

# LIVING ON THE EDGE

A ten part series  
on the life of  
Elijah

Group study guide

Part Three

6th October 2019

## *Coming out*



Have you ever had to reveal something about yourself to someone and you weren't sure how it was going to go? Will they be thrilled or disappointed, will they accept me or reject me? It's a risk. As disciples of Jesus Christ we are given a new identity, but when should we reveal it, and to who and how?

In the third part of this series, Elijah has been in hiding but now “the word of the Lord” has come to him and told him to return to Israel and make himself known to King Ahab, but how will he do that because Ahab is not exactly pleased with Elijah, and what God has asked him to do is risky, taking him away from his place of safety and provision and exposing him to danger.

*After many days the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, "Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth."*

*2 So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was severe in Samaria.*

*3 And Ahab called Obadiah, who was over the household. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly,*

*4 and when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water.)*

*5 And Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the valleys. Perhaps we may find grass and save the horses and mules alive, and not lose some of the animals."*

*6 So they divided the land between them to pass through it. Ahab went in one direction by himself, and Obadiah went in another direction by himself.*

*7 And as Obadiah was on the way, behold, Elijah met him. And Obadiah recognised him and fell on his face and said, "Is it you, my lord Elijah?"*

*8 And he answered him, "It is I. Go, tell your lord, 'Behold, Elijah is here.'"*

*9 And he said, "How have I sinned, that you would give your servant into the hand of Ahab, to kill me?"*

*10 As the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my lord has not sent to seek you. And when they would say, 'He is not here,' he would take an oath of the kingdom or nation, that they had not found you.*

*11 And now you say, 'Go, tell your lord, "Behold, Elijah is here.'"*

*12 And as soon as I have gone from you, the Spirit of the LORD will carry you I know not where. And so, when I come and tell Ahab and he cannot find you, he will kill me, although I your servant have feared the LORD from my youth.*

*13 Has it not been told my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid a hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water?*

*14 And now you say, 'Go, tell your lord, "Behold, Elijah is here"; and he will kill me.'*

*15 And Elijah said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today."*

*16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him. And Ahab went to meet Elijah.*

*17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is it you, you troubler of Israel?"*

*18 And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you have, and your father's house, because you have abandoned the commandments of the LORD and followed the Baals. (1 Kings. 18:1-18 ESV)*

## Commentary

The famine in Israel has been going on for a few years, and there is precious little left growing. Ahab and his steward, Obadiah, are out looking to for something for his horses and mules to eat. They decided to make the task easier by splitting the land in two and each talking a section. Obadiah is startled to find Elijah, and pays him respect, but when Elijah tells him to go and tell Ahab to come, his mood changes to one of fear. What does Obadiah fear? That as soon as he leaves Elijah will take off just as has for the last few years, Ahab will come and find noone, and take out his frustration on Obadiah! Obadiah tells Elijah that he too is a servant of the Lord, but in a differnt way, hiding 100 prophets of the Lord and keeping them alive from the persecution of Jezebel.

Obadiah also tells Elijah about the extensive search Ahab has undertaken to find him, although without success. Elijah is a wanted man!

Elijah reassures Obadiah that he won't do a runner, and Obadiah duly goes back and informs Ahab, who comes and finds Elijah. In hs greeting he calls Elijah "you troubler of Israel." The term means to "stir up," "muddy the waters," or actually to consult with dark forces to cause a hex on someone.

Elijah throws the charge right back on Ahab, it is him who has caused the "hex" on Israel by getting involved with gods which aren't Yahweh.

## Group Study

Review from last week how your response to last week's study and share with the group how you did in the application? What were you success' and where didn't it go so well. Why? How will you adjust going forwards?

Have you ever felt the call from God to leave a place of relative comfort, security, and provision?

How did you feel about it? What were your discussions around the call?

What did you end up doing?

What is the hardest thing you have had to tell someone? How did it go?

What frightens us about telling others about Jesus Christ?

What are some good ways we can approach others to tell them about the Gospel, and what are some ways which are not so helpful.

Read the following passage:

*"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.*

*32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.*

*33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.*

*34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

*35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty*

*and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,*

*36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'*

*37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?*

*38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you?*

*39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?'*

*40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'*

*41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*

*42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,*

*43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'*

*44 Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?'*

*45 Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'*

*46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matthew 25:31-46 ESV)*

What strikes you about this passage?

Why were both groups so surprised?

How does doing these things show the love of Jesus?

There is an often quoted saying, “preach the Gospel, and if necessary use words.” What is wrong with this saying?

Understanding who we are is fundamental to what we do, if we understand we are completely secure in Christ it will help us when God calls on us to “come out” and show those around His love, and tell them the Good news, even if it involves danger for us.

Take the remaining group time affirming to one another who you are in Christ.

### **Wrap up**

What is the next step for your group in consideration of what you have read and talked about?

What will you pray for this coming week?



### Personal study

Take a few days this week and read over the following verses describing your identity in Christ, and pray about how this identity gives you confidence in “coming out” as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Note your reflections in the space provided.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians. 5:17 ESV)*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,  
4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,  
5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter. 1:3-5 ESV)*

*But that is not the way you learned Christ!--  
21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,  
22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,  
23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,  
24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians. 4:20-24 ESV)*

**Reflections**

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**Day two**

*Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians. 4:32 ESV)*

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John. 1:9 ESV)*

*For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;  
12 as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. (Psalm. 103:11-12 ESV)*

## Reflections

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### Day three

*For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"*

*16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,*

*17 and if children, then heirs-- heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (Romans 8:15-17 ESV)*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,*

*4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love (Ephesians 1:3-4 ESV)*

## Reflections

### Day Four

*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.*

*8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

*9 In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.*

*11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

(1 John. 4:7-11 ESV)

*No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.*

*38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,*

*39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all cre-*

*ation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

(Romans 8:37-39 ESV)

**Reflections**

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**Day Five**

*Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,*

*24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.*

(Colosians 3:23-24 ESV)

**Reflections**

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