

Burnout and the Gospel

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[0 : 00] You know, in the winter of 2021, we had an elders meeting. We had to meet outside because you couldn't meet inside at this time. There were nine of us at that time, and one of our elders is 91 years old.

I guess he was probably 89 at the time. And we were meeting outside in the winter. It was about 45 degrees Fahrenheit. I don't know what that is in Celsius, but the wind was blowing, and it was very cold.

And we met outdoors for an elders meeting for a couple of days. You know, we took a break and went home at night. But I remember the devotion that I led the elders through was here from 1 Kings 19 on where is the Lord when we're very, very, maybe beyond tired when we're actually burned out.

Before I was a church planter and a pastor, Olivia and I served in China as missionaries from 1998 to 2005. I know she doesn't look that old. I do.

But anyway, we were there. And before you go on the mission field, they give you all of these personality assessments. They're trying to help you understand yourself and help you understand your spouse and your teammates and everyone else.

[1 : 05] And I took a very extensive personality test. It's called the Berkman. And in the Berkman, they measure a couple of things. One is they measure your usual behavior when you're not under stress.

And then they measure your behavior under stress. And they do that for your spouse. And so you can try to understand yourself. So you don't know me very well. But my usual behavior on the graph from 0 to 100 on the percentile is I'm at 99.

So I'm a very, very active person in my usual behavior. But when I get stressed out, I drop down into the 40 percentile range. So when I get stressed, I want to simplify. I want to pull back.

I want to make life a little more easy. Olivia is about the opposite of me. She's somewhere in the middle on her normal activity range. But then when she's stressed out, she gets more busy.

She wants to do more. She wants to accomplish more. And so we get really stressed out together under stress because she wants to do more. She's asking for my help, and I'm trying to pull back all the time.

[2 : 02] And so we're having these marriage conversations. It's good to understand your usual behavior and then your stress behavior. But then sometimes beyond stress, when you're stressed out for long enough, if you don't take care of yourself, you can move beyond stress to what we call burnout.

So what are the marks of burnout? So in burnout, people respond different ways. But here are some common responses. We have trouble thinking clearly. We can be hypercritical of ourselves and others.

We can have trouble sleeping or eating. We can isolate ourselves from community. The Bible, when we read it, it feels like sometimes we're getting nothing out of it.

It feels rock hard to us. We really can't learn, it feels. And ultimately, we're tempted to make really big decisions when we're burned out.

Because we think to ourselves, surely if I can change my external circumstances, that I will feel better internally. When the problem is, as human beings, wherever we go, we are still there.

[3 : 11] We carry ourselves with us. And so whatever is going on in our hearts, unless the Lord is dealing with our hearts and alleviating the burnout in our souls, then we will still be burned out.

And we saw this in the pandemic. We saw this in America, where people were stressed out. And they started making all of these massive decisions, changing everything about their external lives. Well, the problem is, when you move from Manhattan to Tennessee, or you move from California to North Carolina, you're still there.

You brought yourself with you, and you're still stressed out. And so what do we do when the problem is not outside of us, but is actually inside of us? So when we find ourselves in a burned out place, we are in a dangerous place.

But we're also in a place where if the Lord is at work in us, and the Lord is at work, He is moving toward us in our burnout. It can be a spiritually transformative place where we really understand the grace of God at a deeper level in our lives.

So how does God respond to us when we're not just stressed out, but we're burned out? How does the Lord respond to us? What we find here in 1 Kings 19 with Elijah and his experience is that when we're in a burned out place, the Lord moves toward us with a special love and a special grace that He really wants us to receive from Him.

[4 : 37] Let me say that again. When we find ourselves in a burned out place, the Lord is moving toward us with a special grace and a special love that He deeply wants us to receive from Him.

And we'll see that in this story with Elijah. Now, I found it incredible, of all the passages in the Bible, that James preached on 1 Kings 18 two weeks ago.

I mean, that is a mark that the Lord is at work. I mean, I just chose a passage. I love this passage. It's one of my favorite passages. And lo and behold, you had the prequel two weeks ago.

You saw what happened at Mount Carmel in this epic moment. You know, God versus Baal, Yahweh versus Baal, and God wins, and all the prophets of Baal are slaughtered.

