

We Will Thrive

When God's Strength Becomes Our Own (Week 3)

LifeNotes

TALK IT OVER

Main Idea

We will thrive when God's strength becomes our own.

Key Scriptures

Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither do nor rain in the next few years except at my word."

1 Kings 17:1 NIV

Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. 1 Kings 17:3

So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. 1 Kings 17:5

Then the word of the Lord came to him: "Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food." 1 Kings 17:8-9

They he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried out to the Lord, "Lord my God, let this boy's life return to him!" 1 Kings 17:21

... to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

You won't reach the next summit by pushing against the present valley.

Lessons from the valley:

- If He is stripping you down — press in.
- If He is refining you — praise Him.

Start talking.

- Why do we tend to trust in our own strength?
- What are some problems with trusting in our strength?

Start thinking.

- Read 1 Kings 17:1. What can we learn about Elijah from this?

- Read 1 Kings 17:3, 5. What does the name "Kerith" tell us about God's greater purpose in Elijah's life? How did Elijah respond to God's instruction?
- Read 1 Kings 17:8-9. What did we learn was the meaning of Zarephath? Why is that meaningful?
- Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. Why was Paul given a "thorn"? How did Paul respond?

Start sharing.

- How have you questioned, pushed back, and at times, ran away from God's painful lessons?
- What have you learned—in retrospect—from the stripping down, and refining seasons in your life?
- What lessons do Elijah and Paul offer us?

Start doing.

- If you are in a "stripping down" season—lean in through prayer. Literally, get on your knees and/or stretch out and commit to drawing closer to Jesus.
- If you are in a "refining place"—praise Him. Before you begin each day, list 5 things you are thankful for and praise him for them.

Closing prayer.

Jesus, you are King of Kings and Lord of Lords! Thank you for loving me enough to lead me through difficult valleys. Give me the faith and courage to trust in your strength and not my own. Strip away from me any dependence on my own strength.