



Week 11 (July 12-18): Lesson Guide

Open In Prayer

Welcome/Introductions

Ask the group to recall the guidelines for discussion that we use to create a safe environment.

Ask someone to retell last week's story from Matthew 4:1-11 (Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness).

Ask someone on your team to read the Hook Question - Ask, "Has God every provided for you in a special or surprising way?"

Ask someone from your team to read the following background for the story:

It was the time of the kings. The nation of Israel had been divided into two kingdoms – the northern kingdom (Israel) and the southern kingdom (Judah). Historically, the southern kingdom had both good kings and evil kings, but the northern kingdom only had evil kings. Today's story takes place during the reign of Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel in the northern kingdom.

God raised up a prophet by the name of Elijah to pronounce judgment on Israel (the northern kingdom) for their idolatrous ways (they were worshiping Baal instead of God). God sent Elijah to speak to Ahab and Jezebel and tell them that God was going to judge Israel and there would be no rain for three and a half years. Elijah's prophecy came true, and the land experienced a great drought. This drought caused a great famine, and food was in short supply. During the drought, God sent Elijah to live by a stream. While Elijah lived there, God sent ravens to bring him food! This went on for some time, but then the stream dried up because no rain had fallen in the land. God was committed to provide everything Elijah needed to do God's will. So, when the stream dried up, God moved Elijah to a new place. This is where our story picks up...

Tell the story from 1 Kings 17:7-15

Rebuild the story – (Group members tell the story based on what they remember)

Read 1 Kings 17:7-15 – (Ask the group to read these scriptures)

Discuss these questions:

- Why do you think God provided for Elijah and the widow?
- What do you think would have happened if the widow did not obey? Why?
- What does this story teach us about God?
- Like the widow, what does God want you to do right now that requires you to trust Him?

Ask for a volunteer to retell the story one last time.

Ask for a volunteer to tell the story next week.

Prayer Requests (ask someone in the group to take notes so you can email the requests to the group)

Pray (don't feel the need to mention every request in prayer again, just pray for the group and send the email)

WINNING

STORIES OF VICTORY



Week 11: Leadership Coaching Guide

Leading [learn to facilitate your group more effectively]

- Does your group feel more like a church class than a group of friends getting together to build relationships, seek God, and work together toward the common mission of making disciples?
 - It might feel more like a class if...
 - You don't meet in a home
 - You only see or talk to these people at the group meeting
 - You never share any meals together
 - There are not any real friendships happening between the people in your group
 - Nobody is inviting new people to the group
- Carefully approach these issues. Start with prayer. Next, visit with some of the more spiritually mature people in your group and develop a plan. Finally, present your plan to the group, ask them to pray with you, and move towards becoming a discipleship *team* and away from a "nice" church class!
 - Don't forget to consult your coach! Your coach will want to pray with you and will be happy to offer input as you take steps to lead your team to more effectively fulfill the Great Commission together.

Shepherding [know the sheep, feed the sheep, lead the sheep, protect the sheep]

- Remember, discipleship happens in the group meeting, but discipleship must also happen outside the meeting if you are going to follow Jesus' example. Jesus lived life with His guys, shared meals with them, built friendships with them, was transparent about His personal life, etc. If it feels like something is missing in your group meetings than consider the implications of this statement carefully: "You will never, *ever* be able to fake authentic relationships."

Developing [grow as a disciple yourself]

- As we wrap up our focus on love, let's look at a short story about Jesus in Matthew 22:36-40 - grab a Bible and read it real fast, I'll wait...
- In this story, the expert in the law asked Jesus which is the greatest commandment? This implies one answer, but Jesus gave him two: love God and love your neighbor. But stop and think about this, did Jesus really give the man two answers?
 - 1 John 4:21 - "Christ has given us this commandment: The person who loves God must also love other believers."
- Jesus did not offer two answers, He offered only one – because the two are inseparable. It is impossible to love God and not love your brother. When you love God, you will love your brother. Remember the words of our Lord when He said, "I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!"
- How does God want to change the way you love others so that you will grow in your love for Him?