

THE JOURNEY

“Buckle Up”

Week 1: LET's GO

Week 2: ROAD TRIP

Week 3: DON'T GO ALONE

TODAY: “Buckle Up”

Seat Belts became law in 1968 (1970's 11% used seatbelts 1980's 14%)

MN Law passed in 1986 for FRONT SEATS (Then BACK SEATS in 2009)

WHY SO MANY SAFETY MEASURES???? (To keep people SAFE)

*Who here has been in some sort of accident? (Car, deer, tree??):

SEAT BELTS SAVE LIVES!!

-Driving is a calculated risk!

-People will keep driving.....so let's be safe!

TODAY: BUCKLE UP!

We are all on a spiritual journey! (DEFENSIVE DRIVING IS NECESSARY)

SIGNS UP: Watch for Deer! Basically BE ALERT!

1 Peter 5:8-9 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

-Battle is all around the world!

Verse 9 **Resist him, standing firm in the faith,**

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT HIS ENEMY!

John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

JESUS gives LIFE.....The DEVIL leads to DEATH

-THERE IS GOOD.....AND THERE IS EVIL!

Ephesians 6:10-12 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

NOT A SERMON ON FEAR.....BUT ON AWARENESS!!!

WE ARE IN A BATTLE!

THE BATTLE IS REAL.....WE CAN FEEL IT!

DEEP SORROW.....even sadness!

-Assassination of State Representative Hortman

-Annunciation Catholic School shootings

-Ukrainian Refuge murdered on North Carolina light rail

-School shooting in Colorado

-Assassination of Charlie Kirk

COMPOUNDED EMPATHY!

SOCIAL MEDIA: Sad state of humanity!!! (So disheartening)

ALSO: Seeing videos of things our minds are not meant to process!

WE ARE ALL LIVING IN A SIN FILLED WORLD! (SELFISHNESS RULES)

2 Timothy 3:1-4 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. 2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholly, 3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, 4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God

SAD REALITYS....

YET “READ TO THE END OF THE BOOK....WE WIN”

THIS IS OUR WORLD WE LIVE IN!!! (BUT WE HAVE HOPE)

2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

JESUS WANTS US TO LIVE LIFE TO THE FULL!

-NOT IN DEFEAT & HIDING.....VICTORY!

THE DEVIL CAN’T TAKE OUR ‘VICTORY’

-SO HE WILL TAKE OUR JOY! (and the Joy of the Lord is our strength)

HOW MANY OF YOU ARE FEELING OPPOSITION FROM THE ENEMY???

*Means you are heading in the right direction!

Old African proverb: If you don't cross paths with the Devil at some point in your day, you may be heading the same direction!!!

1 Kings 18 Elijah is going to spark LIFE into all the God Followers in Israel!

*Queen Jezebel had killed all the prophets of the Lord! (Fear everywhere)

-She embraced and fed 450 prophets of Baal & 400 of Asherah

-GOD WAS ABOUT TO SHAKE THINGS UP!!!

-850 prophets to 1HEAD TO HEAD!

-Jezabel had brutally executed the other Prophets of God

-The gods of Baal & Asherah vs “Yahweh” the one true God

1 Kings 18:21 Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.” But the people said nothing.

SIMPLE RULES!!

-2 oxes.....cut up on the altars! Presented to the gods!

-Which ever one lights up on fire wins!

1 Kings 18:26-27 So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. “Baal, answer us!” they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.

27 At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.”

THEY TRIED ALL AFTERNOON INTO THE EVENING!

They respond by cutting themselves and adding their own blood to the sacrifice
(such mutilation of the body was strictly forbidden in the Mosaic law)

ELIJAH IS A LITTLE SPUNKY! (I LIKE THAT)

-Elijah gets his altar ready.
-12 stones around it to represent the 12 tribes!
-12 gallons of water (4 large jars....doused it 3 times!)

1 Kings 18:37-38 Answer me, LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”
38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

HUGE VICTORY!!! (People all turned back to God!)

-The people even killed all 850 false prophets.

BUT.....THE DEVIL WAS NOT GOING TO JUST GIVE UP!

-ELIJAH WAS NOT READY FOR ROUND 2!

WORD GOT TO JEZEBEL AND SHE WAS TICKED!!!

1 Kings 19:2 So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, “May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.”

24 HOUR DEATH THREAT.....(He should have felt pretty confident!!!)

I SAY IT OFTEN:

THE DEVIL CAN'T TAKE OUR VICTORY.....SO HE TAKES OUR JOY!

-Jezebel wanted to intimidate him.....deflate him.....defeat him and his God!

-She sent a message to him and gave him 24 hours!

THINK OF THIS.....She could have killed him right there!

She didn't want him dead.....

she wanted to let FEAR strip him of his victory!

