.L. began praying for the sick and seeing things happen. Millions were saved and healed by the power of God’s Word—boldly proclaimed and demonstrated.

NO COMPROMISE!

If we see a few people raised from the dead, we’ll pack our churches out! If we start manifesting miracles in and through our lives, they’ll start letting people in through the roof. We believers still have that power—we just aren’t using it. Even though the Word we have is superior to what Elijah had (2 Pet. 1:19), we don’t have the same faith and confidence in it that he did. Yet look what he accomplished.

And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

1 KINGS 18:40

Elijah killed 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the groves (1 Kin. 18:19). That’s awesome! You may say, “Come on, Andrew, I can’t relate to that! As a New Testament believer, God doesn’t want us going out and killing all the people who aren’t preaching the truth.” I agree. However, you do need to get so adamant that you pursue and eradicate all the devil’s inroads into your life. Don’t compromise with doubt, unbelief, or failure. Fight until you destroy it! Kill it! Overcome it! You need to have this same militant attitude—not against people—but against the devil. You should hate everything Satan is doing and refuse to take no for an answer!

TRUTH IN TENSION

Every truth of God must be held in tension. It’s like a high wire. It has to be anchored on both sides, or a tightrope walker won’t be able to walk on it. The rope must be firmly anchored and stretched between two opposite points in order to support any weight. Every truth in God’s

Word has an apparent opposite. Therefore, as much as you believe in God’s love, you must also hate the devil.

Romans 12:9 says,

Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

These are apparent opposites. However, you can't just cleave to that which is good and ignore evil. You must hate that which is evil. You have to love the good AND hate the evil—love God AND hate the devil.

EVICT THE SQUATTER!

Let not the sun go down upon your wrath: [27] Neither give place to the devil.

EPHESIANS 4:26-27

Most people interpret this as “Don't go to bed angry. Get it worked out before going to sleep.” Although it's beneficial to do that, that's not what this verse is talking about. This verse is saying that you're supposed to have anger for the devil: “Don't ever let your anger go to sleep! Keep it awake! If you start dozing off and getting complacent, stir yourself up and get angry at the devil. Don't put up with his stuff. If you aren't angry—with a godly anger—you'll give place to the devil!”

The Lord gave you a capacity for anger, but it's not meant to be used toward other people—it's meant to be used toward the devil. You need to get on Satan's case!

Many times, I've suffered from things and just tried to believe God and go on. Because I was busy and had other things to do, I just ignored it. Eventually, it just reached a place where I couldn't take it anymore. I'd had all I was going to take. So, I get mad, go somewhere, shut the door, and let the devil have it. “I'm through with this. It's over!” And—BOOM—my miracle happens. Then I wonder, *Why in the world did I wait so long? Why didn't I do this earlier? Why did I go through all this if that's all I had to do?* I had lost my anger and given place to the devil.

Satan is just a squatter who will stick around in your life until you evict him. You need to stir yourself up and get this Elijah attitude: “Lord, You've spoken some things to me. I have a word from You. If things look tough, I'll just pour some extra water on it to prove You can do it! I'm going to pursue my Enemy until I absolutely destroy him! Glory to Jesus!”

Don't just chase your Enemy over the hill. Don't just fight until you get some relief and you can live with the rest. No! Pursue until you conquer. Make it so your Enemy can never fight again. That's what Elijah did.

Outline

- I. The fire of God doesn't just fall anywhere—Elijah had to repair the altar (1 Kin. 18:30).
 - A. If you catch on fire, the world will come watch you burn!
 - B. If you repair your altar and spend time in the presence of the Consuming Fire Himself (Heb. 12:29), your life will be set ablaze with His glory and power.

And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

1 KINGS 18:39

- C. This is the first revival recorded in Scripture.
 - D. Elijah turned the entire nation back to God through one awesome miracle!
- II. We cannot be effective ministers of God ministering in word only.
 - A. There must be some power and demonstration to go with it.
 - B. We believers still have that power—we just aren't using it.
 - C. Even though the Word we have is superior to what Elijah had (2 Pet. 1:19), we don't have the same faith and confidence in it that he did.
 - D. Yet look what he accomplished—Elijah killed 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the groves (1 Kin. 18:19).

And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

1 KINGS 18:40

- E. As New Testament believers, God doesn't want us to go out and kill all the people who aren't preaching the truth.
 - F. However, we do need to get so adamant that we pursue and eradicate all the devil's inroads into our lives.
 - G. We should hate everything Satan is doing and refuse to take no for an answer!
- III. Every truth in God's Word has an apparent opposite.
 - A. Therefore, as much as you believe in God's love, you must also hate the devil.
 - B. Romans 12:9 says,
Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

- C. These are apparent opposites.
- D. However, you can't just cleave to that which is good and ignore evil; you must hate that which is evil.
- E. You have to love the good AND hate the evil—love God AND hate the devil.

IV. Most people interpret Ephesians 4:26-27 as “Don't go to bed angry. Get it worked out before going to sleep”:

Let not the sun go down upon your wrath: [27] Neither give place to the devil.

- A. Although it's beneficial to do that, that's not what this verse is talking about.
- B. This verse is saying that you're supposed to have anger for the devil.
- C. The Lord gave you a capacity for anger, but it's not meant to be used toward other people—it's meant to be used toward the devil.
- D. Satan is just a squatter who will stick around in your life until you evict him.
- E. But don't just chase your Enemy over the hill; don't just fight until you get some relief and you can live with the rest.
- F. Pursue until you conquer—make it so your Enemy can never fight again.
- G. That's what Elijah did.

Teacher's Guide

1. The fire of God doesn't just fall anywhere—Elijah had to repair the altar (1 Kin. 18:30). If you catch on fire, the world will come watch you burn! If you repair your altar and spend time in the presence of the Consuming Fire Himself (Heb. 12:29), your life will be set ablaze with His glory and power.

And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

1 KINGS 18:39

This is the first revival recorded in Scripture. Elijah turned the entire nation back to God through one awesome miracle!

- 1a. According to 1 Kings 18:30, what did Elijah have to do before the fire of God could fall?
(He had to repair the altar)
- 1b. *Discussion question:* What does “If you catch on fire, the world will come watch you burn” mean to you?
(Discussion question)
- 1c. What is 1 Kings 18:39 describing?
(The first recorded revival in Scripture)

2. We cannot be effective ministers of God ministering in word only. There must be some power and demonstration to go with it. We believers still have that power—we just aren't using it. Even though the Word we have is superior to what Elijah had (2 Pet. 1:19), we don't have the same faith and confidence in it that he did. Yet look what he accomplished—Elijah killed 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the groves (1 Kin. 18:19).

And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

1 KINGS 18:40

As New Testament believers, God doesn't want us to go out and kill all the people who aren't preaching the truth. However, we do need to get so adamant that we pursue and eradicate all the devil's inroads into our lives. We should hate everything Satan is doing and refuse to take no for an answer!

2a. You cannot be an effective minister of God by doing what?

- A. Ministering in English only
- B. Ministering in word only
- C. Ministering in miracles only
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(B. Ministering in word only)

2b. *Discussion question:* Why are power and demonstration so important to effective ministry?

(Discussion question)

2c. You should _____ everything Satan is doing and refuse to take _____ for an answer!

(Hate / no)

3. Every truth in God's Word has an apparent opposite. Therefore, as much as you believe in God's love, you must also hate the devil. Romans 12:9 says,

Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

These are apparent opposites. However, you can't just cleave to that which is good and ignore evil; you must hate that which is evil. You have to love the good AND hate the evil—love God AND hate the devil.

3a. *Discussion question:* Meditate on Romans 12:9, and share any thoughts and revelations you have.

(Discussion question)

3b. True or false: You have to love God OR hate the devil.

(False)

4. Most people interpret Ephesians 4:26-27 as “Don't go to bed angry. Get it worked out before going to sleep”:

Let not the sun go down upon your wrath: [27] Neither give place to the devil.

Although it's beneficial to do that, that's not what this verse is talking about. This verse is saying that you're supposed to have anger for the devil. The Lord gave you a capacity for anger, but it's not meant to be used toward other people—it's meant to be used toward the devil. Satan is just a squatter who will stick around in your life until you evict him. But don't just chase your Enemy over the hill; don't just fight until you get some relief and you can live with the rest. Pursue until you conquer—make it so your Enemy can never fight again. That's what Elijah did.

4a. *Discussion question:* How do you plan to stay angry at the devil?

(Discussion question)

4b. Satan is just a squatter who will do what?

(Stick around in your life until you evict him)

4c. What should you do to your Enemy?

(Don't just chase him over the hill or fight until you get some relief and can live with the rest—pursue until you conquer and make it so he can never fight again)

Discipleship Questions

1. According to 1 Kings 18:30, what did Elijah have to do before the fire of God could fall?
2. *Discussion question:* What does “If you catch on fire, the world will come watch you burn” mean to you?
3. What is 1 Kings 18:39 describing?
4. You cannot be an effective minister of God by doing what?
 - A. Ministering in English only
 - B. Ministering in word only
 - C. Ministering in miracles only
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above
5. *Discussion question:* Why are power and demonstration so important to effective ministry?
6. You should _____ everything Satan is doing and refuse to take _____ for an answer!

7. *Discussion question:* Meditate on Romans 12:9, and share any thoughts and revelations you have.

8. True or false: You have to love God OR hate the devil.

9. *Discussion question:* How do you plan to stay angry at the devil?

10. Satan is just a squatter who will do what?

11. What should you do to your Enemy?

Answer Key

1. He had to repair the altar
2. *Discussion question*
3. The first revival recorded in Scripture
4. B. Ministering in word only
5. *Discussion question*
6. Hate / no
7. *Discussion question*
8. False
9. *Discussion question*
10. Stick around in your life until you evict him
11. Don't just chase him over the hill or fight until you get some relief and can live with the rest—pursue until you conquer and make it so he can never fight again

Scriptures

1 KINGS 18:30

And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.

HEBREWS 12:29

For our God is a consuming fire.

1 KINGS 18:39-40

And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. [40] And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

2 PETER 1:19

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.

1 KINGS 18:19

Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

ROMANS 12:9

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

EPHESIANS 4:26-27

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: [27] Neither give place to the devil.

Elijah Saw

And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

1 KINGS 18:41

At that exact moment, this “*sound of abundance of rain*” was only in Elijah’s heart. There wasn’t anything going on yet out in the physical realm. But Elijah saw it and heard it in his heart!

VIOLENTLY RESOLVED

So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, [43] And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. [44] And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man’s hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

1 KINGS 18:42-44

Elijah didn’t pray seven times—he only prayed once. Even though he sent his servant to go look seven times, he only prayed once.

