

## Small Group Guide: "What Are You Doing Here?"

Based on 1 Kings 19



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### Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin by asking God to help your group be honest about struggles with despair, to hear His voice clearly, and to refocus on the mission He has for each person.

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### Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Share a time when you experienced a "spiritual high" followed by an unexpected low. What happened, and how did you respond?

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## Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **Victory doesn't guarantee immunity from despair** - Even after great spiritual wins, we can fall into discouragement when we take our eyes off God's mission and focus on ourselves.
  2. **God meets us in our despair** - He provides for us physically, spiritually, and emotionally, even when we're running away.
  3. **God isn't always found where we expect Him** - Sometimes He speaks in the still, small voice rather than in the earthquake, wind, or fire.
  4. **The mission must be bigger than us** - God's work extends beyond our lifetime and requires us to invest in the next generation.
  5. **We're not alone** - When culture makes us feel isolated, God reminds us there's a faithful remnant.
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## Discussion Questions

### Understanding the Text (15 minutes)

1. Why do you think Elijah, who just defeated 850 false prophets, ran from Jezebel's threat? What changed between chapters 18 and 19?
2. God asked Elijah twice, "What are you doing here?" How would you answer that question about your own life right now? What is your purpose?
3. Elijah said "I alone am left" even though he knew about 100 other prophets. Why do you think he felt so alone? When have you felt this way?

### Personal Application (20 minutes)

4. The pastor shared his experience at camp where a spiritual high turned into chaos. Have you ever questioned whether your ministry or service matters? What helped you through that?
5. Elijah stopped focusing on his mission and started focusing on himself. What are the signs in your life that you've shifted from mission-focused to self-focused?
6. God spoke to Elijah in a "still small voice" rather than dramatic ways. When has God spoken to you in unexpected or quiet ways? How can we create space to hear Him better?

7. The sermon mentioned that "following God can definitely lead to results that are good...but sometimes our desires are not the same as God's." Share a time when God's plan looked different than yours. How did you respond?

### **Moving Forward (15 minutes)**

8. God gave Elijah a mission that extended beyond his lifetime. What does it look like to invest in the next generation spiritually? Who are you pouring into?
9. Elisha burned his plow and sacrificed his oxen - completely cutting ties with his old life. What would radical repentance and commitment look like in your life today? What "plows" might God be calling you to burn?
10. The pastor mentioned three keys to avoiding despair:
  - Be encouraged
  - Be held accountable
  - Make sure the mission is bigger than you

Which of these do you need most right now? How can this group help you?

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### **Practical Applications**

#### **This Week's Challenge:**

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

#### **Option 1: Practice "Be Still"**

- Set aside 15 minutes of silence each day
- Turn off devices and distractions
- Ask God, "What are You saying to me?" and listen
- Journal what you sense Him speaking

#### **Option 2: Combat Isolation**

- Reach out to someone who might feel alone in their faith
- Share a recent "win" or encouragement with the group via text
- Celebrate a victory you've overlooked (write it down, thank God for it)

### **Option 3: Invest in the Next Generation**

- Identify one person younger in the faith you could mentor or encourage
- Take one practical step toward discipling them this week
- Pray for God to show you how to pass on what He's taught you

### **Option 4: Radical Repentance**

- Identify one "plow" in your life that keeps you tied to your old way of living
  - Take a concrete step to "burn" it - delete an app, end a relationship, change a habit
  - Share your commitment with one accountability partner
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### **Group Accountability**

#### **Pair up with one person in the group:**

- Share which practical application you're committing to
  - Exchange contact information
  - Check in with each other mid-week
  - Pray for each other specifically about this commitment
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### **Prayer Focus (10 minutes)**

#### **Pray together for:**

1. **Those in despair** - Group members or loved ones who feel like giving up
2. **Mission clarity** - That God would reveal or renew the mission He has for each person
3. **The next generation** - Young people in your church and community who need mentors
4. **Courage to burn the plow** - Strength to make radical commitments when God calls
5. **Ears to hear** - Ability to recognize God's still, small voice in the chaos of life
6. **Specific needs** - The pastor mentioned his friend Josh battling cancer; pray for him and others facing similar battles

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### **Closing Thought**

**"Know, Love, Share"** - The mission is bigger than any one of us. This week, focus on:

- **Knowing** God more deeply through His Word
- **Loving** Him and your neighbors well
- **Sharing** the gospel where God has placed you

You are not alone. There are 7,000 who haven't bowed the knee. Keep going.

