

Small Groups @ TBC Sermon Discussion Notes

Date of Sermon: 14 June 2015

Speaker: David Lawrence

Title: Faith in a Faithless Society

Introduction: This is the third talk in our Elijah series. The three main characters or groups in the reading (Elijah & the Prophets, King Ahab and Obadiah) each represent a different way of handling faith in a world of unbelief.

Review: (invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review)

Reflect:

Read: 1 Kings 18:1-15

Reflect:

1. Elijah had been waiting in obscurity for three whole years (v1). Only then did the 'word of the Lord' come to him. How do the group imagine Elijah spent those three years?
 - What is it like when God seems to have stopped speaking?
 - How do we maintain faith during such times, so that when God does speak we are ready to hear and willing to obey?
2. Obadiah is praised in this story (can you find the verses?). And yet... his position as a senior administrator in Ahab's house means that he also was complicit in Ahab's sins.
 - What is wrong with a 'privatised faith'? How does it fall short of Biblical faith?
 - What difference might there be between a 'personal' faith and a 'privatised' faith? What are the merits of each?
 - Are there ways that your own personal faith has been tested by compromise at work?
3. Elijah and the prophets exemplify a different sort of faith.
 - How did David describe it in the talk? (*reminder if necessary... Expectant - Submitted - Attentive - Courageous - Single-minded*)
 - What evidence can you find in the passage for this sort of faith? And what other scriptures can you think of that paint faith in these colours?
 - How, practically, does such faith grow? What can we ordinary Christians do to develop this sort of faith?
4. In the talk David made the point that when Israel became compromised by unbelief and idolatry, it was the world of the nations that lost out, since God's light no longer shone through them into his world.

What does it mean for the church to be 'a city set on a hill' (Matthew 5:14)? In *specific practical* details what ways does TBC serve as God's light for our community - and what ways could it do so better?

Leaders: feel free to be selective and creative with your use of these notes. Don't feel you have to use all of the material, but do try to keep the shape of Review – Read – Reflect - Respond

Thornbury Baptist: Loving God - Loving One Another - Loving Neighbour & World

Respond:

Love for God

What is the link between knowing God's love and developing deeper faith?

Love for one another

In what ways does your small group function as a 'community of prophets', like those mentioned in the reading?

Love for neighbour & world

Are there ways in which your group might be a 'light' to your community?

And finally:

Before you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?