Elias [Elijah] was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. [18] And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

JAMES 5:17-18, BRACKETS MINE

Sometimes people think it’s wrong to pray about something more than once, but you ought to “*pray without ceasing*” (1 Thess. 5:17). I don’t believe this scripture is saying to pray twenty-four hours a day. I’m not praying right now—I’m writing. There are times when you’re speaking, singing, etc., but not really praying. And you can’t pray when you’re asleep. Praying without ceasing simply means not to stop praying until you see what you’ve prayed for manifest.

But it's just one prayer. Elijah prayed one prayer, according to James, but he sent his servant out seven times. It was just one prayer, but it was a continuous prayer. Elijah kept praying—prayed without ceasing—until he saw the answer manifest. He became violently resolved.

ONE AWESOME DAY!

Then all he saw was a cloud the size of a man's hand. When I was on top of Mount Carmel, it was a clear day. I remember looking out toward the Mediterranean and seeing a tiny, tiny cloud—about the size of a man's hand. It couldn't have been more perfect! I looked at that and thought, *Elijah had to have faith to believe a three-year drought would end by seeing a cloud that small!*

And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. [46] And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins [pulled up and tucked in his robe], and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

1 KINGS 18:45-46, BRACKETS MINE

Basically, Elijah outran Ahab almost twenty miles, even though Ahab had a chariot and a head start. Elijah was pumped! He had just mocked and killed 850 prophets of Baal, called down fire from heaven, and prayed and ended a three-year drought. Elijah's adrenaline was pumping so hard that he outran a chariot twenty miles and beat Ahab to Jezreel. This was an awesome day in the life of Elijah!

DRENCHED IN BLOOD

But let's look in chapter 19.

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. [2] Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.

1 KINGS 19:1-2

Queen Jezebel was the one who had fed all of these “prophets.” Since they ate at her table (1 Kin. 18:19), this meant it was a state religion. She had totally rejected God. She'd brought in the prophets of Baal and the prophets of the groves and subsidized them, fed them, and took care

of them. They were her prophets. It was her religion. And she didn't do Elijah the honor of even showing up on Mount Carmel when the whole nation was called together. I'm sure she did that just to spite him. Jezebel didn't like Elijah, because he was a prophet of the Lord.

Upon hearing the news, she became furious and took an oath saying, "May the gods make me like one of these slaughtered prophets if Elijah isn't dead by this time tomorrow!" Then she sent a messenger to tell him.

And when he [Elijah] saw that, he arose, and went [fled] for his life.

1 KINGS 19:3, BRACKETS MINE

What did Elijah see? He had just killed 850 people. We usually tend to skim over this because it isn't real pleasant, but we need to stop and envision it. Elijah had killed 850 people with a sword. He did it. Can you imagine that? That's a huge pile of corpses! Think of the blood that Elijah must have been drenched in. What a graphic scene!

TEMPTATION FOLLOWS SUCCESS

So, what did Elijah see? He saw himself like one of those dead men he had just slaughtered. Jezebel painted a word picture—"So let the gods do to me, and more also, if you aren't like one of those dead prophets by this time tomorrow!" Elijah's mind flashed back to that grisly scene, and he saw himself dead. That's why he fled.

The day before, he had seen the word God had put in his heart. He'd seen himself challenging the prophets of Baal to a duel, calling down fire, and slaughtering them. He had told the Lord, "Let the people know that I have done these things at Your word." He'd seen these things already in his heart. He had seen and heard the sound of abundance of rain when there wasn't any evidence yet in the natural realm.

However, this same ability to see what God says on the inside can work in reverse. We can see both positive and negative things in our hearts. The truth is that most of us use it in a negative way.

Elijah saw himself dead, which is why he fled. Although Jezebel desired to kill Elijah, she didn't have the power to do it. If she had, she wouldn't have sent a messenger with a note; she would have sent a soldier with a sword. If Jezebel had truly intended to kill Elijah at that moment, she would have done so without warning him.

In reality, Jezebel was trying to intimidate Elijah. Ahab attempted the same thing in chapter 18, but Elijah rejected it. However, your greatest temptations will often come immediately after your greatest victories.

VULNERABLE IN PROSPERITY

Success is harder to handle than failure. Although this is true, most people don't believe it. They say, "What's really inside you comes out when you're squeezed." Actually, it's just the opposite. Your true character is revealed in times of success.

When you're under the gun and it looks like you're going to die, that's an easy time to seek the Lord. When everything is bad and you're under pressure, you know there are no other options. Unless God comes through, you're in big trouble. Most people who have any commitment, any relationship with the Lord, will seek Him during hard times.

But where most people are destroyed is in prosperity. You'll find out what's really in someone when there isn't any pressure on—when everything is going fine and it looks like it's going to continue that way forever. You can tell more about a person's character in prosperity than you can in adversity.

When everything is going well, we tend not to be as God-dependent. That's why we're the most vulnerable in the midst of prosperity. We tend to become more self-reliant when things are going well. That is exactly what happened to Elijah.

Outline

- I. At that exact moment, this “*sound of abundance of rain*” was only in Elijah’s heart:

And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

1 KINGS 18:41

- A. There wasn’t anything going on yet out in the physical realm.
- B. But Elijah saw it and heard it in his heart!

- II. Elijah didn’t pray seven times—he only prayed once.

So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, [43] And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. [44] And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man’s hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

1 KINGS 18:42-44

- A. Even though he sent his servant to go look seven times, he only prayed once.

Elias [Elijah] was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. [18] And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

JAMES 5:17-18, BRACKETS MINE

- B. Sometimes people think it’s wrong to pray about something more than once, but you ought to “*pray without ceasing*” (1 Thess. 5:17).
- C. I don’t believe this scripture is saying to pray twenty-four hours a day.
- D. Praying without ceasing simply means not to stop praying until you see what you’ve prayed for manifest.
- E. Elijah kept praying—prayed without ceasing—until he saw the answer manifest; he became violently resolved.

III. Elijah had just mocked and killed 850 prophets of Baal, called down fire from heaven, and prayed and ended a three-year drought.

And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. [46] And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins [pulled up and tucked in his robe], and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

1 KINGS 18:45-46, BRACKETS MINE

- A. Elijah's adrenaline was pumping so hard that he outran a chariot twenty miles and beat Ahab to Jezreel.
- B. This was an awesome day in the life of Elijah!
- C. But let's look in chapter 19.

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. [2] Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.

1 KINGS 19:1-2

- D. Upon hearing the news that her prophets had been killed, Jezebel became furious, took an oath saying, "May the gods make me like one of these slaughtered prophets if Elijah isn't dead by this time tomorrow!" and sent a messenger to tell him.

And when he [Elijah] saw that, he arose, and went [fled] for his life.

1 KINGS 19:3, BRACKETS MINE

- E. What did Elijah see?
- F. He had just killed 850 people—most usually tend to skim over this because it isn't real pleasant, but they need to stop and envision it.
- G. Think of the blood that Elijah must have been drenched in—what a graphic scene!

IV. So, what did Elijah see (1 Kin. 19:3)?

- A. He saw himself like one of those dead men he had just slaughtered.
- B. The day before, he had seen the word God had put in his heart.
- C. However, this same ability to see what God says on the inside can work in reverse.
- D. We can see both positive and negative things in our hearts.
- E. Elijah saw himself dead, which is why he fled.
- F. Although Jezebel desired to kill Elijah, she didn't have the power to do it.

- G. If Jezebel had truly intended to kill Elijah at that moment, she would have done so without warning him.
 - H. In reality, Jezebel was trying to intimidate Elijah.
 - I. Our greatest temptations will often come immediately after our greatest victories.
- V. Success is harder to handle than failure.
- A. Although this is true, most people don't believe it.
 - B. They say, "What's really inside you comes out when you're squeezed," when actually, it's just the opposite—a person's true character is revealed in times of success.
 - C. Most people who have any commitment, any relationship with the Lord, will seek Him during hard times.
 - D. But where most people are destroyed is in prosperity.
 - E. We can tell more about a person's character in prosperity than we can in adversity.
 - F. When everything is going well, we tend not to be as God-dependent.
 - G. That's why we're the most vulnerable in the midst of prosperity: We tend to become more self-reliant when things are going well.
 - H. That is exactly what happened to Elijah.

Teacher's Guide

1. At that exact moment, this “*sound of abundance of rain*” was only in Elijah’s heart:

And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

1 KINGS 18:41

There wasn’t anything going on yet out in the physical realm. But Elijah saw it and heard it in his heart!

- 1a. True or false: This “*sound of abundance of rain*” (1 Kin. 18:41) wasn’t in the physical realm.
(**True**)
- 1b. *Discussion question*: Why was it so important that Elijah saw this and heard it in his heart?
Use Scripture to support your answer.
(**Discussion question**)

2. Elijah didn't pray seven times—he only prayed once.

So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, [43] And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. [44] And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

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Even though he sent his servant to go look seven times, he only prayed once.

Elias [Elijah] was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. [18] And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

JAMES 5:17-18, BRACKETS MINE

Sometimes people think it's wrong to pray about something more than once, but you ought to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). I don't believe this scripture is saying to pray twenty-four hours a day. Praying without ceasing simply means not to stop praying until you see what you've prayed for manifest. Elijah kept praying—prayed without ceasing—until he saw the answer manifest; he became violently resolved.

- 2a. How many times did Elijah pray to end the drought?

(Once)

- 2b. First Thessalonians 5:17 says to "_____."

("Pray without ceasing")

- 2c. *Discussion question:* What does 1 Thessalonians 5:17 mean to you, and how can it be applied to your life?

(Discussion question)

3. Elijah had just mocked and killed 850 prophets of Baal, called down fire from heaven, and prayed and ended a three-year drought.

And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. [46] And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins [pulled up and tucked in his robe], and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

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Elijah's adrenaline was pumping so hard that he outran a chariot twenty miles and beat Ahab to Jezreel. This was an awesome day in the life of Elijah! But let's look in chapter 19.

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1 KINGS 19:1-2

Upon hearing the news that her prophets had been killed, Jezebel became furious, took an oath saying, "May the gods make me like one of these slaughtered prophets if Elijah isn't dead by this time tomorrow!" and sent a messenger to tell him.

And when he [Elijah] saw that, he arose, and went [fled] for his life.

1 KINGS 19:3, BRACKETS MINE

What did Elijah see? He had just killed 850 people—most usually tend to skim over this because it isn't real pleasant, but they need to stop and envision it. Think of the blood that Elijah must have been drenched in—what a graphic scene!

- 3a. Why was this an awesome day in Elijah's life?

- A. He had ended a three-year drought
- B. He had outrun a chariot
- C. He had called down fire from heaven
- D. He had mocked and killed 850 prophets of Baal
- E. All of the above
- F. None of the above

(E. All of the above)

- 3b. *Discussion question:* Why do you think Elijah focused on what Jezebel said instead of his victories?

