



T H E M O U N T A I N

The Mountain | *Bible, Broccoli, and Bowling* | Chad Bruegman | 9.2.17

LG Weekly

S T A R T

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

When you get tired or hungry, how do you typically respond? Do people like being around you during those times?

S H A R E

Mountains...from a distance, are beautiful, majestic and seem so silent when you sit and stare at them, however, when you embark on a journey up the side of one you begin to experience a whole new world.

Throughout the Bible, God has revealed himself to people on mountainsides. In this series we will look at a few of those stories and what God wanted to show his people. God's purposes prevail. At times we see Him reveal his glory, might and power. Other times, he calls, restores, promises, leads and challenges. As we study these stories and learn more about God's character and love for us, let's not just ingest more information, but ask God:

Given what I am learning about you God, what is it you are showing me and how do I need to respond to your leading in my life?

Up on the heights of the mountain, you are stripped of vanity and brought to a place of decision. It is a place where you are tested. The mountain will demand all of you at times—as the mountain humbles the proud—but, if willing, God wants to reveal himself more and more to you and to each of us.

This week, Chad spoke about the struggle Elijah went through after the big showdown on the mountain. After experiencing one of the greatest demonstrations of God's power he'd ever witnessed, Elijah found himself depleted, exhausted, hungry, tired and in a very vulnerable state.

Read 1 Kings 19:1-3a

Elijah had just experienced an unforgettable day of victory thanks to God's power that went before him; the god of Baal was publically exposed as a fraud and the prophets of Baal were rounded up and destroyed...so what could go wrong? Jezebel was livid that Elijah was causing trouble for her and the gods she worshipped. So she threatened Elijah during a time when he was exhausted. Elijah, the courageous man of God, turned and ran from a messenger of Jezebel.

Have you ever been in this kind of situation—when one day you experience God's power, provision and strength and the next you nearly succumb to the enemy's threats?

When do you feel most susceptible to being attacked by the enemy? (i.e. before weekend services, when you try and have a devotional time, when you go out with friends, when you're feeling lonely, in certain locations or with certain friends etc.?)

Knowing this about yourself, how can you better prepare for the attacks of the enemy?

G R O W

Within a day, Elijah went from running into the battle to running away from it. He was not a hypocrite, nor was he backsliding, he was simply exhausted. God has given each of us a body, mind and Spirit and all three were designed to be in rhythm and cadence with one another. Elijah was simply experiencing an attack of the enemy when his tanks were at their lowest.

Read 1 Kings 19:3-8

Elijah had become suicidal; he saw a perceived threat as much larger than it actually was. He was gripped by fear, doubted his ministry calling and was prepared to die.

In P.R. House 1, *2 Kings Commentary* (Vol. 8, p. 222), we read that Elijah had most likely resigned his ministry.

For whatever reason—fatigue, lack of faith, or a sense of resignation at the prospect of never having peace—Elijah flees. He fears death the way Obadiah did (18:9–14). DeVries thinks “Elijah interprets Jezebel’s personal attack on him as the end of his ministry.” Indeed, the fact that he dismisses his servant in Beersheba, the southernmost point in Judah, then goes a day’s journey farther may indicate he has given up his ministry altogether. Elijah’s flight in 19:1–3 changes the face of the story. A. Hauser explains:

In three short verses the writer has totally changed the flow of the story. Victory seems to be transformed into defeat, the brave prophet into a cowering refugee, and the victory over death and Baal into an opportunity for death to reassert itself through Jezebel’s oath to take Elijah’s life.

As a follower of Jesus, have you experienced a time where you wanted to resign doing anything for God? If so, what factors do you think contributed to that feeling?

How might the story of Elijah’s weakness after his victorious, mountain-top experience help you reframe your own times of despair into a different perspective?

What does it say about God that a story like this is in the Bible?

MOVE

Chad made a great observation in this weekend’s message:

“The enemy gets the loudest when your tanks are the lowest.”

Spirituality is not just praying, reading the Bible, fasting, or worshipping, rather, it means recognizing what God might be asking of you during any season. Certainly, we do these things to grow in our relationship with Christ, but we must also be very intentional about replenishing our body, mind and Spirit.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31

What does it look like to do everything “all for the glory of God”?

Read Nehemiah 8:9-11

According to Nehemiah, it is the “joy of the Lord” that is our strength. C.S. Lewis once said, “Joy is the serious business of Heaven.” Being intentional about resting, fasting, celebrating, praying, dancing and studying the Bible is essential, but we need to be self-aware of when it is needed and able to take the steps necessary to make sure our tanks are full.

Thinking about your life and what you are going through, what do you think God would want you to do most this week:

- *Seek Him by dedicating a time to fast and pray*
- *Intentionally celebrate God's goodness by having a feast or dinner party to encourage others.*
- *Take time to play and enjoy the life God has given you.*
- *Read the Bible to get to know God more.*
- *Run, stretch, bike, swim or hit the gym to honor God with your body.*
- *Find a place to serve God and His church.*
- *Take a nap, honor the Sabbath in your life.*
- *Make healthy choices in diet to honor the body God gave you.*
- *Get together with a good friend or mentor.*
- *Consider other spiritual disciplines you could employ to replenish your Spirit and do them!*

P R A Y

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other. If a group member has opened up about being in a season of doubt or weariness, consider rallying around that member and lifting him or her up specifically. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

T O G O

Matthew 11:28-30 *(Message)*

Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.

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