

FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

#3 – FIGHT WHEN YOUR FATIGUE DRAINS YOU

1 KINGS 19:1-10 MATTHEW 11:28-30

Intro: *Are you weary, exhausted all the time? Are you sick and tired of being sick and tired? God can give you the weapons to fight fatigue shown through the life of Elijah and teachings of Jesus.*

Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them." Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life, I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep.

1 Kings 19:1-5a

I. Face Up To Your Fatigue

- **How to _____ fatigue** – Fatigue is physical, mental, or spiritual draining of your energy caused by hard work and/or constant stress, leading to decreased or inability to function or respond to situations.

Levels of Fatigue

I Tired -----→ II Weary -----→ III Exhausted
Light-----→ Severe

- **Fatigue occurs in three areas _____ ourselves –**
 - 1) Physical – This is obviously fatigue of the body
 - 2) Mental – Fatigue of our minds and emotions
 - 3) Spiritual – Fatigue that occurs spiritually

Though separate, they are interconnected. Fatigue in one area will influence fatigue in other areas.
- **Elijah _____ for fatigue** – Even though a great prophet, he was just a man like us (James 5:17). He wasn't Superman! After the extreme stress of the Mount Carmel experience and Jezebel's threats, he ran for his life reaching extreme exhaustion. Rather than receiving reward for his hard work, he had to run for his life! He suffered hopelessness, burn-out, and depression.
- **Like Elijah, we are not _____ from fatigue** – Though victorious Christian living is obtainable, reality is that stress, expectations, and the turmoil of life creates valleys on the way to the climb to the mountaintop of spiritual victory.
- **The _____ of others makes it worse** – Others judge us as flawed or unspiritual when we struggle with physical, emotional, or spiritual fatigue. Elijah's story shows us fatigue is a fact of life, and God understands.

All at once, an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread backed over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. The angel came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He replied, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

1 Kings 19:5b-10

II. Turn to God When Fatigued

- **Take _____ of yourself** – God used angels to care for Elijah for physical needs. Today, we need to follow proven wisdom (from the Bible and experience) for adequate rest (time off from work and stress),

sleep, and diet. God may even send you earthly “angels” to encourage us, help us bear our burdens, and give us spiritual counsel.

- **Turn to _____ in prayer** – In our extreme fatigue, we often need guidance on how to deal with our fatigue, encouragement, and supernatural empowerment through the Holy Spirit. Like Elijah, we need to go to God with our true thoughts and feelings – no matter how negative. Then He can respond with the correcting help we need.
- **Give our _____ to Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30)** – When we are weary and burdened, we should give the burdens (concerns, stresses, responsibilities) to Jesus to worry about and ultimately deal with. Do all you can under His guidance and power, and leave the rest to Him. In return, we live our lives and serve Him His way, which is easier than living our life our way under our own power.
- **Rest and _____** – Sometimes, we push ourselves to the limit and beyond to reach total exhaustion. This requires prolonged rest, not just one night’s sleep. Elijah rested twice (verses 5&6) indicating that resting after extreme fatigue to rejuvenate and reenergize is a process that takes time. To avoid reaching the point of exhaustion, we need to rest and recreate weekly. God commands this by setting aside one day a week for a “Sabbath” (Exodus 16:23) – to rest from work. Recreation is also important to recuperate from fatigue. The Sabbath is a time for both worship and rest. Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for man (his benefit), not man made for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27). Don’t feel guilty when you rest and recreate.

He came to a broom tree, sat under it and prayed that he might die. “I have had enough Lord,” he said. “Take my life, I am no better than my ancestors.”

He replied, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.”
I Kings 19:4b, 10

III. Don’t Exaggerate the Negative

- **When extremely fatigued, we can get depressed and _____** – This especially occurs when we don’t see the results we had wanted for our efforts. We maximize the negative and minimize the positive. We have a continual solo pity party for ourselves. Our negativism often blinds us to what God is doing around us.
- **Elijah was a pity party _____!** – He had a pity party for himself, even wanting to die (verse 4)! He even though he was the only person left faithful to God (verse 10)! This points to exaggerated negativity, the opposite of faith in God!
- **See your situation through the eyes of _____** – Trust in God that He is at work, even though we can’t see it. Pray for God to accentuate His blessings and provision in your life that are often not perceived or minimized. Go to God and get a fresh experience with Him. Let God give you a check-up from the neck up, spot and stop stinkin’ thinkin’ and start right spiritual thinking (Philippians 4:8).

Jesus promised us abundant spiritual living (John 10:10). When fatigued and negative, we cheat ourselves of that life. Turn to God for His help, take care of yourself and don’t exaggerate the negative. See the world through eyes of faith.

Answers: I. Identify; within; poster boy; immune; judgment. II. Care; God; burdens; recreate. III. Negative; guy; faith.