(Discussion question)

4. So, what did Elijah see (1 Kin. 19:3)? He saw himself like one of those dead men he had just slaughtered. The day before, he had seen the word God had put in his heart. However, this same ability to see what God says on the inside can work in reverse. We can see both positive and negative things in our hearts. Elijah saw himself dead, which is why he fled. Although Jezebel desired to kill Elijah, she didn't have the power to do it. If Jezebel had truly intended to kill Elijah at that moment, she would have done so without warning him. In reality, Jezebel was trying to intimidate Elijah. Our greatest temptations will often come immediately after our greatest victories.

4a. Can the ability to see what God says on the inside work in reverse?

(Yes)

4b. You can see both _____ and _____ things in your heart.

(Positive / negative)

4c. *Discussion question:* Why do you think that the greatest temptations often come immediately after the greatest victories?

(Discussion question)

5. Success is harder to handle than failure. Although this is true, most people don't believe it. They say, "What's really inside you comes out when you're squeezed," when actually, it's just the opposite—a person's true character is revealed in times of success. Most people who have any commitment, any relationship with the Lord, will seek Him during hard times. But where most people are destroyed is in prosperity. We can tell more about a person's character in prosperity than we can in adversity. When everything is going well, we tend not to be as God-dependent. That's why we're the most vulnerable in the midst of prosperity: We tend to become more self-reliant when things are going well. That is exactly what happened to Elijah.

5a. True or false: Success is harder to handle than failure.

(True)

5b. Your true character is revealed when?

- A. In times of failure
- B. In times of mediocrity
- C. In times of success
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(C. In times of success)

5c. *Discussion question:* Why do you think most people are destroyed when they're in prosperity?

(Discussion question)

5d. What exactly happened to Elijah?

(He became more self-reliant, and not as God-dependent, when things were going well)

Discipleship Questions

1. True or false: This “*sound of abundance of rain*” (1 Kin. 18:41) wasn’t in the physical realm.
2. *Discussion question:* Why was it so important that Elijah saw this and heard it in his heart? Use Scripture to support your answer.
3. How many times did Elijah pray to end the drought?
4. First Thessalonians 5:17 says to “_____.”
5. *Discussion question:* What does 1 Thessalonians 5:17 mean to you, and how can it be applied to your life?
6. Why was this an awesome day in Elijah’s life?
 - A. He had ended a three-year drought
 - B. He had outrun a chariot
 - C. He had called down fire from heaven
 - D. He had mocked and killed 850 prophets of Baal
 - E. All of the above
 - F. None of the above
7. *Discussion question:* Why do you think Elijah focused on what Jezebel said instead of his victories?

8. Can the ability to see what God says on the inside work in reverse?

9. You can see both _____ and _____ things in your heart.

10. *Discussion question:* Why do you think that the greatest temptations often come immediately after the greatest victories?

11. True or false: Success is harder to handle than failure.

12. Your true character is revealed when?
 - A. In times of failure
 - B. In times of mediocrity
 - C. In times of success
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

13. *Discussion question:* Why do you think most people are destroyed when they're in prosperity?

14. What exactly happened to Elijah?

Answer Key

1. True
2. *Discussion question*
3. Once
4. "Pray without ceasing"
5. *Discussion question*
6. E. All of the above
7. *Discussion question*
8. Yes
9. Positive / negative
10. *Discussion question*
11. True
12. C. In times of success
13. *Discussion question*
14. He became more self-reliant, and not as God-dependent, when things were going well

Scriptures

1 KINGS 18:41-46

And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. [42] So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, [43] And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. [44] And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. [45] And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. [46] And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

JAMES 5:17-18

Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. [18] And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:17

Pray without ceasing.

1 KINGS 19:1-3

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. [2] Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. [3] And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

1 KINGS 18:19

Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

"Better than My Fathers"

And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. [4] But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

1 KINGS 19:3-4

If Elijah had really wanted to die, all he had to do was stay there and Jezebel would have obliged him. This is the same for so many of us. We get into self-pity and say things like, "Nothing ever works for me. Things never turn out right!" But we know in our hearts that what we're saying isn't true. Elijah was praying "Take away my life," when the truth was that he didn't really want to die. He was in self-pity.

Here is a revealing statement:

O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

1 KINGS 19:4

This says a lot! Elijah had been thinking that he was better than his fathers. He had done things that nobody else had ever done. He had called for a drought, which had never happened before. There had been droughts, but not a God-called drought where He used someone as an instrument to begin and end it. No one had ever ended a drought the way Elijah did before. In fact, no one had multiplied food, raised somebody from the dead, called down fire from heaven, turned an entire nation to God, or outran a chariot like this in all of history. Elijah had just experienced an unbroken string of successes. This was dangerous territory, and he started thinking he was better than his fathers.

INTIMIDATED

Even though he heard the report from Obadiah in chapter 18 that there were still a hundred of the Lord's prophets being hid in a cave and fed, Elijah said,

I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD.

1 KINGS 18:22

How did Elijah come up with that? Either he chose to ignore what Obadiah had said, or he thought, *Well, they aren't a prophet like I am. Nobody is serving God like me!*

Jezebel wanted to kill Elijah, but she was like any other ruler. She didn't really have the power to just snuff him out. If she did, she wouldn't have sent a messenger with a note; she would have sent a soldier with a sword. If she really wanted to kill Elijah, she would have killed him. She wouldn't have warned him. In reality, she was trying to intimidate him.

Ahab tried to intimidate Elijah in 1 Kings 18:17, but he rejected it. In this instance with Jezebel, though, he failed and fled. Why? Because Elijah honestly thought that somehow or another, God was using him because of some superior ability, quality, or character in his life. He thought he was better than other people. The moment you do that, you're headed for trouble!

ELIJAH'S DOWNFALL

Elijah began by being God-dependent. He started out totally trusting and relying on God to do things through him. But somewhere along the way, as he saw his successes, he actually moved his identity and confidence away from who he was in the Lord and what God had done in him, to who he was in himself and what he'd done. This isn't hard to do.

It's easy to be God-dependent when you're struggling, things aren't going well, and there's nothing you can see in the natural to base your faith on. The only thing you can hang your faith on is the word God has given you. But when they start seeing success and things begin to work, many people move their confidence away from the Lord and what He has said, to things they can see. Then they believe they're a success because of the size of their church, the income of their ministry, the miracles they've seen, or something else. The moment they do that, they've just transferred their confidence—their dependency—from God to something else. Although this is something many people don't want to face, sooner or later every minister—every ministry—will experience problems. It doesn't matter who they are.

Elijah fell because he had transferred his faith and confidence from the Lord to himself. That's why he failed! And this is true for every last one of us. Whenever we fail and experience these difficulties, one way or another, we've done this same exact thing. We shouldn't just wait and

experience it for ourselves. Let's learn this lesson at Elijah's expense. Transferring our faith and confidence from God to ourselves is deadly.

Elijah was so strong that he had defied the king, his armies, and all the prophets of Baal. He stood there and mocked them in front of the entire nation, saying, "Maybe your god is asleep. Yell louder!" He did all of these things, including killing 850 people. Yet one woman with a note caused him to flee in terror. Why? He had taken his faith and confidence away from the Lord and put it upon himself and the things he had done. Elijah's strength was supposed to be in the Lord, not in himself. This is true for every one of us.

YOUR FLESH IS CAPABLE

I'm amazed at how many of us think that the longer we're with the Lord, the stronger and more anointed we become. Somehow, we think we're improving in the process. The truth is the exact opposite. If we're seeing a greater manifestation of God in our lives—greater joy, power, freedom, etc.—the truth is we're becoming more and more dependent on Him. Even though we're more focused on God and can hear Him better, our flesh never improves. Our flesh is still flesh. And the moment we get out of the spirit and into the flesh, we are as capable of doing anything as that flesh was ever capable of doing!

A pastor friend of mine loved God, and good things were happening in his life. However, he fell into a problem and became so discouraged that he threw his Bible out the window and went back to taking drugs. He attempted suicide and wound up in the psychiatric ward of a hospital in Colorado Springs. Don Krow and I went to visit him, but he wouldn't let us in. Even though he was a good friend of ours, he was too embarrassed to see us.

We forced our way in anyway, and he was just sitting there, crying. He told us, "I can't believe I did this! I love God. I've pastored a church. I know better. How could I have done something like this?" When people get out of the spirit and into the flesh, their flesh is as capable of doing anything as it ever was.

It's like flying an airplane. As long as the engines are running, the plane is flying, and you're in it—you're doing great. But if you step out of that airplane, it doesn't matter—you're going down! It wasn't you doing all of this; it was the vehicle you were riding in that was propelling you and giving you this ability to fly. Step out of that vehicle and you're on your own!

It's the same with God. You think, *God, I've really become strong now. I'm greater than I used to be. I'm different than I used to be!* No, your flesh is exactly the same as it ever was. The only victory you're experiencing is because you've become more and more God-dependent. You've let Him live through you (Gal. 2:20). The moment you quit letting God live through you by getting back into self-centeredness and self-sufficiency, you are as capable of doing anything as you ever were.

HEADED FOR FAILURE

It's dangerous for people to experience success who don't have the character to handle it. That's one reason many of you haven't really experienced very much success yet. God is more concerned about you than He is about your ministry. He's more concerned about you than He is just using you. God won't promote you if He knows you can't handle it. He knows you'll be destroyed.

God loves you! Even though He may have given you a call and you can see what the vision is, there is a time in between the call, being separated to that call, and seeing the fulfillment of it. You are the one, primarily, who dictates this amount of time based on what kind of character you develop on the inside.

This is what happened to Elijah. He never was better than his fathers! When he called fire down out of heaven, it wasn't because of his holiness or ability. It was because he was dependent on God and looking totally to Him. As soon as Elijah started reading his own press releases, he became swelled up in pride. He was headed for failure the moment he thought *I've done things nobody else has ever done. I'm special!* It just so happened that the woman with the note triggered it. However, the inevitable could have happened some other way. What an amazing truth!

Outline

- I. If Elijah had really wanted to die, all he had to do was stay there and Jezebel would have obliged him.

