

# GROWTHguide

FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 10, 2016

"When God Seems Small"



## THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

1 Kings 18:16-39, Exodus 14:5-18, Philippians 1:6, Psalm 139:7-10

## REFLECTION AND STUDY

### DAY 1

Have you ever prayed for something and felt it wasn't answered? Have you ever been hit with an unexpected tragedy you had no idea was coming? In these moments, was your trust in God even shaken? Questions and doubts often come over the minds of the faithful and as much as we want to exercise a tenacious faith in a larger than life God, sometimes we wonder why God seems so small when the giant circumstances invade our lives.

Think about a moment in your life when you wondered where God was, or you weren't sure God could handle what life was throwing at you.

- What were you facing in that situation? How did that situation resolve?
- Do you see God anywhere in that situation when you look back on it now?

**Pray and ask God to help you to be aware of His presence and to trust in His power.**

### DAY 2

Our fears bring about some pretty hefty guarantees. When you have fear you inevitably have doubt. Fear makes us doubtful and when we are doubtful we question things even when we believe them to be right. Fear also makes us focus on our own interests. When we are trying to protect ourselves, our vision can become inwardly focused, not outwardly focused. When we are afraid, we want to blame others because fear moves us away from taking responsibility.

- Have you experienced a time when you fear caused you to doubt what God could do?
- How can fear keep us from obedience?

**Pray and ask God to reveal any areas of fear in your life, and to help you let go of those fears.**

### DAY 3

We don't want to walk an unfamiliar path. In Exodus we read about the Israelites wanting to go back to the life in Egypt; even at the expense of becoming slaves again, because they did not see the big picture. They were so afraid of the unknown, they were willing to go back to slavery just because it was familiar! God's people had been promised there was a better life ahead, but through their fears, they were convinced that they should have stayed in Egypt.

- Where are you short sighted because of your fears?
- What paths has fear kept you from walking?

**Pray and ask God to help you walk on His path with confidence. Thank Him for always being near.**

## DAY 4

We are taught never to put God to the test, but what happens when God willingly instructs us to do that? What happens when God knows the only way we are going to see his power is to perform a miracle right in front of us? As we saw in the story of Elijah, God commanded him to challenge the priests of Baal, giving God the opportunity to prove His power. Imagine Elijah standing before the evil king. His life flashes before him and all he can do is hope and pray that God would do what He said He would. And He did! Through the power of the Lord's awesome strength, Elijah and the people of Israel were redeemed.

- Have you ever put God to the test?
- Have you ever been afraid and cried out to God? What happened next?

**Pray and thank God for His faithfulness.**

## DAY 5

Are you weary of life's problems? Do you wonder if there is a future ahead? Have you lost faith in what is still to come? You need to see the power of God. Elijah had doubts and fears. He believed he was at the end of his rope and had nothing left. It was only when Elijah told God, "I am done," that God sent an angel to reveal his power. When life's circumstances overwhelm you, remember **When God seems small, GOD IS NEAR**. In your most difficult and hopeless times is when God is closest to you. When we face stiff challenges, wild uncertainties, even violent and raging seas, God says, "I'm going to be near to you so that you don't face the darkness alone."

- Will you lean into the promises of God?

**Pray and thank God for promising never to leave you alone. Ask Him to be your strength in the face of the challenges you face.**

## DAY 6

Remember the quote Pastor Bob shared from Max Lucado: *"Is the trail dark? Don't sit. Is the road long? Don't stop. Is the night black? Don't quit. God is watching. For all you know right at this moment he may be telling the angel to move the stone."*

- Have you ever given up on something, and then wondered later what would have happened if you'd tried just a little bit longer?
- Have you ever had a prayer answered right when you were at the point of giving up?
- Think about a time when you were close to giving up, but you didn't quit. What was it that enabled you to keep going?

**Pray and ask God to strengthen your faith and help you keep going when you feel like giving up.**

## DAY 7

Today is your "Sabbath" and a time for reflection. How has God been speaking to you over the week? Use what the Lord has said to you to remold and reshape your life. If you are having trouble hearing God's voice, slow down or even stop what you are doing so that the busyness of life's demands do not squelch the whispers of God's language of love upon your heart.