

Small Groups @ TBC Sermon Discussion Notes

Date of Sermon: 24 May 2015

Speaker: David Lawrence

Title: Faith School II

Introduction: This is the second talk in our Elijah series, following Elijah's education in God's faith school.

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

Reflect:

Read: 1 Kings 17:7-24

Reflect:

1. In the talk, David picked up on the 'roller-coaster' nature of Elijah's experience. God's promises don't always lead to God's obvious provision!

- Can you find examples of this in the readings?
- Can you think of examples from your own life? How did you feel? With hindsight were you in faith school? If so, what did you learn?

2. The name 'Zarephath' perhaps gives us a clue to the nature of Elijah's experience: it means 'smelting place'. In the smelting process unwanted impurities are removed from the metal being smelted, so that what remains behind is strengthened.

- What is removed from Elijah in this story? (David suggested a number of 'self-' issues were challenged).
- What is left behind in Elijah, once the smelter has done its work?
- Some people talk about a distinction between one's 'true self' (who I am created to be) and one's 'false self' (who I find myself to be - e.g. fearful; angry; anxious etc). What processes does God use (in people's own experience) to 'smelt' the 'true self' from the 'false self'?

3. In the passage God does some amazing things! What are they?

- What are the challenges to believing that God still does amazing things? What can we do about these challenges?
- How 'normal' should miracles be in Christian experience?
- What is the role of 'faith' in seeing God's 'more' come to pass?

Respond:

Love for God

What does it take to love God, when things don't seem to be turning out as we'd expected?

Love for one another

How can you encourage one another to seek God's 'more'?

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

Love for neighbour & world

Which one verse or phrase would people choose from this reading, to shape their engagement with the world this week?

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?