


Elijah: A Man Like Us

Part One

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Triangle Community Church aims to be a “transforming church”. We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent, action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” Since “**Talking Points, Walking Points**” is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to “dive deep” too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled “**Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time**”, are perfect for private reflection.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

- James 5:17 says that Elijah was “a man like us”. What similarities do **you** see to him?
- Review the **three “portraits” of Elijah** Pastor Doug painted (see **Sermon Summary**).
In which portrait do you **most** see yourself? **Why that one?** Give an example.
In which portrait do you **least** see yourself? **Why that one?** Give an example.
- Review Elijah's **three-fold secret to boldness** (see **Sermon Summary**).
Which secret do you **most** see yourself? **Why that one?** Give an example.
In which portrait do you **least** see yourself? **Why that one?** Give an example.

What **single** change would make the **greatest** improvement in you?

Application-Challenge

- Remember that God is **alive** and wants to **use you** in this generation.
- See yourself **first** as a representative of God and **secondarily** as a teacher, salesman, engineer...
- Remember that the secret to a life of **public** spiritual courage is linked to the quality of your **private** devotional life.
- Remember that the Christian life is **not** without challenges. In fact, it is **though** challenges that God develops our faith and character.



Sermon Summary

Key Text: 1 Kings 17:1-7

Today we begin a study of the Old Testament prophet Elijah. James 5:17 tells us that “Elijah was a man with a nature like ours.” He was person just like you and me—same temptations, difficulties, and discouragements. So, we can relate to him. In 1 Kings 17:1-7 we find **three portraits of Elijah:**

A. Elijah was a man of confrontation. He hits the ground running (v. 1)! Elijah seems to come out of nowhere, like a bolt of lightning. He arrives unannounced before the king of Israel. He storms in, delivers his message, and then disappears as quickly as he arrived. But we only appreciate what Elijah did when we understand when he lived. First Kings 16:30-33 tells the sad story that idolatry had spread throughout the nation. King Ahab was a wicked man! His wife, Jezebel, was Wicked, with a capital W! Thanks to her influence, “he did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him”. It wasn’t easy to be a believer in Elijah’s day—but it never is! There is a price tag attached to walking with God. In America, Christians tend to blend into the culture rather than distinguish themselves from it. Even in Elijah’s day there was group of 7000 prophets who were hiding in caves rather than challenging the cultural rot.

But one solitary figure decided something had to be done, and so Elijah told Ahab, “There won’t be any rain around here until I say so.” God always searches for people of great courage who will be His spokesman. Are you willing to be that man, that woman? There is a **three-fold secret to boldness:**

