
Youth Sunday School Lesson

“A Still Small Voice”

The Calling of Elijah
(1 Kings 19:1-20)

Written by: Ed Lilley, Minister to Students, Ivy Memorial Baptist Church, Hampton, VA

Focal Passage:
1 Kings 19:11-13

Opening Activity:

Family Feud—Prior to the Bible study, prepare a poster board, or white board, with the top 10 answers (listed below) to the following questions. As students arrive, divide them into two teams, and play the game much like the popular *Family Feud* game as the student teams try to guess the top 10 answers on the board.

- According to the University of Minnesota, what are the top 10 stressors students face?
 1. Break up with boy/girlfriend
 2. Increased arguments with parents
 3. Trouble with brother or sister
 4. Increased arguments between parents
 5. Change in parents' financial status
 6. Serious illness or injury of family member
 7. Trouble with classmates/teacher
 8. Trouble with parents
 9. Re-marriage of parent
 10. Taking a test

(University of Minnesota, *Teens in Distress series*, 2005)

- According to www.righthealth.com, what are the top 10 distractions to a student trying to study?
 1. Email
 2. Instant messaging
 3. Text messaging
 4. Social networking
 5. Surfing the internet
 6. Gaming (Xbox, etc.)
 7. Television
 8. Eating/Snacking
 9. Chores
 10. Family commitments



a still small voice
1 Kings 19:11-13



Debriefing the Activity—

- Do you agree/disagree with the answers listed in the above surveys? Why or why not?
- Which of the above distractions do you struggle with the most in your life? Which of the above stressors do you struggle with the most in your life?
- **Say:** There are many things in our lives that cause us stress and demand our attention. When these inevitable times in our lives take place it can be very difficult to recognize when, and what, God is trying to say to us. Let's briefly look at the life of the prophet Elijah, his struggle, and how he was called back to God.

The Context:

- Have the students discuss what/who they think a prophet is, what a prophet does.
- Introduce the prophet Elijah by briefly reviewing the highlights of 1 Kings, chapters 17–18, to set the stage.
- Have a student read 1 Kings 19:1-10.
- Ask someone prior to the Bible study time to give a testimony of a time when they were so scared/depressed/saddened that they just couldn't eat, rest, and eventually collapsed in exhaustion and had to be cared for by a parent or someone else.
- How did God provide for Elijah when he collapsed out of exhaustion?
- How does God provide for you when you are stressed out, scared, or depressed?

The Contact:

Activity—"The Lighthouse." Call for two volunteers to stand at opposite ends of the room. After one of the volunteers is blindfolded, instruct the rest of the youth to position themselves randomly throughout the room as obstacles. When you say "start," have the sighted student guide the blindfolded student through the maze of student obstacles; the students can talk, distract, or you could even play music in the background.

Now, try the same thing with two new volunteers, only this time have everyone be silent and instruct the volunteer student guide to speak softly while giving his/her instructions on how to navigate the room in order to reach the other side where he/she is standing.

Debrief the Activity—

- What do you think it was like being the person blindfolded?
- What were some of the possible emotions/feelings being felt by either volunteer?
- Was it easier to hear the instructions with a lot of noise or when it was silent?
- What are some observations about a student's focus when it is noisy? Silent?

Have a student read the focal passage, 1 Kings 19:11-13.

- After reading this Scripture, what do we learn about God?
- Understanding the context of 1 Kings 17–18, do you think that Elijah had come to depend on God using the sensational to get people's attention in order to repent? How is this similar to how we expect God to speak to us today?
- Why did Elijah cover his face and kneel after realizing that he was in the presence of God?

The Call:

- Have a student read 1 Kings 19:15-18.
- Knowing how depressed and stressed out Elijah was, how did God meet Elijah's need?
- What were God's instructions for Elijah?
- How did Elijah respond to God's call (v19a)?

The Conclusion:

Thought #1—When God calls us to a particular task, we must surrender to God’s call. We must obey God. No greater joy exists on the earth than the joy of serving God. Think of some of the joys we experience when we serve or meet someone’s need:

- The joy of giving a toy to a child who has nothing.
- The joy of providing food, shelter, clothing, or money to a needy person.
- The joy of leading someone to Christ.

Again, there is no greater joy than surrendering to God and God’s purpose for our lives. When the call comes we must, like Elijah, get up, go forth, and do the task God is calling us to do. We must surrender to the call of God.

Thought #2—When God calls us to serve, we must surrender to God’s call. Note the examples given to us in the Scriptures:

- Abraham surrendered to the call of God (Genesis 12:1-4)
- Noah surrendered to the call of God (Genesis 6:22)
- Moses surrendered to the call of God (Exodus 3:9-10)
- Gideon surrendered to the call of God (Judges 6:14)
- David surrendered to the call of God (Psalm 40:8)
- Elisha surrendered to the call of God (1 Kings 19:20)
- Isaiah surrendered to the call of God (Isaiah 6:8)
- Christ surrendered to the call of God (John 4:34)
- Paul surrendered to the call of God (Acts 9:6)

The Challenge:

Say: Each student, like Elijah, probably has a multitude of stressors and distractions. Like so many others, we are also waiting for God to speak to us in some magnificent, obvious, inspired moment as seen in the movies or on TV.

Provide each student with some time to consider what God is trying to say to them. Enlist some adult volunteers that preferably have a rapport with the students to listen and help discern God’s voice in their lives. You might also consider providing a brochure from the Virginia Baptist Mission Board that provides counseling helps for students feeling called to salvation or Christian ministry and service.

Close in prayer asking God to help each student handle the distractions and stressors that can so easily weigh them down in order that they might be able to determine the voice of God amidst everything else.

Follow-Up:

Try giving each student a phone call before your next meeting together to see how God has been revealed to them during the week. Ask the students if they have found it easier, or more difficult, to hear the voice of God and why or why not. Remind them that just like you picked up the phone to call them, in the same way God, the Creator of all that they see, is calling them as well. Will they answer, respond later, let it go to voicemail, or avoid God’s call altogether?