2026-11-11 Small Group Guide

Small Group Guide: What Are You Doing Here?
Based on 1 Kings 18-19
Overview

This session explores the story of Elijah after his dramatic victory on Mount Carmel — his exhaustion, his fear, his despair, and God's gentle response. The central question God asks Elijah twice — "What are you doing here?" — becomes an invitation for each of us to examine where we are spiritually, emotionally, and purposefully in our own lives.

Key Takeaways

Spiritual highs do not make us immune to exhaustion and despair. Elijah had just witnessed fire fall from heaven, yet within days he was running for his life and asking God to let him die. Emotional and spiritual crashes can follow our greatest moments.

God meets us in our weakness with provision, not condemnation. Rather than rebuking Elijah for his fear, God sent an angel with food and water — twice — and said, "The journey is too much for you." God acknowledges our limits.

God is not always found in the dramatic. The wind, earthquake, and fire were powerful and impressive, but God was in the still, small whisper. Sometimes we need to quiet ourselves enough to hear him.

The enemy uses our weariness against us. When we are depleted, we are most vulnerable to believing we are worthless, alone, and without purpose. Scripture reminds us that it is the enemy who shouts condemnation while God quietly speaks of our value.

Knowing what we are doing here matters. God's repeated question — "What are you doing here, Elijah?" — is not a rebuke so much as an invitation to realign. It is a question worth sitting with personally and honestly.

Discussion Questions
Opening (Getting Comfortable)

Think of a time when you worked hard toward something meaningful and then felt completely drained afterward. What did that feel like, and how did you respond?

Have you ever had a moment where, like Elijah, you felt like saying, "I have had enough"? Without going into detail you are not comfortable sharing, what kinds of circumstances tend to bring you to that place?

Going Deeper (Into the Text)

In 1 Kings 19, after Elijah's greatest victory, he runs in fear from one person — Jezebel. What does this tell us about the nature of fear and exhaustion? Why do you think our lowest moments sometimes follow our greatest ones?

God's first response to Elijah's despair was not a sermon or a correction — it was food, water, and rest. What does that say about how God views our physical and emotional needs? How does that challenge or encourage you?

The angel told Elijah, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." God did not remove the journey — he prepared Elijah for it. How have you experienced God preparing you for something difficult rather than simply removing the difficulty?

God was not in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire — he was in the gentle whisper. Why do you think we sometimes look for God in the dramatic rather than in the quiet? What makes it hard to hear the whisper?

God asked Elijah the same question twice: "What are you doing here?" Elijah gave nearly the same answer both times. Why do you think God asked again? What do you think he was trying to draw out of Elijah?

Elijah said, "I am the only one left." He was wrong — God later told him there were seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed to Baal (1 Kings 19,

where God reveals this number). How does isolation distort our perspective? Have you ever felt like you were the only one, only to discover you were not alone?

Personal Reflection

The sermon posed this question directly: "What am I doing here — not just in this room tonight, but on this earth? Am I where I am supposed to be?" How would you honestly answer that question right now?

The sermon described two contrasting voices: the enemy screaming "you are worthless" and God quietly whispering "you are priceless." Which voice do you find yourself listening to most often? What makes it difficult to tune out one and tune in to the other?

The sermon mentioned that we often default to a particular behavior under pressure — some go back to old habits, some check out, some go through the motions robotically. What is your default response when you are overwhelmed or spiritually depleted?

Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to put into practice before your group meets again:

Slow down and ask the question. Set aside 15 to 20 minutes this week in a quiet place — no phone, no background noise — and simply ask God, "What are you doing here?" and "What do you want me to do here?" Write down what comes to mind.

Identify your default. Pay attention this week to how you respond when pressure increases. Do you pull away from God or toward him? Do you go through the motions or genuinely engage? Bring what you notice back to the group next time.

Receive before you give. If you are in a season of pouring out — serving,

caring for others, working hard in ministry or family life — intentionally schedule time to be filled up spiritually. Read the Word not to prepare something for someone else, but for yourself.

Find your whisper. Experiment with silence and stillness in your prayer time this week. Instead of filling the time entirely with words, leave space to listen. Note what you sense, feel, or hear in that quiet.

Counter the lie with the truth. When you catch yourself agreeing with a voice that says you are worthless, failing, or alone, write down the lie and then find one scripture that speaks the opposite. Memorize it or keep it somewhere visible.

Closing Prayer Focus

Close your group time by praying together for:

Those in the group who are in a season of exhaustion or despair
Ears to hear God's gentle whisper above the noise of daily life
Courage to honestly answer the question, "What are you doing here?"
The faith to trust that God's plans for each person are not finished, even when it feels that way

For Further Study

1 Kings 17 — Elijah at the brook Cherith and with the widow at Zarephath, where God first provided food and water miraculously
1 Kings 18 — The confrontation on Mount Carmel and the return of rain
1 Kings 19:15-18 — God's response to Elijah after this passage, where he gives him a new assignment and reveals that Elijah is not as alone as he believed
Romans 8:26-28 — The Spirit intercedes for us when we do not know what to pray
2 Corinthians 12:7-10 — Paul's thorn in the flesh and God's response: "My grace is sufficient"
Philippians 4:6-7 — Peace that surpasses understanding