

II. Group discussion *Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for "the big question."*

Read I Kings 16:29-33 aloud.

1. What kind of king was Ahab?

How do you think Jezebel affected Ahab's effectiveness as king?

Hint – when "bel" or "baal" is in a Bible name, it is not a good sign.

Why does God allow evil people to exercise power?

What do think happened to the faith of the Israelites while Ahab was king? Do you suppose any of them remained faithful?

2. Read I Kings 17:1. How did God respond to Ahab's reign?

How would it have felt to walk in Elijah's shoes? How do you suppose this message helped his popularity?

When might you be called on this week to challenge someone for acting in a foolish or evil manner? What might keep you from speaking up?

3. Read I Kings 18:16-41 aloud. A creative way to encounter the story would be to read it like a play, with a narrator & speakers.

4. Elijah challenges the Israelites to choose in verse 21.

What were the pro's & con's of worshipping Baal?

You could join the popular crowd at the king's parties, but you would have betrayed some of your core beliefs.

What were the pro's & con's of worshipping Yahweh?

You knew you were worshipping the one true God, but you ran the risk of getting to meet him sooner than you planned.

Why do you think the people said nothing to this question?

When are you faced with a choice of following the crowd or following Jesus? What helps you make the right choice?

5. After Baal turned out to be bogus and Yahweh sent fire, how did the crowd respond?

If God had not sent the fire, how do you think the crowd would have responded?

Why did Elijah kill the prophets of Baal and Asherah? Was this harsh?

How long do you suppose this revival lasted?

It would have been tough, because Jezebel still reigned.

6. The actions of the crowd show how difficult it is to speak up when others do not. How does this happen to you...
Do you ever feel pressured to hide your faith?
Do you ever feel like it is unsafe to say what you really think?
Do you ever keep silent because you are afraid others will look down on you?
Do you ever hide a burden from friends who could help?

Why do we hide our true feelings about our faith and our struggles?

How would it help you to have a place where you could tell others about your struggles?

Who can you talk to when you are struggling? How could our group become a safer place for honest sharing?

† **The big question** *If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.*

What is one area of your life where you need God's help but you might hesitate to ask someone to help you?

Marriage, job, parenting, personal struggles, sin, grief, etc. Let this lead naturally into a time of prayer for one another.

III. Other resources

The point – Our faith grows stronger when we talk about it honestly. Find a spiritual friend and confess the ways that you need him or her to pray for you.

Prayer ideas

Pray for revival – in our group, our church, and around the world!
Ask God for courage to confess our struggles to one another.
Thank God for his constant help and presence.
Pray for God to guide and strengthen each person.

Ask God to guide us through the process of welcoming Kevin, Chase, Reid & Trey Owen, and Jana Graves.

Kid-friendly activity. *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Act out I Kings 18:16-39. For the kids who cannot read, pair them up with readers.

Why were the people having trouble making up their minds?
Baal worship was the more popular way to go.

How did God show that he is the one and only true God?

How did the people respond after God sent fire?

What are some ways we might be tempted to put other things ahead of our faith?

Why should we put God first in all things?

What should you do if your friends want you to do something, but you know it is wrong?
Ask the parents to give examples of when this happened to them.



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LIFE Group Guide

I Kings 18 – Confessing our faith

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme: **Faith grows stronger when you talk about it.**

Prentice has encouraged us to pray for revival, and this guide fits with his call. In I Kings 16-19, Elijah called for revival, and the Israelites finally got it. It will help you to read the whole story in I Kings 16:29-19:21 – plus, it is a great story. This guide hits the highlights, but there are other items in the text that might enrich your discussion, such as the actions of Elijah, Obadiah, and the widow in Zarephath.

Prentice's sermon talks about how Elijah confronted sin, and this guide takes a similar path. While it would not be wise to position yourself as Elijah and point out sin in members' lives, you can be like Elijah by making your group a safe place to confess. Tap into the power of the group to be the body of Christ – encourage people to share honestly and to help one another with their struggles.

Leadership tip: Emphasize the “one another” aspects of group life. Pray for one another, look one another in the eye, encourage one another, listen to one another. This may be the most encouraging, supportive place in the lives of group members. Make your group safe for wounded people.

I. Relate *Use a few to introduce the theme, check everyone's spiritual pulse, and “break the ice.” No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage through these questions.*

- ❖ Pray for Kevin Owen and our congregation.
- ❖ What was helpful about this morning's sermon?
- ❖ How were you different 10 years ago?
- ❖ What is your favorite house plant? How well do you do with house plants?