

3 Questions to Ask Yourself Before You Crash and Burn

This past week, Steve and I spent a few days in the mountains with our Reach Beyond home staff. The scenery was beautiful, and God met us there. Steve and I taught from the life of Elijah, one of our favorite Old Testament heroes.

One of my favorite stories of Elijah is what happens after the miraculous events at Mt. Carmel. Elijah is threatened by Jezebel, becomes afraid and runs for his life. He runs to Beersheba—which means “the place of swearing” in Hebrew. There Elijah curls up and cries out to God to take his life (1 Kings 19). After being strengthened by sleep and food, he continues running to Horeb. In the Hebrew, Horeb literally means *the Mountain of Dried-up Bones*, but it was known in Israel as the Mountain of God. There in the cave, the Lord tenderly meets Elijah, cares for him, and then sends him back to work.

As I think about this story and its implications for you and me, I realize that often when God uses us in a mighty way—as He used Elijah on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18)—a crash will follow.

As Westerners, we value productivity and accomplishment. We value hard work and endurance. All of those are great qualities! But if we don’t figure out what it looks like to nurture our spirit, soul and body, we’ll burn out. I understand the dilemma all too well. I love my life. It’s exciting! It’s full of adventure! The opportunities are endless, and all of them look amazing to me. (In case you haven’t figured this out—I’m known for my exuberance.) But even in my exuberant nature, I need to consider what will keep my life sustainable. What practices will keep me serving God passionately for the long haul? You need to figure this out as well.

3 Questions to Ask Yourself to Help You Find a Sustainable Rhythm:

What practices do I need *daily* to nurture my relationship with God? These might include prayer time, a quiet walk, reading your Bible, journaling, listening to worship music and so on.

What do I need *weekly* to function in my full anointing? Consider exercise, rest, time spent in conversation with family and friends, affection needs, and affirmation needs. Consider the activities you enjoy for play—art, sports, reading and so on. Reflect on all the aspects of your life—physical, spiritual, emotional, professional and relational—and consider what you need weekly.

How can I create the space to spend unhurried, quality time in God's presence—simply to enjoy Him? God created us for relationship. He wants us to simply enjoy and delight in Him, but so often we go at such a fast pace that He gets left out of the picture. When God spoke to Elijah in the cave, He wasn't in the powerful wind, He wasn't in the earthquake, He wasn't in the fire, He came in a gentle whisper. I love that! I don't know about you, but I don't want to miss the gentle whisper. Life will pull us in a million directions. Discipline yourself to listen for the whisper. {eoa}

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