



TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

There [Elijah] 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, torn 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.” The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.

1 Kings 19:9-12

Freedom from loneliness

Have you ever felt alone? You were excluded from the party; you didn't get an invite. You were stuck at home alone while everyone else hung out. Everybody else got the Snap and laughed when they got it, but your profile stays quiet. Nobody seems to want to talk or hang out. Or maybe the opposite is true. You have lots of people who want to be your friend, but you're not close to any of them. You're alone in the crowd; you have lots of likes and followers but you still long for a true friend. Or maybe, your faith puts you on an island, standing for God's truth, so that you end up all alone because of your stand.

If you've ever felt alone, you can relate to the prophet Elijah.

Elijah had a tough job. He had to preach against the king and queen of Israel. They had introduced a false God named Baal into Israel, and they were leading thousands of people astray. Elijah preached, and he preached. Then he preached some more. But no one seemed to care. No one seemed to listen. He felt alone. In fact, he was so lonely and so overwhelmed that he at one point said, “God, I'm done. Take me home to heaven.” He wanted to die.

But God wanted him to know that he was not alone. And he wants you to know it too. There was Elijah in a cave, hundreds of miles away from everyone. But then God came. And he said, “Elijah, what are you doing here?” Elijah had run; he had tried to hide. But he could not escape God's loving care and concern. God was right there to care about Elijah. We are never alone! God is always with us. There's no place we can go on this earth where we will be alone. God will always be with us.

And God made sure that Elijah knew it. He came to Elijah through a whisper, through his Word. And that's what God does for you again and again. He comes to you in his Word and declares his undying love for you. He reminds you that in baptism God has made you his own child and he will always be there. Each time you come to the Lord's Supper he will assure you again and again of his love and forgiveness. The Lord is always with you. You are never alone. Not now. Not ever.

And that wasn't the only thing Elijah learned that day. Open up your Bibles and keep reading in 1 Kings 19:13-18. There God says, “Elijah! You think you're alone? You think you're the only one who loves me? There are 7000 people who haven't bowed down to Baal. You're not alone!” There is a group of people, your Christian church and your Christian friends, who stand with you in faith and in life. Go seek them out! Keep on meeting together with them. Build each other up in the faith and encourage each other. You are not alone. Your God ensures it by staying by your side always and by giving friends who will stick with you.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for your love that you promise to never take away from me. Thank you for the Christian friends you have placed in my life so that I'm never alone. I always have you and I always have a Christian community around me. When I'm feeling lonely, remind me of both of these things. Amen.