And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. [4] But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

1 KINGS 19:3-4

- A. This is the same for so many of us.
- B. We get into self-pity and say things like, “Nothing ever works for me. Things never turn out right!” but we know in our hearts that what we’re saying isn’t true.
- C. Elijah was praying “Take away my life,” when the truth was that he didn’t really want to die; he was in self-pity.
- D. Here is a revealing statement:

O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

1 KINGS 19:4

- E. Elijah had just experienced an unbroken string of successes, so this was dangerous territory, and he started thinking he was better than his fathers.
 - F. Elijah honestly thought that somehow or another, God was using him because of some superior ability, quality, or character in his life.
 - G. He thought he was better than other people, and the moment you do that, you’re headed for trouble!
- II. Elijah began by being God-dependent, by totally trusting and relying on God to do things through him.
- A. But somewhere along the way, as he saw his successes, he actually moved his identity and confidence away from who he was in the Lord and what God had done in him, to who he was in himself and what he’d done.
 - B. It’s easy to be God-dependent when you’re struggling, things aren’t going well, and there’s nothing you can see in the natural to base your faith on.

- C. But when they start seeing success and things begin to work, many people move their confidence away from the Lord and what He has said, to things they can see.
 - D. Then they believe they're a success because of the size of their church, the income of their ministry, the miracles they've seen, or something else.
 - E. Elijah fell because he had transferred his faith and confidence from the Lord to himself.
 - F. And this is true for every last one of us.
 - G. Transferring our faith and confidence from God to ourselves is deadly.
- III. I'm amazed at how many people think that the longer we're with the Lord, the stronger and more anointed we become—somehow, we think that we're improving in the process.
- A. The truth is the exact opposite.
 - B. If we're seeing a greater manifestation of God in our lives—greater joy, power, freedom, etc.—the truth is we're becoming more and more dependent on Him.
 - C. Even though we're more focused on God and can hear Him better, our flesh never improves.
 - D. And the moment we get out of the spirit and into the flesh, we are as capable of doing anything as that flesh was ever capable of doing!
 - E. The only victory you're experiencing is because you've become more and more God-dependent.
 - F. You've let Him live through you (Gal. 2:20).
 - G. The moment you quit letting God live through you by getting back into self-centeredness and self-sufficiency, you are as capable of doing anything as you ever were.
- IV. God is more concerned about you than He is about your ministry; He's more concerned about you than He is just using you.
- A. God won't promote you if He knows you can't handle it—He knows you'll be destroyed.
 - B. God loves you!
 - C. Even though He may have given you a call and you can see what the vision is, there is a time in between the call, being separated to that call, and seeing the fulfillment of it.
 - D. You are the one, primarily, who dictates this amount of time based on what kind of character you develop on the inside.
 - E. This is what happened to Elijah—he never was better than his fathers!
 - F. As soon as Elijah started reading his own press releases, he became swelled up in pride.
 - G. He was headed for failure the moment he thought *I've done things nobody else has ever done. I'm special!* “Better than My Fathers”

Teacher's Guide

1. If Elijah had really wanted to die, all he had to do was stay there and Jezebel would have obliged him.

And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. [4] But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

1 KINGS 19:3-4

This is the same for so many of us. We get into self-pity and say things like, “Nothing ever works for me. Things never turn out right!” but we know in our hearts that what we’re saying isn’t true. Elijah was praying “Take away my life” when the truth was that he didn’t really want to die; he was in self-pity. Here is a revealing statement:

O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

1 KINGS 19:4

Elijah had just experienced an unbroken string of successes, so this was dangerous territory, and he started thinking that he was better than his fathers. Elijah honestly thought that somehow or another, God was using him because of some superior ability, quality, or character in his life. He thought he was better than other people, and the moment you do that, you’re headed for trouble!

- 1a. Did Elijah really want to die?

(No, he was in self-pity)

- 1b. *Discussion question:* Why do you think it was so important to Elijah to be better than his fathers?

(Discussion question)

- 1c. What was Elijah thinking?

(That he was better than his fathers; that God was using him because of some superior ability, quality, or character in his life; and that he was better than other people)

2. Elijah began by being God-dependent, by totally trusting and relying on God to do things through him. But somewhere along the way, as he saw his successes, he actually moved his identity and confidence away from who he was in the Lord and what God had done in him, to who he was in himself and what he'd done. It's easy to be God-dependent when you're struggling, things aren't going well, and there's nothing you can see in the natural to base your faith on. But when they start seeing success and things begin to work, many people move their confidence away from the Lord and what He has said, to things they can see. Then they believe they're a success because of the size of their church, the income of their ministry, the miracles they've seen, or something else. Elijah fell because he had transferred his faith and confidence from the Lord to himself. And this is true for every last one of us. Transferring our faith and confidence from God to ourselves is deadly.

2a. True or false: Elijah began by being self-dependent.

(False)

2b. As Elijah saw his successes, he moved his identity and confidence away from who he was in the Lord and what God had done in him, to what?

- A. Who he was in himself and what he'd done
- B. Who Ahab and Jezebel said he was and what they wanted him to do
- C. What he saw in the natural and what the ravens told him to do
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(A. Who he was in himself and what he'd done)

2c. *Discussion question:* Why is it easy to be God-dependent when things aren't going well and self-dependent when things are going well?

(Discussion question)

2d. Transferring our faith and confidence from _____ to _____ is deadly.

(God / ourselves)

3. I'm amazed at how many people think that the longer we're with the Lord, the stronger and more anointed we become—somehow, we think that we're improving in the process. The truth is the exact opposite. If we're seeing a greater manifestation of God in our lives—greater joy, power, freedom, etc.—the truth is we're becoming more and more dependent on Him. Even though we're more focused on God and can hear Him better, our flesh never improves. And the moment we get out of the spirit and into the flesh, we are as capable of doing anything as that flesh was ever capable of doing! The only victory you're experiencing is because you've become more and more God-dependent. You've let Him live through you (Gal. 2:20). The moment you quit letting God live through you by getting back into self-centeredness and self-sufficiency, you are as capable of doing anything as you ever were.

3a. True or false: The longer you're with the Lord, the stronger and more anointed you become.

(False)

3b. *Discussion question:* How does a greater dependency on God lead to a greater manifestation of Him in your life?

(Discussion question)

3c. The moment you get out of the spirit and into the flesh, are you capable of doing anything as that flesh was ever capable of doing?

(Yes)

3d. *Discussion question:* What are some scriptures that support the concept of letting Christ live through you?

(Discussion question)

4. God is more concerned about you than He is about your ministry; He's more concerned about you than He is just using you. God won't promote you if He knows you can't handle it—He knows you'll be destroyed. God loves you! Even though He may have given you a call and you can see what the vision is, there is a time in between the call, being separated to that call, and seeing the fulfillment of it. You are the one, primarily, who dictates this amount of time based on what kind of character you develop on the inside. This is what happened to Elijah—he never was better than his fathers! As soon as Elijah started reading his own press releases, he became swelled up in pride. He was headed for failure the moment he thought *I've done things nobody else has ever done. I'm special!*

4a. God is more concerned about _____ than He is about your _____.

(You / ministry)

4b. *Discussion question:* Why wouldn't God promote you if He knows you can't handle it?

(Discussion question)

4c. What comes in between the call, being separated to that call, and seeing the fulfillment of it?

(Time)

4d. *Discussion question:* What does your character have to do with your ministry, and how can it affect God's timing?

(Discussion question)

Discipleship Questions

1. Did Elijah really want to die?
2. *Discussion question:* Why do you think it was so important to Elijah to be better than his fathers?
3. What was Elijah thinking?
4. True or false: Elijah began by being self-dependent.
5. As Elijah saw his successes, he moved his identity and confidence away from who he was in the Lord and what God had done in him, to what?
 - A. Who he was in himself and what he'd done
 - B. Who Ahab and Jezebel said he was and what they wanted him to do
 - C. What he saw in the natural and what the ravens told him to do
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above
6. *Discussion question:* Why is it easy to be God-dependent when things aren't going well and self-dependent when things are going well?
7. Transferring our faith and confidence from _____ to _____ is deadly.

8. True or false: The longer you're with the Lord, the stronger and more anointed you become.

9. *Discussion question:* How does a greater dependency on God lead to a greater manifestation of Him in your life?

10. The moment you get out of the spirit and into the flesh, are you capable of doing anything as that flesh was ever capable of doing?

11. *Discussion question:* What are some scriptures that support the concept of letting Christ live through you?

12. God is more concerned about _____ than He is about your _____.

13. *Discussion question:* Why wouldn't God promote you if He knows you can't handle it?

14. What comes in between the call, being separated to that call, and seeing the fulfillment of it?

15. *Discussion question:* What does your character have to do with your ministry, and how can it affect God's timing?

Answer Key

1. No, he was in self-pity
2. *Discussion question*
3. That he was better than his fathers; that God was using him because of some superior ability, quality, or character in his life; and that he was better than other people
4. False
5. A. Who he was in himself and what he'd done
6. *Discussion question*
7. God / ourselves
8. False
9. *Discussion question*
10. Yes
11. *Discussion question*
12. You / ministry
13. *Discussion question*
14. Time
15. *Discussion question*

Scriptures

1 KINGS 19:3-4

And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. [4] But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

1 KINGS 18:22

Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

1 KINGS 18:17

And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

GALATIANS 2:20

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

"What Are You Doing Here?" - Part I

And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. [6] And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. [7] And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. [8] And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. [9] And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

1 KINGS 19:5-9

God asked Elijah, "What are you doing here?" Elijah wasn't "there." This wasn't where God wanted him to be. They were having a revival in Samaria, but the guy God used to spark it had fled. Instead of rejoicing and leading the people, Elijah was hiding and complaining. Within forty-eight hours or so of seeing the fire of God fall, slaughtering the false prophets, and praying down rain, this guy was so discouraged and depressed that he was telling God to kill him. So, the Lord asked, "What are you doing here? This isn't there! This is not where I want you to be."

EXCUSES, EXCUSES

Look at Elijah's answer.

And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

1 KINGS 19:10

Lie! That was a lie! Instead of humbling himself, he justified himself. Elijah was defeated, depressed, and in retreat, but he still wasn't willing to admit, "God, it's me. I missed it." Instead, he was contending, "It's other people and what they've done. I'm the only one left!"

This attitude is prevalent in our society today. Very few people accept responsibility for themselves and their actions. They blame anything and everything else!

I've heard all kinds of excuses as I've traveled. Normally, the people start telling me how hard it is to minister, saying, "Nobody can make it here. This is the occult capital of the United States." Really? I've been to at least a hundred places that have claimed that distinction. "But you don't understand. They're all snowbirds down here. They're here to retire and get away from everything. They aren't seeking God!" It's always the excuse that it's because of something or somebody else that the church hasn't grown and nothing is ever working. "It's those people!" or the old standby "It's that woman that You gave me!" They're always using some excuse.

"I'M THE ONLY ONE!"

That's exactly what Elijah was doing. He was sitting there saying, "God, I've been jealous for You. I've done good. It wasn't me. It was these people. I'm the only one left!" That wasn't the right answer. The Lord was giving him a test to see if he had repented, but he gave the wrong answer.

