

## Small Group Guide: Showdown on Mt. Carmel 1 Kings 18



### **Opening Prayer (2-3 minutes)**

Ask someone to open your time together in prayer, asking God to help the group understand His Word and apply it to their lives.

### **Icebreaker (5-10 minutes)**

Share about a time when you felt completely alone in standing up for something you believed was right. How did it feel? What was the outcome?

### **Key Takeaways from the Sermon**

1. **\*\*You are not alone with God on your side\*\*** - Even when culture makes you feel isolated
2. **\*\*Faith requires risk\*\*** - Not everything God asks you to do is safe
3. **\*\*There is a time for confrontation\*\*** - Standing for truth isn't always comfortable
4. **\*\*Embrace the holy, cut off the wicked\*\*** - Pursue sanctification actively
5. **\*\*Blessing is not always immediate\*\*** - Faith requires perseverance

## **Discussion Questions**

### ***Understanding the Text (15-20 minutes)***

1. What stood out to you most from the story of Elijah on Mount Carmel? Why?
2. Obadiah had already done good things by hiding 100 prophets. Why wasn't that enough? What does this teach us about resting on past faithfulness?
3. Elijah asked, "How long will you waver between two opinions?" Where do you see people today trying to keep "one foot in both camps" spiritually?

### ***Personal Reflection (20-25 minutes)***

4. The sermon mentioned that "the silence is louder than ever" when we're hiding our faith. Have you experienced this? Share about a time when keeping silent about your faith made you feel more isolated.
5. Elijah made the challenge harder for himself by pouring water on the altar before the world could criticize. How can we apply this principle when sharing our faith or standing for truth?
6. The pastor mentioned that sometimes mockery is appropriate when used for God's glory, not personal pride. How do we discern the difference? Can you think of biblical examples beyond Elijah?
7. Elijah prayed for a miracle not for himself, but to turn hearts to God. How often do we pray for spectacular things for our own spiritual enrichment versus for others' salvation?

### ***Application and Action (15-20 minutes)***

8. The sermon gave the example of Christians in Nigeria who stayed silent in the culture and are now being persecuted. What areas of our culture do you think Christians need to speak up about, even when it's uncomfortable?

9. "Not everything God asks you to do is safe. Faith requires risk." What is something God might be asking you to do that feels risky or uncomfortable? What's holding you back?

10. "Embrace the holy, cut off the wicked." What specific thing in your life do you need to cut off that's leading you away from God? How can this group support you in that?

11. Elijah's servant looked seven times before seeing the cloud. Where in your life do you need to persevere in prayer even when you don't see immediate results?

### **Practical Applications**

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

*Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:*

**\*\*Option 1: Confrontation with Love\*\***

Identify one conversation you've been avoiding where you need to speak truth. Pray about it, prepare thoughtfully, and have that conversation this week.

**\*\*Option 2: Cut Off the Wicked\*\***

Identify one specific sin pattern or temptation in your life. Take concrete steps to remove access to it (delete an app, cancel a subscription, change a routine, ask for accountability).

**\*\*Option 3: Persevere in Prayer\*\***

Choose something you've been praying about without seeing results. Commit to praying about it daily for the next 30 days, regardless of whether you see change.

**\*\*Option 4: Public Faith\*\***

Find one opportunity this week to publicly identify as a Christian when you normally would have stayed silent (at work, school, with neighbors, on social media).

**Accountability and Prayer** (10-15 minutes)

1. Share which practical application you're committing to this week.

2. Pair up or form groups of 3 for accountability:

- Share specifically what you're committing to
- Exchange contact information
- Plan to check in mid-week

3. **\*\*Prayer Time:\*\***

- Pray for courage to stand alone when necessary
- Pray for perseverance when blessings are delayed
- Pray for each person's specific commitment this week
- Pray for Christians around the world facing persecution (specifically Nigeria)

**Closing Thought**

"If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31)

You may feel alone, but with God on your side, you have everything you need to stand for truth, even when it's uncomfortable, risky, or costly.

**For Next Week**

Read 1 Kings 19 in preparation for next week's discussion. Pay attention to what happens to Elijah after his great victory and what God's response is to his discouragement.