And Elijah goes on. He tries to evangelize Ahab all the way back. I don't know if he got that far in the chapter, but he follows the king all the way back to his summer palace, and he's trying to evangelize him, show him the gospel.

[5 : 35] This is the high point of Elijah's ministry. And then just beyond that, just on the flip side of that, we find him here in 1 Kings 19, which Angus read for us this morning.

So chapter 19 begins with the queen's rage. She's very angry about what happened at Mount Carmel. She's very angry that all of her puppet priests have been killed and slaughtered.

She's not happy. And so she starts pursuing Elijah, trying to kill him. And so instead of Elijah responding with the courage that we saw in chapter 18, we see him responding with fear and tiredness and anxiety.

And he, instead of being bold, he runs. He runs to the wilderness. In fact, he runs about 100 miles somehow south. We find this sometimes in the Old Testament where people are somehow empowered as track stars and they run places.

But anyway, he runs to Jezreel. He runs all the way to Beersheba, which is 100 miles south of Jezreel. So after reaching Beersheba, he shows us a few things that really demonstrate what a poor state of mind and being that he's in.

- [6 : 50] Watch what he does. These are all really bad things to do. So he leaves his servant. So he intentionally isolates himself from other people. That's not a good thing to do.
- He goes by himself into the wilderness. Now anyone knows that hiking alone, especially in the desert, is bad. So that's not a good... He's not thinking clearly.
- He's making poor decisions. He's not necessarily suicidal, but he's close. He wants to die. He wants to die.
- It says he asks God to kill him. He's misunderstanding reality. He says, it's enough. I'm no better than my fathers. Take my life.
- He feels worthless. He feels like his ministry has amounted to nothing. Even though it's true that before God, we're all sinners and we're all desperately in need of his mercy.
- [7 : 45] Elijah's not a normal guy. He has had a successful ministry. He's just been on the top of Mount Carmel and seen God do incredible things. God has been faithful to him.
- But yet in this moment, his full assessment of his life is, I'm worthless, I'm meaningless, and I want to die. And then he lays down and he sleeps involuntarily.
- So when someone sleeps involuntarily for as long as he slept, it means that he's completely fried. He has maxed himself out. So how can we understand what has happened with him in contrast to 1 Kings 18?
- Well, Elijah has been running very, very hard in ministry for a very, very long time. He's been put under spiritual pressure.
- He is in a faithless age. If you know the context of this moment in history, I mean, it's just one bad king after another. A couple are good. Most are bad. But it's just a really brutal time to be a faithful Christian.
- [8 : 47] And he's been running hard, standing up for the Lord in a faithless age. He's under physical pressure. He's just run all this way, so he's physically tired. He's under relational pressure.
- He's been doing a lot of this by himself, alone. And he's been under ministry pressure. And all of this has taken a massive toll on him. Now, none of us have been exactly through what Elijah went through.
- This is a unique situation. But you also, if you've been alive the last three years in this world, you've also been through a lot. You may have been sick more often than usual.
- You may have had family members who have been sick and you've been taking care of them. You may have lost a loved one or multiple people that you loved during this season of COVID. You may be walking through a time of intense hurt caused by your previous church, people that you trusted.
- And you felt like, of all the people that I can trust and find the grace of God in them, you didn't find it. And now you're wondering what that is all about.
- [9 : 56] You may have had to endure online school. Our kids were in online school for eight months. You may have experienced economic stress due to factors that no one could have seen coming.
- You might have lost your job or maybe your investments were bad or the inflation rate is insane. And so then you're having a hard time. And on top of these pressures that everyone's faced, you might have had your own pressures.
- Perhaps you moved during the pandemic and moving can be stressful. Or maybe you've struggled some with mental health. We have many in our congregation who have struggled, some even in our own family.

Did you lose a job, lose income? Was extraordinary pressure put on family relationships or personal relationships where you just saw things very differently than other people that you thought that you would agree with?

And it becomes very difficult. On top of all this, in the midst of all the chaos, were you leading? Were you in a leadership position? Were you leading in the church? Were you leading in your company?

[10 : 56] Were you leading in your family? If you were leading other people through all of this, then you bore a particular burden. And so some of you, even today, as we sit here, are feeling burned out.