Elijah was deceived. He was saying, "I'm the only one serving You!" Anytime you think you're the only one serving God, you can just write "Ichabod" over your head (1 Sam. 4:21-22)—the glory has departed! Never, under any circumstances, are you ever the only one who loves God. You are never the only person in your city or church serving Him. Anytime you think that, you're in big trouble! It's just never, ever true.

Elijah knew differently. He knew that there were other prophets (1 Kin. 18:13). But apparently, he had written them off, saying, "They aren't of my caliber. They aren't 'full Gospel.' They don't have the revelation. I'm the only one preaching the true word of God." That's a terrible attitude!

THE STILL, SMALL VOICE

So, the Lord spoke to him again.

And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an

earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: [12] And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

1 KINGS 19:11-12

Elijah had started off just listening to the still, small voice and having relationship with God. He was a nobody. No one knew him. Nothing dramatic had ever happened. Then the Lord had spoken a word into his heart concerning a drought, and the ball started rolling. Yet later on, Elijah had seen God do so many powerful things through him that he'd moved away from the simple and gotten into the spectacular. He had moved away from being intimate with and completely dependent on God. It can be hard to handle seeing fire fall from heaven, consume the sacrifice, and spark a great revival—what do you do for an encore?

I've met many ministers who have seen God use them in great manifestations of His power. However, in a sense, it ruins them. They become bored after that. After a while, that little zing, that emotional high they get from being somebody special, wears off. Then they have to do something else to become someone special again. It's easy to transfer your dependence and faith away from God and onto things.

The Lord sent the awesome wind, earthquake, and fire—all of these dramatic, spectacular things—but He wasn't in any of them. God manifested Himself to Elijah in the still, small voice.

The Lord was calling Elijah back to humility and intimate relationship. He was saying, "Elijah, you've gotten away from this. This was what made you who you are. It's what made the things you've seen happen. Yet you've gotten away from them."

Outline

I. God asked Elijah, “What are you doing here?”

And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. [6] And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. [7] And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. [8] And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. [9] And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

1 KINGS 19:5-9

- A. Elijah wasn't “there”; this wasn't where God wanted him to be.
- B. They were having a revival in Samaria, but the guy God used to spark it had fled.
- C. Instead of rejoicing and leading the people, Elijah was hiding and complaining.
- D. So, the Lord asked, “What are you doing here? This isn't there! This is not where I want you to be.”

II. Look at Elijah's answer.

And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

1 KINGS 19:10

- A. Instead of humbling himself, he justified himself.
- B. Elijah was defeated, depressed, and in retreat, but he still wasn't willing to admit, “God, it's me. I missed it.”
- C. Instead, he was contending, “It's other people and what they've done. I'm the only one left!”
- D. This attitude is prevalent in society today—very few people accept responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- E. They're always using some excuse.
- F. That's exactly what Elijah was doing.
- G. The Lord was giving him a test to see if he had repented, but he gave the wrong answer.
- H. Elijah was deceived.

- I. Never, under any circumstances, are you ever the only one who loves God.
- J. Anytime you think that, you're in big trouble!
- K. It's just never, ever true.

III. So, the Lord spoke to Elijah again.

And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: [12] And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

1 KINGS 19:11-12

- A. Elijah had started off just listening to the still, small voice and having relationship with God.
- B. He was a nobody—nothing dramatic had ever happened.
- C. Then the Lord had spoken a word into his heart concerning a drought, and the ball started rolling.
- D. Yet later on, Elijah had seen God do so many powerful things through him that he'd moved away from the simple and gotten into the spectacular.
- E. He had moved away from being intimate with and completely dependent on God.
- F. I've met many ministers who have seen God use them in great manifestations of His power, but after a while, that little zing, that emotional high they get from being somebody special, wears off.
- G. Then they have to do something else to become someone special again.
- H. It's easy to transfer your dependence and faith away from God and onto things.
- I. The Lord was calling Elijah back to humility and intimate relationship.
- J. He was saying, "Elijah, you've gotten away from this. This was what made you who you are. It's what made the things you've seen happen. Yet you've gotten away from them."

2. Look at Elijah's answer.

And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

1 KINGS 19:10

Instead of humbling himself, he justified himself. Elijah was defeated, depressed, and in retreat, but he still wasn't willing to admit, "God, it's me. I missed it." Instead, he was contending, "It's other people and what they've done. I'm the only one left!" This attitude is prevalent in society today—very few people accept responsibility for themselves and their actions. They're always using some excuse. That's exactly what Elijah was doing. The Lord was giving him a test to see if he had repented, but he gave the wrong answer. Elijah was deceived. Never, under any circumstances, are you ever the only one who loves God. Anytime you think that, you're in big trouble! It's just never, ever true.

2a. How did Elijah answer God's question?

("And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kin. 19:10); i.e., instead of humbling himself, he justified himself)

2b. This attitude is prevalent in society today—very few people accept what?

- A. Credit cards
- B. Responsibility for themselves and their actions
- C. Their shortcomings and failings
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(B. Responsibility for themselves and their actions)

2c. Discussion question: Why is it dangerous to think you are the only one who loves God?

(Discussion question)

3. So, the Lord spoke to Elijah again.

And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: [12] And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

1 KINGS 19:11-12

Elijah had started off just listening to the still, small voice and having relationship with God. He was a nobody—nothing dramatic had ever happened. Then the Lord had spoken a word into his heart concerning a drought, and the ball started rolling. Yet later on, Elijah had seen God do so many powerful things through him that he'd moved away from the simple and gotten into the spectacular. He had moved away from being intimate with and completely dependent on God. I've met many ministers who have seen God use them in great manifestations of His power, but after a while, that little zing, that emotional high they get from being somebody special, wears off. Then they have to do something else to become someone special again. It's easy to transfer your dependence and faith away from God and onto things. The Lord was calling Elijah back to humility and intimate relationship. He was saying, "Elijah, you've gotten away from this. This was what made you who you are. It's what made the things you've seen happen. Yet you've gotten away from them."

3a. True or false: Elijah was a well-known prophet of God before he received the word concerning the drought.

(False)

3b. *Discussion question:* In an effort to achieve an emotional high by being someone special, why would you transfer your dependence and faith away from God and onto things?

(Discussion question)

3c. The Lord was calling Elijah back to _____ and _____.

(Humility / intimate relationship)

Discipleship Questions

1. First Kings 19:9 says, “And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, _____
_____, Elijah?”
2. *Discussion question:* Why do you think Elijah wasn’t “there,” where he was supposed to be?
3. How did Elijah answer God’s question?
4. This attitude is prevalent in society today—very few people accept what?
 - A. Credit cards
 - B. Responsibility for themselves and their actions
 - C. Their shortcomings and failings
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above
5. *Discussion question:* Why is it dangerous to think you are the only one who loves God?
6. True or false: Elijah was a well-known prophet of God before he received the word concerning the drought.

7. *Discussion question:* In an effort to achieve an emotional high by being someone special, why would you transfer your dependence and faith away from God and onto things?

8. The Lord was calling Elijah back to _____ and _____.

Answer Key

1. "What doest thou here"
2. Discussion question
3. "And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kin. 19:10); i.e., instead of humbling himself, he justified himself
4. B. Responsibility for themselves and their actions
5. Discussion question
6. False
7. Discussion question
8. Humility / intimate relationship

Scriptures

1 KINGS 19:5-12

And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. [6] And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. [7] And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. [8] And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. [9] And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? [10] And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. [11] And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: [12] And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

1 SAMUEL 4:21-22

And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband. [22] And she said, The glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken.

1 KINGS 18:13

Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?

"What Are You Doing Here?" - Part 2

When Elijah first started his ministry, he had nothing in the natural going for him—except he had a word from God. Because of this, he was dependent on Him and spent time just loving and worshiping God. Then he became a success. He saw God use him in ways that even Moses hadn't been used. He moved away from the simplicity of his relationship with the Lord. He left his first love (Rev. 2:4).

The Lord did all those dramatic things, but He wasn't in them. He was in the still, small voice. You'll never grow beyond this. You'll never grow beyond just this personal, intimate relationship with God. This must be the foundation of anyone who is going to stay with God over a prolonged period of time. It was this humility and intimacy with the Lord that Elijah got away from. Yet he was mightily used of God.

In 1 Kings 19:13, the Lord finally spoke to him in a still, small voice, asking again, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

God asked him the same question as before (1 Kin. 19:9). As you know, the Lord doesn't repeat Himself often. He'll say something to you, and then you won't hear from Him again until you deal with what He said before. It's pretty serious when God repeats Himself. Elijah had failed the first test. God had asked, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Instead of humbling himself and saying, "I got into pride and thought I was better than everyone else," he blamed everybody else, saying, "I've been faithful. I'm the only one!" Elijah failed the first time, so God let him take the test over again by asking the same question. However, Elijah answered with the same exact words!

PRIDE AND ARROGANCE

And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

1 KINGS 19:14

This wasn't true the first time, and it wasn't true the second time either! If the Lord lets you retake a test, it's because you failed the first time around. Elijah should have at least tried a different answer.

The Lord finally went on and said, "There are 7,000 who haven't bowed the knee to Baal" (1 Kin. 19:18). Elijah knew of at least a hundred, but there were 7,000 who were still faithful servants of God!

Anytime you think you're the only person with a revelation or who's doing something, you're wrong! You've moved into some form of pride and arrogance, thinking you have something nobody else has. It's never true.

The Lord then told Elijah to do three things. One was to get a replacement—to find Elisha—and anoint him to be prophet in his stead. Personally, I don't believe Elisha was God's original plan.

PLAN B

David wasn't God's first choice either.

And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. [14] But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.

1 SAMUEL 13:13-14

Samuel told Saul, "If you had humbled yourself today, God would have established your throne in Israel forever." Saul was God's first choice. He wasn't an intermediate step on the way to David. There never would have been a David if Saul had been faithful. Saul was God's first choice and he blew it! David was God's second choice. Although David worked out great and God's plan B was better than we could imagine plan A would have been, who knows what would have happened if Saul had been faithful and stayed true to God?

I believe it's the same thing here. Elijah, not Elisha, was God's real choice in this matter. Elisha simply fulfilled what Elijah was called to do. If Elijah had remained faithful—humbled himself and given the right response—he would have finished his work. The things Elisha did, Elijah would have accomplished.

“ I QUIT! ”

Look what God told him to do:

And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: [16] And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. [17] And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. [18] Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

1 KINGS 19:15-18

Elijah immediately departed and did the last thing he was commanded to do: he anointed Elisha to be prophet in his stead. He never did the other two things God told him to do. Elisha had to do them instead (2 Kin. 8:7-15 and 9:1-10). Elisha wouldn't have done them if Elijah had.

