

Disciple's Quest

If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine.

John 8:31

July 22, 2018

Prerequisites for Effective Personal Ministry - Part 2

1 Kings 17

Main Idea:

Looking at Elijah's life as a fugitive, first at Cherith, and today at Zarephath, we learn some of the things God requires of us as His believing people in order for us to be truly useful in His service.

Outline:

Prerequisite One (7/15): To be truly useful in God's service, we must be in the process of being disciplined by Him.

Prerequisite Two (7/15): To be truly useful in God's service, we must continually walk by faith and not by sight.

Prerequisite Three: To be truly useful in God's service, we must undergo the necessary refining at His direction. At Zarephath, God "turned up the heat" to refine Elijah in two ways:

- 1) He seemingly placed him in harm's way.
- 2) He subtracted from his material prosperity.

Three lessons from the smelting furnace:

1. Living in the center of God's will is no guarantee of material wealth.
2. The sum of God's plan for your life is always far greater than the small part you can see during times of refining.
3. God's purpose for the smelting furnace is to better prepare us to serve Him.

Prerequisite Four: To be truly useful in God's service, we must recognize the great depth of our reliance on prayer and act on it by praying.

Questions for further contemplation and application following the message:

1) Can you think of a time in your life when God refined and strengthened you by means of a trial or challenge?

What is typically your initial response to hardship?

What should it be?

What measures can you take today to respond well and cooperate with God's refining work in your life?

2) Why do we tend to be so quick to consider material wealth a blessing from God?

Is it always a blessing, or sometimes can it be a test?

How about poverty? Can poverty be the means of God's blessing us? Can you think of any Scriptures other than 1 Kings 17 that illustrate this?

3) Read Luke 4:16-30 and Romans 9:15-16.

Why were the people of Nazareth so enraged, in part, by Jesus' explanation of Elijah's ministry to the widow woman at Zarephath?

NOTES