Some of you may feel like you felt that way a little while back. And the reality is that we probably will be there again one day. And so 1 Kings, I believe 1 Kings 19 is here in the Bible for us, so that we can see how the Lord responds to people, His people, when they're on the edge of margin, when they're really, really tired.

How does the Lord respond? This is a key question because I feel like when we're burned out, I sometimes feel a bit ashamed. Like I shouldn't be here.

I should, as a pastor, I know the Bible. I mean, I should be able to believe God's love and really experience the Holy Spirit so that I, and I should know myself well enough to not get to a point where I'm there.

But then you find yourself there again and you wonder and you ask yourself the question, how does God respond to me when I'm this tired and at the edge of my margin?

[12 : 06] Well, the good news of the gospel that we find here in 1 Kings, or 1 Kings 19, as you guys put it, is that the Lord moves toward us with a personal, holistic, and comprehensive grace to restore us in times of burnout.

What we find here in the Lord is He moves toward Elijah with this holistic grace, and His plan is to restore him in the most wise and multifaceted and spirit-filled way that He possibly could.

So, the second point this morning, the first point was signs of burnout. The second point is God restores the burned out. God restores the burned out. And observe with me four ways that God restores Elijah during this time of burnout.

First of all, He restores Elijah physically. He restores Elijah physically. Now, hold on a minute. I mean, in church, we would think that God, the first thing He would do when He moves toward someone who's burned out, we might think, I would think, that He would move to restore them spiritually.

I mean, isn't restoring someone spiritually more important than restoring them physically? That's not what we learn here. We learn that God cares about the whole human being. God knows that we are embodied souls.

[13 : 27] And if our bodies are broken down, if you are just totally physically exhausted, then God means to do something about that first. God sends not spiritual health first to Elijah, but physical rest, physical care.

Psalms 103:14 says this, God knows our frame, and He remembers that we are dust. We often overestimate ourselves.

We often overestimate our capacity. This is God's estimation of your capacity. He remembers that you are dust. God knows that you are finite.

You are not infinite. God knows that you are exhaustible, not inexhaustible. And when we find ourselves in that place where we realize what God already knows, that we are dust, we do not have it all together, the Lord moves toward us with His grace.

So God sees Elijah, and this man is physically broken down. And so God sends an angel to him to do what? Well, first of all, to feed him.

[14 : 38] To feed him. How amazing is this? This angel of the Lord bakes Elijah a cake on hot stones in the desert and brings him a jar of water.

How amazing is that? That must have been a nice cake that God made for Elijah. I've had some wonderful desserts here and wonderful cakes, but that must have been unbelievable. What kindness from the Lord.

But after Elijah eats and drinks, he's still so tired he falls down again, and he falls asleep. And after that, the angel arouses him again and encourages him to eat the rest of the cake and drink the rest of the water.

And then Elijah is finally physically able to arise and go. But listen to the compassion of the Lord here, these words. Arise and eat, Elijah, for the journey is too great for you.

How beautiful is that? That God knows and God feeds him. He says, I want you to go on this journey, but I'm going to give you everything you need for it, but you need to eat what I've given for you so that you can continue on in the journey.

[15 : 44] So God is compassionate, and that compassion is shown in physical restoration. The second way God restores Elijah is he restores him spiritually. So now that Elijah is in a physical place where he can receive from the Lord, and we often need that.

We need to be in a physical place where we can actually receive the good things that God has given to us spiritually. Actually, Elijah moves toward the Lord. So he is called, and he goes to Mount Horeb, which is called the Mount of God.

So at this time in Old Testament history, God's presence was in certain locations. That's different than now, where God's presence is with us by the Holy Spirit. As believers, God is always with us.

But at that time, you had to go to different places. And at this point in time, the Spirit of God was on this mountain. Okay, so Mount Horeb, where God was known, the presence of God was known to be.

And so Elijah goes there, and the question that God asks of Elijah is this. What are you doing here? What are you doing here, Elijah? What are you doing here?

[16 : 47] And Elijah's answer, of course, God already knows the answer. God knows the answer. But he often asks us questions so that we will need to grapple with the question ourselves.

