

Beyond Sunday

For groups, friends, families, couples, or individuals to reflect on the message you heard this Sunday.

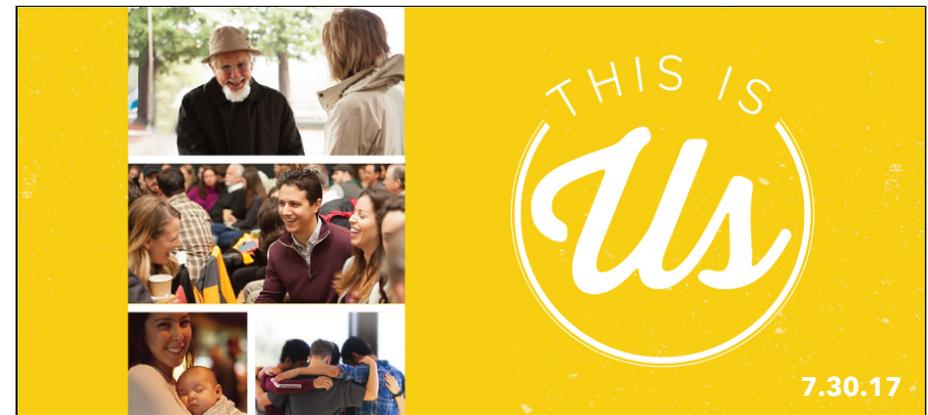
REFLECT on the message heard Sunday, 7/30.

1. This passage is a lesson on how God puts us back together when we are in a place of despondency and burnout. Look back into 1 Kings 18. What do you think might have brought Elijah to such a dark, weak, and hopeless place? Do you have seasons of “maximum output” that tend to leave you drained and vulnerable?
2. After having thrown his “Sunday best punch” to no apparent effect, Elijah runs and wants to throw away his life as a prophet of God. What are the first things the angel does to attend to him? Why do you think God first started with rest and food? How does lack of these basics affect you?
3. After having been fed and given rest, Elijah journeys to Mt Horeb (Mt Sinai) where Moses received the 10 Commandments. Of all places on earth this is the one a Jew in that day would have associated with meeting with God. Elijah intuitively knew that he could only get back on his feet with a renewed experience with God. Where do you go and what do you do to be replenished when you are spiritually dry and empty?
4. Twice God asks the question, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” Each time Elijah gets to vent the pain, frustration, and fatigue that’s inside him. God doesn’t correct him; He just lets him get it out. Have you ever experienced the healing effect of someone just listening to you? Why do you think “getting it out” is often so much healthier than holding it all inside? Who is the best listener in your life?
5. Having eaten, slept, and vented all the emotions that were inside him, Elijah encounters God anew. God gives him an experience of spiritual renewal. Why do you think these elements of renewal happened in this order? What is it about a fresh encounter with God that sets us on our feet again? Have you ever had God meet you in despondency with a fresh encounter with Himself?
6. Why do you think God waited till after Elijah was renewed physically, emotionally, and spiritually before giving him his next assignment? Why does it seem like our best outward work for God seem to flow from the times when our inner world is most whole with Him. How might this relate to the message of John 15:5-8?

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Elijah: This is Us

Elijah was a **human being, even as we are.**

James 5:17a

Elijah’s Journey to Burn Out:

1 Kings 19:1-5

- **He wore himself out**

Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep. v.5

- **He shut people out**

...left his servant there... v.3b

- **He focused on the negative**

...I am no better than my ancestors... v.4

- **He put God in a box**

...I have had enough, Lord v.4

God's Prescription for Burn Out

God gives Elijah replenishment

All at once **an angel touched him** and said, **"Get up and eat."** He 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. The 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."** So 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.** 1 Kings 19:5b-8

God replaces Elijah's lies with His truth

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?"** 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." The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." 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. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. 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?"** 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." 1 Kings 19:9-14

God gives Elijah a "Go"

The Lord said to him, **"Go** back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram. Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu. Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel –all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him."

The Rest of the Story

1 Kings 19:19a: **So Elijah went** from there...

The Bible never denies reality. The Bible never plays it safe. The Bible never offers you a cosmetized view of the fallen world. The Bible never tricks you into thinking that things are better than they are. The Bible is straightforward and honest but not void of hope. While it is very candid about the hardships of life in this broken world, the Bible is also gloriously hopeful. The honesty does not crush the hope, but neither does the hope negate the honesty.

–Paul David Tripp, *New Morning Mercies*