-She wanted him to RUN! She wanted him to look weak!!

*He just defeated 850 prophets and now he is scared of 1 woman??

INSTEAD: FAITH WAS REPLACED WITH FEAR!

KEY (the devil knows he can't win.....so he will try to make us LOSE by giving up!)

THE DEVIL CAN'T TAKE OUR VICTORY.....SO HE TAKES OUR JOY!

-Elijah had given up!!

-FEAR had overcome him

1 Kings 19:3-4 ³Elijah was afraid^[a] and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, ⁴while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."

*Pretty different FEELINGS just a couple days later!

-NOT FEELING MUCH CONFIDENCE IN HIS VICTORY!!

Elijah wasn't feeling the POWER OF LOVE AND A SOUND MIND!

-HE HAD A SPIRIT OF FEAR!

IN EMOTIONAL & PHYSICAL EXHAUSTION.....HE FALLS ASLEEP

1 Kings 19:5-6 Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." ⁶He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.

PRACTICAL STEP 1: TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF PHYSICALLY

EAT, DRINK WATER AND REST!!! Even EXERCISE!

SPD training (REM sleep is the best way to process stress)

PRACTICAL STEP 2: TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF EMOTIONALLY

1 Kings 19:7-8 ⁷The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." ⁸So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.

SO INTERESTING: Elijah traveled 40 days to get to Horeb!

-Horeb was THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD

-The HOLY MOUNTAIN.....MT SINAI!

*Place Moses saw God face to face. (Burning bush.....10 commandments)

HISTORIC PLACE OF COVENANT WITH GOD!

ELIJAH TRAVELED 40 DAYS FOR A SIGN!!! (Place of encouragement)

PRACTICAL STEP 2: TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF EMOTIONALLY

*FILL YOURSELF! Go to a place of VICTORY!

MOST PEOPLE ARE RUNNING TO NEWS OUTLETS AND SOCIAL MEDIA!

-News is twisted and makes money off controversy! (addiction)

-Social media is fueled by the same! (addiction)

Philippians 4:4-8 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

-Rejoice in the Lord

-Keep your cool

-Bring your request to God

-God will give you peace

-Think on the right things

SO: Take care of yourself PHYSICALLY & EMOTIONALLY.....

PRACTICAL STEP 3: TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF SPIRITUALLY

1 Kings 19:9-11 There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him: “What are you doing here, Elijah?” ¹⁰ He replied, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.” ¹¹ The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.”

GOD WAS GOING TO REVEAL HIMSELF!

1 Kings 19:12-13 Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. ¹² After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. ¹³ When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

SO INTERSESTING TO ME.....2 TIMES WE HEAR THE SAME THING.

VERSE 9 STARTS WITH “WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE ELIJAH”

THEN VERSE 13.....THE WHISPER,

“WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE ELIJAH”

-SAME QUESTION AS BEFORE (VERSE 9)

-SAME PROBLEM AS BEFORE (VERSE 10) *nothing had changed

1 Kings 19:14 He said, “I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.”

INTERESTING: Even after a 40 day journey to the Holy Mount of God.....
and the still small voice of God speaking to him.....

Elijah still focused on his problem (that hadn't changed)

GOD MET HIM WHERE HE WAS AT!!!
GOD GAVE HIM A PLAN!

- He told him the plan of who he wanted to make king!
- He told Elijah exactly what he needed to do next!

PRACTICAL: GOD WILL MEET YOU WHERE YOU ARE AT!
AND REMIND YOU OF WHO HE IS!
AND TELL YOU WHAT YOU NEED TO DO!

-Not in the WIND, not in the EARTHQUAKE, not in the FIRE!

-In a gentle “WHISPER”

A Whisper is CLOSE & INTIMATE!

MAIN THOUGHT: THE WHY BEHIND THE WHAT!

-We think the main Goal of prayer is to HEAR God's voice

-God's number one Goal is to DRAW US CLOSE! (Whisper)

“I've got this”
“You can make it through this”
“I already know what you need”
“I AM WITH YOU”

A WHISPER IS QUIET AND INTIMATE!

CLOSENESS.....INTIMACY.....comes from the HIGHS & LOWS.....TOGETHER!!!!

Elijah felt ALONE and DEFEATED!

-God spoke very clear directions to Elijah.....VERY SPECIFIC!

-GOD GAVE ELIJAH JUST WHAT HE NEEDED.....ELISHA!!

We can get it all wrong:

We often pray b/c we just want to HEAR God's voice.....

.....HE just wants us CLOSE!

2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

RESPONSE:

- 1) Take care of yourself physically! REST
- 2) Take care of yourself emotionally! REMEMBER
- 3) Take care of yourself spiritually! RECEIVE