God isn't surprised with Elijah's answer, but Elijah needs to say out loud what's really on his heart. And so what does Elijah say out loud? He says, it shows the burnout of his soul.

He says, it's a very self-centered, self-referential answer about all of life. I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword.

And I, even I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away. So in burnout, we're often very self-aware, very self-consumed, and he's just thinking about himself, and he's actually not thinking about himself very accurately.

He has been faithful to God, and no one else. He alone, and he's feeling the weight of being alone, and having his adversaries come after him.

[17 : 53] So what do we see here? Well, Elijah, in his self-centeredness, can't see God in this moment. He's so consumed with his own frustrations and his own life, he can't see God clearly.

And you know, Elijah, he has banked his entire life on the Lord. The only way for his life, Elijah's life, to make any sense at all is if the Lord God is real, and the Lord God is present, and the Lord God is at work.

If he doesn't have God at the center of his life, if God is not making sense of his life, then his life doesn't make sense. And he can't see the Lord, and so he feels this loss of vision of God.

But watch God here in this situation. God doesn't rebuke Elijah for his bad answer. I find that very reassuring, that sometimes we give the wrong answer, we give bad answers to God.

And we might say the wrong thing, right? And we're just expressing our heart. But he doesn't rebuke him for his self-centeredness or his lack of faith. God in that moment moves in power and in grace toward Elijah in this moment.

[19 : 08] Let's look at how God moves toward Elijah. So Elijah has already seen God move through natural phenomena. Remember 1 Kings 18.

He's already seen fire, and then after that he sees rain. And there's a famous song from America by James Taylor called Fire and Rain. But he's seen fire and rain. And he's seen God do amazing things through natural phenomena, and God starts there.

So you start, you have the earthquake, and you have the wind, and then you have the fire. But God himself isn't in any of those powerful manifestations.

So what Elijah needs is not the power of God. He needs to experience the presence of God. He needs to experience the intimate voice of God, and God knows that.

And so the Lord moves toward Elijah with a whisper. So a whisper, think about that. A whisper is a spoken word of the Lord. It's a true spoken word of the Lord, but it's spoken in such a way to show the compassion of God, the empathy of God for his servant Elijah.

[20 : 19] This word of the Lord is an extension of the Lord God himself. The whole Bible is the spoken word of the Lord, and God moves toward Elijah with this spoken word that he needs to hear.

And what the Lord is saying is this. He's saying, yes, you've seen what I can do in my power. You've seen what I can do in this moment when you stand strong on Mount Carmel, but now I want to show you who I am in your weakness.

I want to show you my grace, my personal grace that comes in a whisper when you feel you are at your lowest point. He wants Elijah to know God's personal love for him that speaks to him with a personal voice of grace, not when he's strong, but when he is weak.

And so in this moment, Elijah probably understands the gospel in a deeper way than ever before. It's tempting to believe that in some way, God maybe loves me just a little bit because of my performance.

Because I've done some things pretty well, I'm not going to go out there and say that God really justifies me on the basis of my works. I know that's not true, but I feel existentially like God is a little more pleased with me when I have it all together.

[21 : 39] But it's in our lowest points when we really can't point to anything at all in our personal record that God shows us his love, his personal grace, and he shows us the gospel and he says, I love you not because of you, I love you because of me, because of my sovereign grace, because I love you and I've fixed my love on you.

Not on your works, but just because I love you. So then God asks Elijah the same question again. What are you doing here, Elijah? And Elijah gives the same answer, but it's hard when you read the Bible.

I could hear Angus wrestling with it. Do I read the second response any differently? We can't read the tone of the response. He gives the same response, but maybe his tone has changed.

Maybe he's a little more humble. Maybe he's a little bit more aware of God's grace at this time. So God restores him spiritually. The third way God restores is he restores him vocationally.

Vocationally. Now what is vocation? Vocation is not just your job or what you do for work, but it's the purpose that God has uniquely given you to serve him for his glory.

[22 : 49] So everyone has, you have a job, hopefully you have a job, everyone needs a job, but you have something bigger than that. That's this idea of calling. And what's happening here with Elijah is he's questioning his calling.

He's wondering if his ministry has amounted to anything at all. And he thinks, maybe I've been totally unsuccessful if I'm the only one left. And so God restores him vocationally.

