

Word One Bible Study

Time to Recharge Your Batteries!

by Daniel and Susan Schumm

Text: 1 Kings 19:1-8 for the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Find themselves relating to the Prophet Elijah as he faces a moment in his life where he is in much need of spiritual rejuvenation.
2. Learn anew how vitally important it is that we maintain constant contact with God through Word and Sacrament ministry for the sake of spiritual nurturing and revitalization.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles

Pencil/Pen and a slip of paper for each participant

A small working flashlight (preferably one that uses a single AA battery) to be turned on just before the study begins. (Hopefully, the battery will go dead before the end of the class session to serve as a vivid object lesson. Have a fresh battery on hand so that at the end of class, you can bring the flashlight back to life and stress the point of this lesson.) If possible, have rechargeable batteries and a battery charger on hand to also use as a visual aid.

GROUP GUIDELINES

Divide into groups of 6-8 people. Choose as leader the individual who is wearing the lightest colored shirt. The leader's job is to keep the group moving through the material and ensure that everyone has a chance to share. Participants are always encouraged to share, but may pass if they do not feel comfortable sharing a response.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

1. Using a pencil and a piece of paper, ask each participant to take three (3) minutes to write down as many different kinds of things that they can think of which require a battery in order to work.
2. Starting with the youngest and going to the oldest class member, each one is to take a turn and share what they have written on their lists. The rest of the group is to compare their lists with the one who is sharing.
 - a. Any items which are on someone else's list are to have a line drawn through them.
 - b. Any items which are not found on someone else's list are to be circled.
 - c. The member who has the most circled items is to be given a rousing standing ovation.
3. Ask (with the intent of getting some personal responses):
 - a. Have you ever gone to use a flashlight only to find that the batteries were terribly weak or even dead?
 - b. In order for a flashlight (or anything that relies on batteries) to be of any practical use - especially at the moment in time when you need it the most, of what must you make certain?
 - c. What advantages do rechargeable batteries have over regular batteries?
 - d. But even with rechargeable batteries, of what must you make certain?

INTRODUCTION

The prophet Elijah had just seen the prophets of Baal defeated on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:16-46). Elijah had challenged the prophets of Baal to a kind of "duel" between their god and Elijah's God. Both sides were to build an altar and prepare a sacrifice and whoever's god could ignite the sacrifice would be shown to be the true God (1 Kings 18:24). The prophets of Baal spent all day trying all sorts of things to coax their god into igniting their sacrifice (even cutting themselves to the point of bloodletting). "But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention (1 Kings 18:29). Elijah, on the other hand -even after having saturated his sacrifice with water - the moment he called upon the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel," the sacrifice and altar which he had prepared became engulfed with fire and was consumed by the flames. The people who

had witnessed all of this cried out: "The Lord - he is God! The Lord - he is God!" (1 Kings 18:39). Thereupon, the prophets of Baal were captured and put to death. Now, imagine that you are Elijah. How would you be feeling right about now?

GETTING INTO GOD'S WORD

1. Read 1 Kings 19:1-5a.
 - a. When Queen Jezebel learned that her prophets of Baal had been defeated, what did she do that took the charge out of Elijah's victory celebration? (See 1 Kings 19:2).
 - b. Imagine again that you are Elijah. How would you be feeling now? What fears and doubts and questions might you have?
 - c. How was Elijah feeling and what did he do? (See 1 Kings 19:3)
 - d. If Elijah were a battery, how much life would he have in him? What evidence does our text provide as to the level of Elijah's inner strength and his desire and ability to cope with his present circumstances? (see 1 Kings 19:4-5). Have you ever felt like Elijah?
 - e. If Elijah were a battery, what was he most in need of at this point in his life?
2. Read 1 Kings 19:5b-8.
 - a. Sensing that he needed some significant spiritual recharging, where did Elijah head off to? (See 1 Kings 19:8)
 - b. In essence, by heading to "Horeb, the mountain of God" (1 Kings 19:8), with whom was Elijah wanting and needing to spend some time?
 - c. While in route to Mount Horeb, Elijah became dependent upon God's provision just to stay alive and keep going? (See 1 Kings 19:6-8). If just his journey through the desert were to be viewed as a kind of object lesson, what insights and truths would Elijah come to realize? (See Corinthians 12:9)
 - d. Following our text, we learn that as a result of spending some quiet time with God, Elijah's spiritual batteries are "recharged" and he returns to God's people to continue in his role as a prophet of God.

REINFORCING WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

Discuss:

1. What are some of the telltale signs that a Christian's spiritual batteries are in need of recharging? What happens if one's spiritual batteries are allowed to get low?
2. In what ways are you just like Elijah?
3. Elijah went to Mount Horeb to spend time with God. What are the means which God has given to us whereby we can spend time with Him and have our spiritual batteries recharged? (See 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Acts 2:38; Matthew 26:26-28).
4. What are some of the benefits and blessings that come from having spiritual batteries which are fully charged?
5. What are some of the insights and truths that you have come to realize as a result of this lesson from the life of Elijah?

CLOSING

Close with a circle prayer having each person pray a 1-2 sentence prayer for the person to their left. Encourage everyone to use the insights gained from this study to help shape their individual prayers.

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