

## **Sermon Notes and Discussion Questions: Life in the Spirit - Experiencing God**

We want to experience the power of God through the Holy Spirit in our lives, families, churches, and communities. We want fire to fall, walls to shake, and God to make His presence known. However, as we read Scripture we should take notice that the bold presence of God is present when and where His people are bold in their witness. As we take bold stands for the Lord, we can count on His continuing presence and power. Let fire fall as we experience the presence and power of God through the Holy Spirit.

We need boldness like Elijah in 1 Kings 18.

What are some examples of Christians taking a bold stand for God in your community? Why isn't the number of believers willing to take a bold stand for God larger? Have you ever felt the sting of opposition because of your faith in Jesus? How did it feel? What did it cost you?

The Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah had a series of unfaithful and wicked kings who actually promoted the worship of idols. King Ahab of Israel represented the extreme. He married a Phoenician woman, Jezebel, who was an assertive advocate for worship of Baal. The prophet Elijah had the opportunity to take a bold stand for the Lord.

1. Recognize what commitment looks like: 1 Kings 18:21

What problem motivated Elijah to issue his challenge? Why do you think the people were unwilling to commit themselves to the Lord God? What temptations to waver between the Lord and contemporary "baals" exist in our society?

God's people take a bold stand when they declare their commitment to follow the Lord, even when this commitment leads to criticism or persecution.

2. Call the people together: 1 Kings 18:30a

How important is unity in the work of the Church?

3. Repair the altar: 1 Kings 18:30b

Go back to where it was right

#### 4. Boldness in prayer and action: 1 Kings 18:36-39

pray with 3 purposes:

- a. That God be glorified - an environment where only He can receive glory
- b. That his witness go forth - less hearing, more doing!
- c. That the people be revived - genuine transformation is the true miracle

How did the people respond when they saw the answer to Elijah's bold prayer?

What does Elijah's prayer reveal about his motive in the contest with the

prophets of Baal? What does it show us about his faith?

How does God show His power today? How does He make resources available to us to accomplish His purposes without flashing fire from heaven?

Believers can be emboldened in their stand for the Lord by recognizing and affirming God's answers to their prayers. Seeing God answer prayers lets us know we can pray with confidence. We can rely on God to help us when we take a stand for Him in faith.

#### 5. Live dependent on his presence and power every day!

What do you need to surrender to him today to be totally dependent on Him?

In what area of your life are you sitting on the fence and wavering between two opinions with regard to obeying God's will?

What can you do this week to be bold, to be a witness, and go in the power of the Lord? How can you be an encouragement to those that are doing the same?