For Elijah, he was created and called to be a prophet. And so he's wondering, has my profiting done anything? Has it been worth anything at all for Israel?

And so God restores him, and he's not asking Elijah to make major wholesale changes. Oftentimes when we're in a time of burnout, we think maybe I need to change everything in my life.

He's wondering, do I need to change everything? No, God says, just keep on doing what you're doing. Maybe do it slightly differently with a little more grace in your soul, a little more assurance of who I am.

[23 : 46] But he confirms and clarifies for Elijah that he has a next phase of ministry. God's not finished with him yet. He's wondering if God is finished, but God says, I've got more for you.

And he says, I'm going to ask you to anoint a few kings here. And then, importantly, I'm going to ask you to anoint Elisha to be the prophet after you. So there's going to be another prophet.

And that leads to the fourth element of restoration as he restores Elijah relationally. Relationally. And so Elijah has been alone. He's been doing this by himself.

And he realizes, God realizes, this is the time for Elijah to tap Elisha. He needs companionship in the journey. It's not good to be ministering by yourself for a long time.

So that's one way he encourages him. And then in verse 18, he says, there are at least 7,000 more people who have not bowed their knee to Baal, who are still faithful to Yahweh.

[24 : 41] So he's telling Elijah, you have been standing, you have been standing what feels like alone in a faithless age, but actually your ministry has mattered because I have 7,000 people that are still following me who have been faithful.

And so he receives this relational encouragement from the Lord, which is very significant. And it answers the core need of loneliness that's given in his twice answer that he gives.

All of the I's, I, I, I, only. God says, I hear you. You're not alone. I'm going to give you a companion for the journey, which is so important. So the final point this morning is, how do we respond to God's love if you're burned out?

Okay, and again, you may be burned out now, so you're like, wow, this is perfect, thank you so much, but you may get there one day. So think about it, think, or maybe you have someone in your life and you're wondering, how do I help them?

They seem really low. Well, this is, there's some instructions here about how to follow the instruction from 1 Kings 19. So first of all, how do we respond to God's physical restoration?

[25 : 48] So if you're burned out, first of all, you need to understand that your physical restoration is very important. If you're burned out, you really need to sleep. You really need to get good sleep.

Sleep can be spiritual, we learn here. You need to eat well. You need to drink enough. Sometimes the most, sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is take a nap or sleep in.

I know that maybe you don't think so, but actually it is. You need, you need your rest. You're a finite human being. You are dust and you were created for rest. You need to take a Sabbath. You need to take a day off from work.

You need to worship the Lord and be around his people and take a break. You need to see these good gifts that God offers you. Maybe he's not going to bake you a cake today on a stone, but he might give you something good.

He just gave us, we celebrate our, we're on 22 and a half years of marriage, but COVID messed up our 20th celebration. We just got to go on a vacation to Spain, which was amazing.

[26 : 49] And I think that's actually a very spiritual practice to get away and enjoy the good things that God has given us. So we all need to take breaks. Whatever that break looks like for you, take a break.

If you're in a burned out place physically, the problem is if you're not restored physically, you're going to have a really hard time appreciating and taking hold of the good things God is doing for you spiritually.

When we're in a physically low place, sometimes God is just screaming out the grace of God to us, but we're so tired we just can't hear it. And the amazing thing is as we start feeling better physically, maybe you've been sick for a long time and as you've been sick, you've really questioned the goodness of God.

But then as you feel better and you feel more like yourself, you can actually read the Bible again and understand, oh, God is good. It's not just because you're not sick anymore, it's because your physical body actually feels better.

And so you can then read and you can listen and you can receive. And so pay attention to your physical body. As I said earlier, you are an embodied soul. We as Christians are not, we shouldn't be dualists.

[28 : 04] We shouldn't separate the body from the soul. You have a soul and a body. They go together and so take care of yourself physically. Then we need to respond to God's spiritual restoration.

What you need from God isn't some massive display of miraculous power. Sometimes God gives that to us and when he does, that is awesome. But very often it is in the gentle whisper of the Holy Spirit as we read the Bible, as we meet with other believers in community, perhaps as we listen to a sermon that the whisper of God, the grace of God whispers to our soul and we again are affirmed in the grace of the gospel.