After several powerful manifestations of wind, earthquake, and fire, here was the Lord speaking to Elijah in a still, small—but audible—voice. God gave him three specific things to do, but Elijah just skipped two-thirds of them. He went right away and anointed his successor, which was like saying, “I'm ready to get out of this. I'm ready to die.” Basically, Elijah anointed his successor and quit.

Only a few things were recorded of Elijah in Scripture after this. When Ahab killed Naboth (1 Kin. 21:1-16), Elijah went down and prophesied destruction over Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kin. 21:17-24). Then Ahab's son, Ahaziah, sent soldiers to kill him in 2 Kings 1. Elijah simply called down fire from heaven and consumed 102 men.

However, this wasn't God's perfect will. Jesus rebuked His disciples in the New Testament for trying to do the same thing (Luke 9:54-56). If Christ had physically been there in 2 Kings, He would have rebuked Elijah too. I'm not saying Elijah sinned. It was just a different covenant, so things like that could happen—but it was never God's best.

Outline

- IV. When Elijah first started his ministry, he had nothing in the natural going for him—except he had a word from God.
- A. Then he became a success.
 - B. He moved away from the simplicity of his relationship with the Lord—he left his first love (Rev. 2:4).
 - C. The Lord did all those dramatic things (1 Kings 19:11-12), but He wasn't in them; He was in the still, small voice.
 - D. You'll never grow beyond this—you'll never grow beyond just this personal, intimate relationship with God.
 - E. This must be the foundation of anyone who is going to stay with God over a prolonged period of time.
 - F. In 1 Kings 19:13, the Lord finally spoke to him in a still, small voice, asking again, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"
 - G. It's pretty serious when God repeats Himself.
 - H. Elijah failed the first time, so God let him take the test over again by asking the same question.
 - I. However, Elijah answered with the same exact words!

And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

1 KINGS 19:14

- J. If the Lord lets you retake a test, it's because you failed the first time around.
 - K. Elijah should have at least tried a different answer.
 - L. The Lord finally went on and said, "There are 7,000 who haven't bowed the knee to Baal" (1 Kin. 19:18).
 - M. Anytime you think you're the only person with a revelation or who's doing something, you're wrong!
 - N. You've moved into some form of pride and arrogance, thinking that you have something nobody else has—it's never true.
- V. The Lord then told Elijah to do three things.

- A. One was to get a replacement—to find Elisha—and anoint him to be prophet in his stead.
- B. Personally, I don't believe Elisha was God's original plan.
- C. David wasn't God's first choice either.

And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. [14] But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.

1 SAMUEL 13:13-14

- D. Saul was God's first choice.
- E. He wasn't an intermediate step on the way to David.
- F. There never would have been a David if Saul had been faithful—Saul was God's first choice and he blew it!
- G. I believe it's the same thing here: Elijah, not Elisha, was God's real choice in this matter.
- H. If Elijah had remained faithful—humbled himself and given the right response—he would have finished his work.
- I. The things Elisha did, Elijah would have accomplished.

VI. Look what God told Elijah to do:

And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: [16] And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. [17] And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. [18] Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

1 KINGS 19:15-18

- A. Elijah immediately departed and did the last thing he was commanded to do: he anointed Elisha to be prophet in his stead.
- B. He never did the other two things God told him to do.
 - 1. Elisha had to do them instead (2 Kin. 8:7-15 and 9:1-10).
 - 2. Elisha wouldn't have done them if Elijah had.
- C. God gave him three specific things to do, but Elijah just skipped two-thirds of them.

- D. Basically, Elijah anointed his successor and quit.
- E. Only a few things were recorded of Elijah in Scripture after this, including when Ahab's son, Ahaziah, sent soldiers to kill him (2 Kings 1).

VII. Elijah called down fire from heaven and consumed 102 men.

- A. However, this wasn't God's perfect will.
- B. Jesus rebuked His disciples in the New Testament for trying to do the same thing (Luke 9:54-56).
- C. I'm not saying Elijah sinned.
- D. It was just a different covenant, so things like that could happen—but it was never God's best.

Teacher's Guide

4. When Elijah first started his ministry, he had nothing in the natural going for him—except he had a word from God. Then he became a success. He moved away from the simplicity of his relationship with the Lord—he left his first love (Rev. 2:4). The Lord did all those dramatic things (1 Kings 19:11-12), but He wasn't in them; He was in the still, small voice. You'll never grow beyond this—you'll never grow beyond just this personal, intimate relationship with God. This must be the foundation of anyone who is going to stay with God over a prolonged period of time. In 1 Kings 19:13, the Lord finally spoke to him in a still, small voice, asking again, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" It's pretty serious when God repeats Himself. Elijah failed the first time, so God let him take the test over again by asking the same question. However, Elijah answered with the same exact words!

And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

1 KINGS 19:14

If the Lord lets you retake a test, it's because you failed the first time around. Elijah should have at least tried a different answer. The Lord finally went on and said, "There are 7,000 who haven't bowed the knee to Baal" (1 Kin. 19:18). Anytime you think you're the only person with a revelation or who's doing something, you're wrong! You've moved into some form of pride and arrogance, thinking that you have something nobody else has—it's never true.

4a. Read Revelation 2:4. What did Elijah do?

(He left his first love)

4b. *Discussion question:* Why won't a believer ever grow beyond a personal, intimate relationship with God?

(Discussion question)

4c. *Discussion question:* Why must this type of relationship with God be the foundation of anyone who is going to stay with Him over a prolonged period of time?

(Discussion question)

4d. True or false: It's pretty serious when God repeats Himself.

(True)

4e. What should Elijah have done when God asked him the same question?

(At least tried a different answer)

5. The Lord then told Elijah to do three things. One was to get a replacement—to find Elisha—and anoint him to be prophet in his stead. Personally, I don't believe Elisha was God's original plan. David wasn't God's first choice either.

And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. [14] But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.

1 SAMUEL 13:13-14

Saul was God's first choice. He wasn't an intermediate step on the way to David. There never would have been a David if Saul had been faithful—Saul was God's first choice and he blew it! I believe it's the same thing here: Elijah, not Elisha, was God's real choice in this matter. If Elijah had remained faithful—humbled himself and given the right response—he would have finished his work. The things Elisha did, Elijah would have accomplished.

5a. There never would have been a _____ if Saul had been faithful—Saul was God's _____ and he blew it!

(David / first choice)

5b. *Discussion question:* Why is humbling yourself so important to finishing the work God has called you to do?

(Discussion question)

6. Look what God told Elijah to do:

And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: [16] And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. [17] And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. [18] Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

1 KINGS 19:15-18

Elijah immediately departed and did the last thing he was commanded to do: he anointed Elisha to be prophet in his stead. He never did the other two things God told him to do. Elisha had to do them instead (2 Kin. 8:7-15 and 9:1-10). Elisha wouldn't have done them if Elijah had. God gave him three specific things to do, but Elijah just skipped two-thirds of them. Basically, Elijah anointed his successor and quit. Only a few things were recorded of Elijah in Scripture after this, including when Ahab's son, Ahaziah, sent soldiers to kill him (2 Kings 1).

6a. What did Elijah do after God gave him those three commands (1 Kin. 19:15-18)?

(He immediately departed and did the last thing he was commanded to do: he anointed Elisha to be prophet in his stead)

6b. What happened with the other two things God told Elijah to do?

- A. They weren't done
- B. Elijah did them eventually
- C. Elisha did them instead
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

(C. Elisha did them instead)

6c. *Discussion question:* What happened to Elijah and his ministry after he anointed his successor, Elisha?

(Discussion question)

7. Elijah called down fire from heaven and consumed 102 men. However, this wasn't God's perfect will. Jesus rebuked His disciples in the New Testament for trying to do the same thing (Luke 9:54-56). I'm not saying Elijah sinned. It was just a different covenant, so things like that could happen—but it was never God's best.

7a. *Discussion question:* Why was calling fire down from heaven never God's best? Refer to 2 Kings 1, Luke 9:54-56, and other scriptures as needed.

(Discussion question)

Discipleship Questions

9. Read Revelation 2:4. What did Elijah do?

10. *Discussion question:* Why won't a believer ever grow beyond a personal, intimate relationship with God?

11. *Discussion question:* Why must this type of relationship with God be the foundation of anyone who is going to stay with Him over a prolonged period of time?

12. True or false: It's pretty serious when God repeats Himself.

13. What should Elijah have done when God asked him the same question?

14. There never would have been a _____ if Saul had been faithful—Saul was God's _____ and he blew it!

15. *Discussion question:* Why is humbling yourself so important to finishing the work God has called you to do?

16. What did Elijah do after God gave him those three commands (1 Kin. 19:15-18)?

17. What happened with the other two things God told Elijah to do?
- A. They weren't done
 - B. Elijah did them eventually
 - C. Elisha did them instead
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above
18. *Discussion question:* What happened to Elijah and his ministry after he anointed his successor, Elisha?
19. *Discussion question:* Why was calling fire down from heaven never God's best? Refer to 2 Kings 1, Luke 9:54-56, and other scriptures as needed.

Answer Key

9. He left his first love
10. *Discussion question*
11. *Discussion question*
12. True
13. At least tried a different answer
14. David / first choice
15. *Discussion question*
16. He immediately departed and did the last thing he was commanded to do: he anointed Elisha to be prophet in his stead
17. C. Elisha did them instead
18. *Discussion question*
19. *Discussion question*

Scriptures

REVELATION 2:4

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

1 KINGS 19:13-18

And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? [14] And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. [15] And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: [16] And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. [17] And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. [18] Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

1 KINGS 19:9

And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

1 SAMUEL 13:13-14

And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. [14] But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.

2 KINGS 8:7-15

And Elisha came to Damascus; and Benhadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither. [8] And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and enquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? [9] So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Benhadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? [10] And Elisha said unto him,

Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the LORD hath shewed me that he shall surely die. [11] And he settled his countenance stedfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept. [12] And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. [13] And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria. [14] So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou shouldst surely recover. [15] And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

2 KINGS 9:1-10

And Elisha the prophet called one of the children of the prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramothgilead: [2] And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber; [3] Then take the box of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not. [4] So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramothgilead. [5] And when he came, behold, the captains of the host were sitting; and he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain. [6] And he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, even over Israel. [7] And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel. [8] For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: and I will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel: [9] And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah: [10] And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. And he opened the door, and fled.

1 KINGS 21:1-24

And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. [2] And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. [3] And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. [4] And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because

of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. [5] But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? [6] And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. [7] And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. [8] So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth. [9] And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people: [10] And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die. [11] And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them. [12] They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. [13] And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died. [14] Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. [15] And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead. [16] And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it. [17] And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, [18] Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. [19] And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. [20] And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD. [21] Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, [22] And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin. [23] And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. [24] Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

LUKE 9:54-56

And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? [55] But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. [56] For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

Be Faithful!

