

# THE BIG IDEA CURRICULUM

## Find God through the tough times

### Small Group Study for Week of June 20 - 27

**Big Idea:** We all need basic training from God in how to deal with the tough times in our lives. In tough times I need the presence of God with me and the purpose of God for me.

#### Group Reads: 1 Kings 19:1-4

Elijah was known as the greatest of all prophets. He had just experienced the 2 greatest spiritual victories of his lifetime, the defeat of the prophets of Baal and the answered prayer for rain. But yet he feels alone, afraid, discouraged and depressed. Why? Well we read in the passage above in verse 2 that Elijah finds that his life is being threatened.

1. When someone threatens you, how do you tend to react? Why do you think that is?
  - a. Run and hide
  - b. Puff up your chest and confront them
  - c. Back down and take it
  - d. Communicate in a healthy way
  - e. Curl up in a ball and cry
  - f. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Have there been times in your life where you have said those very words to God, "I have had enough, Lord?" Describe that time in your life and how you dealt with it.

Most of us have been through those tough times when we feel alone, scared and depressed like Elijah. Often through those times we want to throw our hands up in the air and shout, "Alright, I give up. I can't take anymore." Often we aren't equipped and trained with the tools, the survival guide, we need to lead us through. We need to build a foundation to stand on and it starts by finding God. A very wise woman (my Mom) once told me that we will all fall in our lives but you know how close you are to God by how quickly you get back up! I have held on to that truth in my own life.

#### Read 1 Kings 19:11-15

3. Share your observations from this passage about how God spoke to Elijah. What do you need to do in your life to hear God more?

Elijah didn't experience God through His power, the earthquake, wind or fire but he experienced God's PRESENCE through a gentle whisper.

4. When was the last time you experienced God's presence in your life? Describe that time and how you felt closer to God.
5. How would your life change if you heard from God every day? How do you think it would change your church?

6. Read the following quotes about God's presence, pick your favorite and share why.

*"Just remaining quietly in the presence of God, listening to Him, being attentive to Him, requires a lot of courage and know-how."*

*Thomas Merton*

*"Security is not the absence of danger, but the presence of God, no matter what the danger."*

*Author Unknown*

*"Peace is not the absence of affliction, but the presence of God." ~Author Unknown*

7. How can you focus more on God and less on the troubles in your life?

When we focus more on finding God and less on our trials during the tough times, we grow closer to Him. We experience a peace beyond anything we can imagine. And suddenly our lives become more about praising Him and having a relationship with Christ and less about wallowing. You know the song, "It's my party and I'll cry if I want to, cry if I want to. You would cry if it happened to you." It may be fun to sing but that doesn't really apply here does it?

We can choose to make God the most significant relationship in our life and spend time in His presence. When we do, that's when we find PURPOSE!! God's presence leads to God's purpose for our lives.

### **Read Romans 8:28**

*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.*

8. What does this verse mean to you and how does it apply to your own life?
9. Do you have purpose in your life? If so, share what that is.

What Elijah accomplished is available to us. We have to be intentional about finding God in the tough times and remaining in His presence. We also need to serve and honor Him through our purpose. When we continue to do God's work even through the fear, loneliness and depression is when we experience our greatest moments of faith, just like Elijah!