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### **For Next Week**

- Read 1 Kings 20-21 (Ahab's continued rebellion)
  - Come prepared to share how your practical application went
  - Bring someone new if possible - the mission extends through invitation
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**Leader Note:** Be sensitive to those who may be genuinely struggling with despair or depression. Have resources available (pastoral contact info, counseling referrals) and be willing to pray with individuals after the meeting if needed.

## 5-Day Devotional



### **Day 1: When Victory Leads to Despair**

**Reading:** 1 Kings 19:1-4

**Devotional:** Elijah's journey from Mount Carmel's triumph to wilderness despair reveals a profound truth: spiritual highs don't immunize us from human struggles. After witnessing God's power defeat 850 false prophets, Elijah runs from one threatening letter. Why? He lost sight of his mission and focused on himself.

We often expect that serving God faithfully will shield us from difficulty. When trials come after victories, we question everything. But God doesn't abandon us in our lowest moments. Like Elijah under the broom tree, we may feel alone and defeated, but God is already preparing to meet us there. Your despair doesn't disqualify you from God's purposes—it positions you to experience His sustaining grace in new ways.

**Reflection:** What recent victory in your life has been followed by unexpected discouragement? How might God be preparing you for something greater?

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## **Day 2: The Still Small Voice**

**Reading:** 1 Kings 19:9-13; Psalm 46:10

**Devotional:** God wasn't in the earthquake, wind, or fire—He spoke in a still small voice. Elijah expected God to show up in the spectacular, the powerful, the obvious. But God chose whisper over thunder.

In our noisy world, we often seek God in the dramatic moments while missing Him in the quiet. We expect burning bushes when God is speaking in gentle promptings. "Be still and know that I am God" isn't just poetic—it's practical instruction. When despair makes God's voice harder to hear, we must intentionally create space for stillness.

God doesn't always work the way we expect. He meets us where we are, not where we think He should be. The question isn't whether God is speaking, but whether we're still enough to hear Him.

**Reflection:** Where are you looking for God? What would it look like to "be still" in your current circumstances?

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## **Day 3: You Are Not Alone**

**Reading:** 1 Kings 19:14-18; Romans 11:1-5

**Devotional:** "I alone am left," Elijah complained—twice. But God corrected him: "I have reserved 7,000 in Israel." Elijah wasn't alone; culture had just made the faithful silent.

Isolation is one of despair's most effective lies. When we're struggling, we convince ourselves no one understands, no one cares, no one else is fighting this battle. But God always preserves a remnant. There are others who haven't bowed to the idols of our age, who are faithfully serving even when culture demands silence.

The enemy wants you to believe you're the only one standing for truth, the only one struggling, the only one who feels inadequate. Don't let that lie take root. Reach out. Share your burden. Join with others in mission. The body of Christ exists because we were never meant to serve alone.

**Reflection:** Who in your life might be silently fighting the same battles? How can you break the isolation—yours or theirs?

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## **Day 4: Mission Bigger Than Yourself**

**Reading:** 1 Kings 19:19-21; Luke 9:57-62

**Devotional:** When Elijah threw his mantle on Elisha, the young farmer faced a choice: delay or commit. Elisha's response was radical—he destroyed his plow and sacrificed his oxen. No backup plan. No looking back. Complete repentance means complete commitment.

God pulled Elijah from despair by giving him a mission bigger than himself—one he wouldn't even see completed. The work of God extends beyond our generation, beyond our lifetime. When the mission is truly God's, it doesn't depend on our success or survival; it depends on our faithfulness to pass it forward.

Your calling isn't about you achieving something for God to celebrate. It's about God's glory being revealed through surrendered lives across generations. What instruments of your old life need to be burned? What are you still holding onto that keeps you from fully embracing God's call?

**Reflection:** What "plow" is God asking you to burn? What mission has He given you that's bigger than yourself?

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## **Day 5: Enduring with Strength from God**

**Reading:** 1 Kings 19:5-8; Matthew 4:1-11

**Devotional:** Elijah received supernatural provision for a 40-day journey. Jesus, the greater prophet, endured 40 days in the wilderness without food. Both faced temptation and trial, but Jesus shows us the ultimate example of endurance.

Following Christ isn't always sunshine and victory celebrations. Sometimes it's simply enduring—putting one foot in front of the other when you can't see the destination. God doesn't promise the journey will be easy, but He promises to provide what you need for the road ahead.

The angel didn't remove Elijah's journey; he strengthened him for it. God rarely removes our trials, but He always provides grace to endure them. When you feel depleted, remember: God meets you in your weakness with His strength. The same God who sustained Elijah and upheld Jesus will carry you through your wilderness.

**Reflection:** What journey are you currently enduring? How have you seen God provide strength when you had none left?