## **5-Day Devotional: Standing Firm in a Shifting Culture**

### **1 Kings 18 Showdown on Mt. Carmel**



#### **Day 1: You Are Not Alone**

**Reading:** 1 Kings 19:9-18

#### **Devotional:**

Elijah stood alone on Mount Carmel, facing 450 prophets of Baal. In his isolation, he felt like the last faithful servant of God. Yet God revealed that 7,000 others had not bowed to Baal. When culture pressures you to compromise, when your workplace or school seems devoid of believers, remember: you are never truly alone. God has preserved a remnant, and His presence goes with you always. The silence of hiding can make isolation feel overwhelming, but God sees every faithful heart. Today, ask God to open your eyes to the other believers around you. Reach out to one person who might also feel alone in their faith. Your courage to stand might be exactly what they need to see.

#### **Reflection Question:**

Where in your life do you feel isolated in your faith? How might God be calling you to break that silence?

## **Day 2: Faith Requires Risk**

**Reading:** Hebrews 11:32-40

### **Devotional:**

Obadiah faced an impossible choice: obey God's prophet or protect his own life. He had already risked much by hiding 100 prophets, but God asked for more. Faith is not a one-time decision but a continual posture of trust that often requires us to step into uncomfortable, even dangerous territory. The Christian life promises persecution, not safety. Jesus never guaranteed ease—He promised His presence. When God calls you to speak truth, share the gospel, or stand for righteousness, the risk is real. But so is His faithfulness. What "safe" compromise are you clinging to that God is asking you to release? True faith doesn't calculate the cost and decline—it counts the cost and follows anyway.

### **Reflection Question:**

What is God asking you to do that feels risky? What would obedience look like today?

## **Day 3: Confronting Culture with Truth**

**Reading:** 1 Kings 18:20-24, 36-39

### **Devotional:**

Elijah didn't whisper his faith—he confronted an entire nation's idolatry. There is a time to be gentle and a time to boldly declare truth. Our culture desperately needs Christians who will define terms clearly, expose empty philosophies, and demonstrate the power of the living God. Elijah's mockery wasn't cruel—it revealed the absurdity of worshiping lifeless idols. When you engage the world's ideas, don't let them move the goalposts or redefine truth. Stand firm on God's Word. The culture may call you intolerant, but speaking truth in love is the most compassionate thing you can do. People are dying for lack of truth. Will you be silent, or will you, like Elijah, call for a decision: "How long will you waver between two opinions?"

### **Reflection Question:**

Where is God calling you to be more confrontational with cultural lies? What truth needs to be spoken?

## **Day 4: Embrace the Holy, Cut Off the Wicked**

**Reading:** Romans 6:1-14

### **Devotional:**

After God's fire fell, Elijah commanded the people to seize the false prophets. Repentance requires more than acknowledging truth—it demands action. When you come to Christ, you don't just add Jesus to your life; you cut off what opposes Him. What sin are you tolerating? What relationship, habit, or entertainment is pulling you away from holiness? God calls you to be ruthless with sin while being gracious with yourself in the process of sanctification. This isn't about earning salvation—Christ has already secured that. This is about living in the freedom He purchased. Stop trying to keep one foot in the world and one in the Kingdom. Choose this day whom you will serve, then cut off everything that competes for God's rightful place in your life.

### **Reflection Question:**

What specific sin or compromise do you need to "cut off" today? What practical step will you take?

## **Day 5: Persevering for the Blessing**

**Reading:** James 1:2-12

### **Devotional:**

After the spectacular victory on Mount Carmel, Elijah prayed for rain—and nothing happened. Six times his servant reported no clouds. But Elijah kept praying. We live in a culture of instant gratification, but God's timeline rarely matches ours. The blessing for obedience isn't always immediate. Sometimes God delays to build perseverance, deepen faith, or accomplish purposes we cannot see. When you've done what God asked and still see no results, keep praying. Keep trusting. Keep looking for that cloud the size of a man's hand. Your breakthrough may be one more prayer away. The rain will come. God's promises never fail—they're just not always punctual by our standards. Don't quit in the gap between obedience and blessing. That's where faith becomes sight.

**Reflection Question:** Where have you been tempted to give up because you haven't seen results? How can you persevere in faith today?



**Closing Prayer**

Father, give us courage to stand alone when necessary, wisdom to confront culture with truth, and perseverance to keep believing when blessings are delayed. Help us cut off what hinders our walk with You and embrace the holiness You've called us to. Remind us that we are never truly alone, for You are always with us. May our lives point others to Your reality and power. In Jesus' name, Amen.