After Elijah anointed Elisha, he didn't do very much. This was basically the end of his ministry. Elijah never anointed the two kings God had commanded him to anoint.

What Ahab did to Naboth was totally unjust. He wanted Naboth's vineyard, but Naboth wouldn't sell. So, Jezebel and Ahab set him up and brought false charges against him. After Jezebel had Naboth stoned, she told Ahab to go down and possess his vineyard (1 Kin. 21).

If Elijah had been obedient to anoint Jehu as king, Ahab and Jezebel wouldn't have done this. When Elisha did finally anoint him, Jehu marched right out of the room, rode straight into Samaria, and immediately killed Ahaziah, Jezebel, and all of Ahab's relatives (2 Kin. 9-10). Ahab himself had already died in battle some time before (1 Kin. 22:34-40). As Jehu took over the kingdom, he deceived all of the nation's Baal worshipers into gathering together at once in the house of Baal. Then he closed the gates and ordered his army to kill every single one of them. Jehu made the house of Baal a latrine (2 Kin. 10:27). He was vicious!

If Elijah had anointed Jehu as king, Ahab and Jezebel would have been dead and Naboth would never have been killed. The death of Naboth was actually a result of Elijah failing to do what God told him to do. Therefore, Elijah was responsible for Naboth's death.

Since the Scripture doesn't tell us exactly what would have or could have happened, it's not productive to speculate. However, we do know that people—both individuals and the nation as a whole—suffered because of Elijah's disobedience. Elisha was actually a second thought. All of this would probably have never happened if Elijah had fulfilled his ministry.

CALLED BY GRACE

I've heard many people testify that they weren't God's first choice for the assignment He called them to do. You may not be God's first choice either. You may be picking up a mantle that someone else laid down. You may say, "But, Andrew, that's hard on my pride!" Good!

You need to recognize that God has never had anybody qualified working for Him yet. The Lord isn't using you because you're so perfect and holy and you have it all together. If you keep this in mind, it'll prevent you from getting this "Elijah Syndrome" and slipping into this attitude of "I'm the only one!"

God uses you because you're available, responsive, and fully trusting in Him. But the moment you think the Lord is using you because of who you are and what you've done, you're headed for trouble (Prov. 16:18). God could easily raise up somebody else to do it instead. Although He calls you based on His grace, whether or not the Lord promotes you any further does depend on how you respond to certain things.

If Elijah had humbled himself when God tested him, I believe the Lord would have restored him. Then Elijah could have fulfilled his call in life. But since he continued in arrogance, Elijah missed most of the rest of God's plan.

STAY HUMBLE

God loves us and it's by His grace that He's called any of us to minister. It's His grace that has given us whatever gifts we have. Our gifts and callings are by grace. They aren't based on our performance (Rom. 11:29). But as far as our God-given spheres of influence, those are dependent on a lot of things.

If you've proven to be a person without character, the Lord won't promote you. That doesn't mean you can't be promoted. There is a religious system today that can promote people itself. Some folks who make it to the "top," get on radio and television, become famous, but were not put there by God at all. The Lord doesn't promote someone who isn't going to accurately represent Him.

If you fall into this "Elijah Syndrome" and flunk your test, humble yourself and learn from your mistake. If God gives you a retest and you continue in your arrogance, you could actually decrease your influence and cut your ministry short. Faithfulness is important!

God rewards faithfulness. He has a perfect plan for every single one of us, totally independent of our performance. However, our ability to experience and fulfill those plans will depend on how closely we follow the Lord and stay humble before Him.

Elijah was a man who did all these great things. Then he also failed—big time! When God spoke to him in an audible voice, he refused to do two-thirds of what God had commanded him to do. Yet Elijah walked with God to such a degree that he was translated into heaven. He was one of only two people who never died (2 Kin. 2:11 and Heb. 11:5). Talk about grace!

KNOW YOUR PLACE

Basically, Elijah never fulfilled his ministry. He didn't do everything God told him to do. He quit midstream because he failed. Elijah was just never able to recover and get back on track, because his confidence was in himself. Yet he walked with God to such a degree that he was translated:

And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. [2] And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.

2 KINGS 2:1-2

And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

2 KINGS 2:4

And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here: for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

2 KINGS 2:6

Elijah tried to part with Elisha three different times, but Elisha just held on. Elisha had this concept that Elijah possessed in the beginning: He was going to be where God wanted him to be. He was going to be “there!” Elisha knew what was going to happen to Elijah, and he refused to stay “here”; he went “there.” He knew his place was with Elijah, not somewhere else. Therefore, he wouldn't take no for an answer. Elisha was a faithful guy!

FULLY DEPENDENT ON HIM

Elisha was never rebuked the way Elijah was. We didn't see the failure in Elisha's life the way we saw it in Elijah's. Elisha performed twice as many miracles, yet he wasn't translated. He died. In fact, the Scripture records that he died sick.

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died.... [20] And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. [21] And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

2 KINGS 13:14 AND 20-21

Even though Elisha died of sickness, the power of God operated so strongly in him that a dead man came back to life after merely touching his bones! I don't understand how there was enough anointing in Elisha's bones to raise the dead yet he died of sickness. I also don't understand how Elisha could be more faithful than Elijah yet not have the same results. Why wasn't he translated too? Apparently, there were other variables that we're not aware of.

There is much to learn from the life of Elijah! When you begin to see success and start feeling like you've done something, you'd better draw near to God and keep your full dependence on Him. If you swell up in pride, you'll be headed for a fall (Prov. 16:18). Recognize that you aren't the only one preaching the Word, ministering in power, and doing something to advance God's kingdom. You need to maintain a humble attitude. If you do, the Lord will be able to preserve you from the kinds of problems you saw in the life of Elijah (1 Pet. 5:5-6).

Outline

- I. What Ahab did to Naboth was totally unjust.
 - A. If Elijah had been obedient to anoint Jehu as king, Ahab and Jezebel wouldn't have falsely accused Naboth, killed him, and stolen his land (1 Kin. 21).
 - B. When Elisha did finally anoint him, Jehu marched right out of the room, rode straight into Samaria, and immediately killed Ahaziah, Jezebel, and all of Ahab's relatives (2 Kin. 9-10).
 - C. If Elijah had anointed Jehu as king, Ahab and Jezebel would have been dead and Naboth would never have been killed.
 - D. The death of Naboth was actually a result of Elijah failing to do what God told him to do.
 - E. Since the Scripture doesn't tell us exactly what would have or could have happened, it's not productive to speculate.
 - F. However, we do know that people—both individuals and the nation as a whole—suffered because of Elijah's disobedience.
 - G. All of this would probably have never happened if Elijah had fulfilled his ministry.

- II. You need to recognize that God has never had anybody qualified working for Him yet.
 - A. The Lord isn't using you because you're so perfect and holy and you have it all together.
 - B. If you keep this in mind, it'll prevent you from getting this "Elijah Syndrome" and slipping into this attitude of "I'm the only one!"
 - C. God uses you because you're available, responsive, and fully trusting in Him.
 - D. But the moment you think the Lord is using you because of who you are and what you've done, you're headed for trouble (Prov. 16:18).
 - E. God could easily raise up somebody else to do it instead.
 - F. Although He calls you based on His grace, whether or not the Lord promotes you any further does depend on how you respond to certain things.
 - G. If Elijah had humbled himself when God tested him, I believe the Lord would have restored him—then Elijah could have fulfilled his call in life.

- III. God loves us and it's by His grace that He's called any of us to minister.
 - A. Our gifts and callings are by grace; they aren't based on our performance (Rom. 11:29).
 - B. But as far as our God-given spheres of influence, those are dependent on a lot of things.
 - C. If we've proven to be people without character, the Lord won't promote us.
 - D. That doesn't mean we can't be promoted.
 - E. There is a religious system today that can promote people itself.

- F. But the Lord doesn't promote someone who isn't going to accurately represent Him.
- G. If we fall into this "Elijah Syndrome" and flunk our test, we should humble ourselves and learn from our mistakes.
- H. Faithfulness is important!
- I. God rewards faithfulness.
- J. He has a perfect plan for every single one of us, totally independent of our performance.
- K. However, our ability to experience and fulfill those plans will depend on how closely we follow the Lord and stay humble before Him.

IV. Basically, Elijah never fulfilled his ministry.

- A. He quit midstream because he failed.
- B. Elijah was just never able to recover and get back on track, because his confidence was in himself.
- C. Yet he walked with God to such a degree that he was translated:

And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. [2] And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.

2 KINGS 2:1-2

And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

2 KINGS 2:4

And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here: for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

2 KINGS 2:6

- D. Elijah tried to part with Elisha three different times, but Elisha just held on.
- E. Elisha had this concept that Elijah possessed in the beginning: He was going to be where God wanted him to be—he was going to be "there!"
- F. He knew his place was with Elijah, not somewhere else; therefore, he wouldn't take no for an answer.
- G. Elisha was a faithful guy!

- V. Elisha was never rebuked the way Elijah was, nor did we see the failure in Elisha's life the way we saw it in Elijah's.
- A. Elisha performed twice as many miracles, yet he wasn't translated—he died.
 - B. In fact, the Scripture records that he died sick.

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died.... [20] And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. [21] And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

2 KINGS 13:14 AND 20-21

- C. Even though Elisha died of sickness, the power of God operated so strongly in him that a dead man came back to life after merely touching his bones!
 - D. I don't understand how there was enough anointing in Elisha's bones to raise the dead yet he died of sickness.
 - E. I also don't understand how Elisha could be more faithful than Elijah yet not have the same results—why wasn't he translated too?
 - F. Apparently, there were other variables that we're not aware of.
- VI. There is much to learn from the life of Elijah!
- A. When you begin to see success and start feeling like you've done something, you'd better draw near to God and keep your full dependence on Him.
 - B. If you swell up in pride, you'll be headed for a fall (Prov. 16:18).
 - C. Recognize that you aren't the only one preaching the Word, ministering in power, and doing something to advance God's kingdom.
 - D. You need to maintain a humble attitude.
 - E. If you do, the Lord will be able to preserve you from the kinds of problems you saw in the life of Elijah (1 Pet. 5:5-6).

Teacher's Guide

1. What Ahab did to Naboth was totally unjust. If Elijah had been obedient to anoint Jehu as king, Ahab and Jezebel wouldn't have falsely accused Naboth, killed him, and stolen his land (1 Kin. 21). When Elisha did finally anoint him, Jehu marched right out of the room, rode straight into Samaria, and immediately killed Ahaziah, Jezebel, and all of Ahab's relatives (2 Kin. 9-10). If Elijah had anointed Jehu as king, Ahab and Jezebel would have been dead and Naboth would never have been killed. The death of Naboth was actually a result of Elijah failing to do what God told him to do. Since the Scripture doesn't tell us exactly what would have or could have happened, it's not productive to speculate. However, we do know that people—both individuals and the nation as a whole—suffered because of Elijah's disobedience. All of this would probably have never happened if Elijah had fulfilled his ministry.