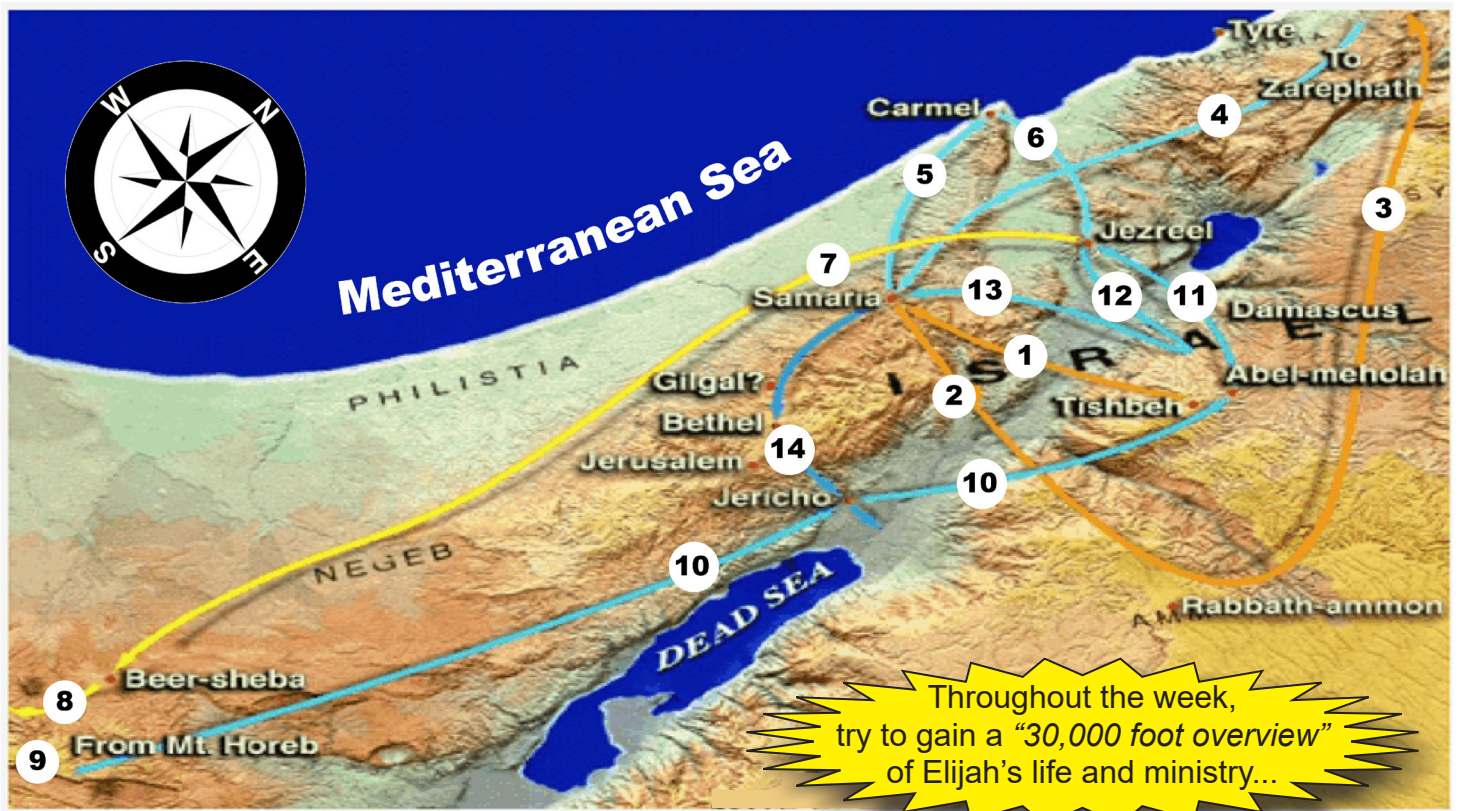
- **Elijah believed that the God of Israel is alive** (v. 1). Do you? Even the great Reformer, Martin Luther, was frequently plagued with discouragement. Once, when immersed in depression, his wife Katharina came downstairs clothed completely in black clothes of mourning. She asked him, “*Martin, is God dead? Are we having his funeral?*” That experience marked a new chapter in his leadership.
- **Elijah believed he was God’s representative.** Whom do you live to represent? You are to be a representative of the living God where you work, live, and recreate. Elijah was unimpressed with Ahab’s palace; he was a representative of the living God—the King of the Universe.
- **Elijah believed in God’s power.** No doubt, Deuteronomy 11:16-17 was in the forefront of his mind when he spoke to Ahab. Do you trust God’s promises? For example, Jesus promised to meet every legitimate need of those who whole-heartedly pursue him (Matthew 6:33). Nothing honors God more than to say, “God, you say this, and I believe it. And with your help, I am going to order my life according to it.”

B. Elijah was a man of concealment. His courage is linked to his private walk with God (v. 2-7). All of us need to get away from distractions, from skeptics, from the demands of work, and get alone with God. God is not impressed with our busyness. He is only impressed with who you are and who you are becoming. Oftentimes, there is a lot of activity in our lives, but not a lot of accomplishment; we are great doers in public, but deficient in our private devotional life (John 4:23-24). Elijah obeyed God’s command to “hide himself” (v. 3).

C. Elijah was a man in crisis. Elijah was sitting by the brook—and it dried up! (v. 7) Have you ever asked God to control you life—and then find that your “brook is drying up”? Christians are not problem-free; we know “The Great Problem Solver”! It is in the midst of life’s greatest trials that God shows Himself to be stronger still. God is interested in developing our faith—and he does this through trials.

Talking To Others About This Week’s Message

If a neighbor or friend at work asked you, “*What kind of stuff do they talk about at your church?*”, how would you summarize the most important elements of this week’s sermon and the key lessons you intend to apply to your life? Can you explain it in **plain language** anyone could understand?



1. Elijah of Tishbeh went to Samaria to warn Ahab of a drought (1 Kings 17:1)
2. Elijah then retired to the brook Cherith, where he was fed until the brook dried up.(17:1-7)
3. Then Elijah was sent to Zarephath, where he multiplied the widow's oil and meal.(17:8-24)
4. In the third year Elijah returned to Samaria and met Ahab (1 Kings 18:1-19)
5. Then Elijah summoned Israel to Mt. Carmel to decide between Yahweh and Baal. Yahweh was vindicated by fire consuming the altar and sacrifice (18:20-40)
6. As rain came, Elijah ran before Ahab to Jezreel (18:41-46)
7. Threatened by Jezebel, Elijah fled southward through Beersheba (1 Kings 19:1-3)
8. Here Elijah was visited by an angel in the desert under a juniper tree (19:4-8a)
9. Elijah went on to Mt. Horeb (18:8b-14)
10. Returning to Gilead, Elijah appointed Elisha of Abel-meholah as prophet (19:15-21)
11. Later Elijah rebuked Ahab at Jezreel for the murder of Naboth (1 Kings 20:1—21:19)
12. It is possible that Elijah then returned to Gilead until Ahab's death (1 Kings 21:20-29)
13. Journeying to Samaria, Elijah met Ahaziah's messengers, then the king himself, and predicted the latter's death (2 Kings 1)
14. Finally Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal through Bethel and Jericho, across the Jordan, to the place of his ascension (2 Kings 2)