

Spiritual Warfare

Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Do you consider yourself to be a bold person? Explain.
2. Do you get more satisfaction from starting a project or finishing a project?

Read the following passages: 1 Kings 18:16-40.

When Elijah told the people, “If the Lord is God follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him,” the people were silent. Nobody was willing to publicly confess a commitment to Yahweh. How did this group of Israelites end up there? It began generations earlier when the Israelites asked Rehoboam, Solomon’s son, to ease the heavy burden Solomon had laid upon the people. When Rehoboam answered harshly, ten of the twelve tribes of Israel rallied around a new leader, Jeroboam. Jeroboam, concerned that these twelve tribes would eventually reunite with David’s dynasty if they resumed the pattern of worship outlined in the Law of Moses, created a substitute. He formed two golden calves, chose a new group of people to serve as priests, and established two new places for the people to gather to worship. Future kings followed Jeroboam’s lead. When Ahab came to power, he took things even further by formalizing Baal worship in Israel. Within several generations of Solomon’s reign, the people of Israel had completely lost their way spiritually.

We, too, live in the midst of spiritual confusion. Our cultural context is very different from that of the ancient Israelites. Even so, our problems are not just political, social, environmental, or psychological. They are spiritual.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. By the time God began speaking through Elijah, Baal worship had become a major operation in Israel. To the average Israelite, it probably seemed like Baal had a great deal of power. God called Elijah to expose this lie. What are some lies associated with each the following areas that you have found yourself prone to believe?
 - God
 - Church
 - Your identity
 - Your purpose
 - Your relationships
 - Your mental or physical health
 - Sexuality
 - Money

2. What helps you stay grounded in the truth when you are experiencing challenges in your life?
3. Elijah prayed that God would make himself known to all those present on Mount Carmel. What are some areas you would like to see God make himself known in your life or in the lives of others?
4. What are some practical ways we can fuel prayer in our own lives?
5. After a dramatic display of God's power, Elijah, in line with the instructions given in the Law of Moses (see Deuteronomy 13:1-5), killed all of the prophets of Baal who were present on Mount Carmel. Are there any voices in our culture or in your circles that you need to stop listening to? Explain. What can you do about it practically?
6. How do we recognize the unhelpful voices that emerge in our own thought-life? What can we do to more effectively ignore these unhelpful voices in our own minds?
7. What is one area in which you would like to experience more victory in your spiritual life?

Pray