1a. *Discussion question:* Meditate on the actions of Elijah, Ahab, Jezebel, Naboth, and Jehu (1 Kin. 21 and 2 Kin. 9-10). What can you learn from these people?

(Discussion question)

2. You need to recognize that God has never had anybody qualified working for Him yet. The Lord isn't using you because you're so perfect and holy and you have it all together. If you keep this in mind, it'll prevent you from getting this "Elijah Syndrome" and slipping into this attitude of "I'm the only one!" God uses you because you're available, responsive, and fully trusting in Him. But the moment you think the Lord is using you because of who you are and what you've done, you're headed for trouble (Prov. 16:18). God could easily raise up somebody else to do it instead. Although He calls you based on His grace, whether or not the Lord promotes you any further does depend on how you respond to certain things. If Elijah had humbled himself when God tested him, I believe the Lord would have restored him—then Elijah could have fulfilled his call in life.

2a. True or false: The Lord is using you because you're so perfect and holy and you have it all together.

(False)

2b. Why does God use you?

(Because you're available, responsive, and fully trusting in Him)

2c. *Discussion question:* What are your thoughts on the idea that "although He calls you based on His grace, whether or not the Lord promotes you any further does depend on how you respond to certain things"?

(Discussion question)

3. God loves us and it's by His grace that He's called any of us to minister. Our gifts and callings are by grace; they aren't based on our performance (Rom. 11:29). But as far as our God-given spheres of influence, those are dependent on a lot of things. If we've proven to be people without character, the Lord won't promote us. That doesn't mean we can't be promoted. There is a religious system today that can promote people itself. But the Lord doesn't promote someone who isn't going to accurately represent Him. If we fall into this "Elijah Syndrome" and flunk our test, we should humble ourselves and learn from our mistakes. Faithfulness is important! God rewards faithfulness. He has a perfect plan for every single one of us, totally independent of our performance. However, our ability to experience and fulfill those plans will depend on how closely we follow the Lord and stay humble before Him.

3a. God _____ you and it's by His _____ that He's _____ any of you to minister.
(Loves / grace / called)

3b. Your gifts and callings are by grace; they aren't based on what, according to Romans 11:29?

- A. Your performance
- B. The weather
- C. Your family
- D. God
- E. Your circumstances

(A. Your performance)

3c. *Discussion question:* Why are character and faithfulness so important when it comes to the Lord promoting you?

(Discussion question)

3d. Your ability to experience and fulfill God's perfect plans for you will depend on what?

(How closely you follow the Lord and stay humble before Him)

4. Basically, Elijah never fulfilled his ministry. He quit midstream because he failed. Elijah was just never able to recover and get back on track, because his confidence was in himself. Yet he walked with God to such a degree that he was translated:

And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. [2] And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.

2 KINGS 2:1-2

And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

2 KINGS 2:4

And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here: for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

2 KINGS 2:6

Elijah tried to part with Elisha three different times, but Elisha just held on. Elisha had this concept that Elijah possessed in the beginning: He was going to be where God wanted him to be—he was going to be “there!” He knew his place was with Elijah, not somewhere else; therefore, he wouldn’t take no for an answer. Elisha was a faithful guy!

4a. Why did Elijah quit in the middle of his ministry?

(Because he failed, and because his confidence was in himself)

4b. *Discussion question:* What can you learn from Elisha’s faithfulness (2 Kin. 2:1-2, 4, and 6)?

(Discussion question)

5. Elisha was never rebuked the way Elijah was, nor did we see the failure in Elisha's life the way we saw it in Elijah's. Elisha performed twice as many miracles, yet he wasn't translated—he died. In fact, the Scripture records that he died sick.

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died.... [20] And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. [21] And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

2 KINGS 13:14 AND 20-21

Even though Elisha died of sickness, the power of God operated so strongly in him that a dead man came back to life after merely touching his bones! I don't understand how there was enough anointing in Elisha's bones to raise the dead yet he died of sickness. I also don't understand how Elisha could be more faithful than Elijah yet not have the same results—why wasn't he translated too? Apparently, there were other variables that we're not aware of.

5a. *Discussion question:* What can you learn from Elisha's death (2 Kin. 13:14 and 20-21)?
(*Discussion question*)

6. There is much to learn from the life of Elijah! When you begin to see success and start feeling like you've done something, you'd better draw near to God and keep your full dependence on Him. If you swell up in pride, you'll be headed for a fall (Prov. 16:18). Recognize that you aren't the only one preaching the Word, ministering in power, and doing something to advance God's kingdom. You need to maintain a humble attitude. If you do, the Lord will be able to preserve you from the kinds of problems you saw in the life of Elijah (1 Pet. 5:5-6).

6a. When you begin to see success and start feeling like you've done something, is that the time to pull away from God and start relying on yourself?

(No, you should draw near to God and keep your full dependence on Him)

6b. What does Proverbs 16:18 tell you?

(“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall”; i.e., or if you swell up in pride, you'll be headed for a fall)

6c. What will happen if you maintain a humble attitude?

(The Lord will be able to preserve you from the kinds of problems you saw in the life of Elijah (1 Pet. 5:5-6))

Discipleship Questions

1. *Discussion question:* Meditate on the actions of Elijah, Ahab, Jezebel, Naboth, and Jehu (1 Kin. 21 and 2 Kin. 9-10). What can you learn from these people?
2. True or false: The Lord is using you because you're so perfect and holy and you have it all together.
3. Why does God use you?
4. *Discussion question:* What are your thoughts on the idea that "although He calls you based on His grace, whether or not the Lord promotes you any further does depend on how you respond to certain things?"
5. God _____ you and it's by His _____ that He's _____ any of you to minister.
6. Your gifts and callings are by grace; they aren't based on what, according to Romans 11:29?
 - A. Your performance
 - B. The weather
 - C. Your family
 - D. God
 - E. Your circumstances
7. *Discussion question:* Why are character and faithfulness so important when it comes to the Lord promoting you?

8. Your ability to experience and fulfill God's perfect plans for you will depend on what?

9. Why did Elijah quit in the middle of his ministry?

10. *Discussion question:* What can you learn from Elisha's faithfulness (2 Kin. 2:1-2, 4, and 6)?

11. *Discussion question:* What can you learn from Elisha's death (2 Kin. 13:14 and 20-21)?

12. When you begin to see success and start feeling like you've done something, is that the time to pull away from God and start relying on yourself?

13. What does Proverbs 16:18 tell you?

14. What will happen if you maintain a humble attitude?

Answer Key

1. *Discussion question*
2. False
3. Because you're available, responsive, and fully trusting in Him
4. *Discussion question*
5. Loves / grace / called
6. A. Your performance
7. *Discussion question*
8. How closely you follow the Lord and stay humble before Him
9. Because he failed, and because his confidence was in himself
10. *Discussion question*
11. *Discussion question*
12. No, you should draw near to God and keep your full dependence on Him
13. "*Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall*"; i.e., or if you swell up in pride, you'll be headed for a fall
14. The Lord will be able to preserve you from the kinds of problems you saw in the life of Elijah (1 Pet. 5:5-6)

Scriptures

1 KINGS 22:34-40

And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. [35] And the battle increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot. [36] And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country. [37] So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. [38] And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour; according unto the word of the LORD which he spake. [39] Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? [40] So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

2 KINGS 10:27

And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day.

PROVERBS 16:18

Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

ROMANS 11:29

For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

2 KINGS 2:11

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

HEBREWS 11:5

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

2 KINGS 2:1-2

And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. [2] And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.

2 KINGS 2:4

And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

2 KINGS 2:6

And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

2 KINGS 13:14

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.

2 KINGS 13:20-21

And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. [21] And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

1 PETER 5:5-6

Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. [6] Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

Conclusion

Hopefully, the Lord has used this study guide to speak many things to you from the life of Elijah, and that has made a direct impact on you and your relationship with Him. Here is a summary of some of the major points I've made in this book.

1. One person—any man or woman—who has a word from God, has the potential to change their world.
2. You have to be faithful to act on the first word the Lord gives you before you'll get any more words from Him.
3. God sends His provision to where He told you to go, not to where you are. There is a place called "there" for me and you.
4. Our place called "there" isn't a static place; it changes. We must maintain our relationship with the Lord to detect the change.
5. Elijah wasn't taking from the widow when he asked for her last bit of food; he was God's instrument to provide her food for years and see her son raised from the dead. Likewise, when I receive offerings, I'm not taking from people; I'm helping them to receive from God.
6. I have been challenged by Elijah's boldness with Ahab and the prophets of Baal. He didn't just resist them; he destroyed them.
7. Sadly, I've also been inspired by Elijah's mistakes. Elijah was intimidated by a messenger with a note, not a soldier with a sword. This happened because he saw himself dead. He quit looking at things through the eyes of God's Word.
8. I've learned that after great success comes great temptation for us to get into pride. Elijah thought he was better than his fathers. Success is a greater temptation than hardship.
9. Elijah told the Lord he was the only one serving Him, although he knew that wasn't true. He was going by his emotions and not by the truth. This always leads to disaster.
10. Elijah was looking for God in some dramatic, supernatural way, but God manifested Himself in a still, small voice. We can miss God if we are only looking for some spectacular manifestation.
11. God gave Elijah a second chance on his test, but Elijah gave the same answer, which was wrong the first time. If he wanted to get a different result, he should have given a different answer. If we don't like the grade we've received, we need to do something different.
12. God spoke to Elijah in an audible voice to do three things, yet he chose not to do two of them. He only did the third command—anointing Elisha as his replacement. Elijah never fulfilled all God told him to do. God, help me not to make this same mistake.

13. Despite Elijah's failures, he still walked with God to the degree that he didn't die. He was taken up into heaven in a whirlwind. This gives hope to me, and all who have ever missed God, that I can still have a powerful relationship with the Lord. God is full of grace.

As I shared at the beginning of this book, we don't have to learn all of life's lessons through our own hard knocks. This is why the Lord gave us the good, the bad, and the ugly of these Bible characters' lives. It's so we can learn by their mistakes.

I pray that the Holy Spirit uses the things I've pointed out in this book about the life of Elijah to inspire you and also to warn you of Satan's plots against your life. The devil doesn't have any new tricks; he just recycles the same old stuff he's been using throughout history. There is nothing he is doing to you that isn't common to all (1 Cor. 10:13). You can overcome just as Elijah overcame—with the Word of God.