In order to experience the grace of God, sometimes the Lord will ask you a question. What he asked Elijah was, what are you doing here? What he asked James and John in the gospels and he also asked the same question to blind Bartimaeus as we call him sometimes.

He asked them, what do you want me to do for you? Both of them the same question. God likes to ask questions. He likes to hear our answers. You need to engage with the Lord. Tell him what's on your heart.

Be honest with the Lord. You don't have to dress yourself up, act like you're better than you are because he already knows how you're doing. Just tell him how you're doing and in that interaction, that relational interaction, the Lord meets with us.

[29 : 24] And remember that if you find it hard, if you're beating yourself up for being in a low place, like I shouldn't be here, I should know better than this. That's not how God responds to you.

Actually, when the Lord sees you in a low place, what's on his heart is to say, now maybe he or she is ready to receive my grace that comes to weak and broken people.

God moves toward us with a personal grace. How do we respond to God's vocational restoration? Well, you need to recognize sometimes when we're burned out, we think, oh no, maybe God's totally done with me.

He's gonna cast me aside and I'm worthless. And actually, that's the farthest thing from God's mind when you're burned out. Okay, you have to remember the gospel that God doesn't cast people aside who are burned out.

In that place, he affirms his love for you and actually, he's not finished with you at all. You are in a season, you're in a moment when you need to experience his grace, but perhaps in this moment, he's preparing you for the next phase of your ministry.

[30 : 27] He doesn't pull us out of our calling but he moves us forward in our calling through times of burnout. And then how do we respond to God's relational restoration?

Well, part of the cry of the soul when we're burned out is, am I really alone in this? Does anyone understand? David felt this way in Psalm 142.4.

He was in a cave alone in the wilderness and he wrote in Psalm 142.4, No one cares for my soul. Hmm, no one. Paul put it this way in 2 Timothy 4.16, Everyone has deserted me.

Sometimes we feel that way. But the Lord is at work and in times like this, we are tempted when we're burned out to pull away from other people because we think, oh, if people really knew how messed up I was, they wouldn't love me.

But actually, in the church, and I know this church is different. Some churches aren't that way but in this church I know and in our churches, when you're honest about how you're really doing, it's actually attractive.

[31 : 32] Because, why? Because that means that you are looking for the grace of God just like me. You also are in that place where you're crying out for the Lord and it actually builds relationships.

When you act like you're fine and everything is good, it's actually harder to build relationships. When you're honest, you say, this is tough, this is hard, I'm really, I need to experience the Lord's grace. That's when we can move toward one another in community, when we're honest with one another and other people can then confirm the grace of God to us in our lives.

So the big question, though, for this, as we apply this text, is how do we know that when we read the Old Testament that these stories just aren't isolated accounts where God is really kind to one man way back when, seems like, you know, ages ago for real, a long time ago, how do we know this isn't just an isolated story where God is kind to Elijah?

How do we know that this is true for us today? Well, is the movement of God toward Elijah in this chapter not embodied best by Jesus Christ himself?

Jesus, what did he do? He moved toward us physically. I preached this sermon, I've been preaching through Kings at my church, I preached this sermon just after Christmas. Jesus came as an embodied human being.

[32 : 52] He took on flesh. He was made in our likeness. Incredible. And then what did he do? He went to the cross. He suffered the miseries of this life and he went to the cross suffering physically for us.

He came for us spiritually. He came for us not with all of this incredible phenomena. He came as a humble human being speaking the grace of God. Probably the greatest whisper ever spoken in human history was on the cross when Jesus is dying and hanging there and he can't get enough volume out because of the pressure on his lungs and he says, Father, forgive them.

He forgives his enemies. He forgives those who persecute him. And he says, it is finished in a whisper as well saying, it's all done. You don't have to perform for God.

I've already done everything that's necessary for life to come to you. Jesus came for us spiritually. He came for us vocationally. If you wonder if you have any purpose because you go to a job all week and you're like, what's the point of all of this?

And sometimes you're, maybe you have a family and you're raising children and you're just wondering, how's it gonna turn out? I feel like every day is the same. And the Lord says, your purpose is a purpose that I've given you.

[34 : 13] I've given you the greatest vocation. Yes, you work. Yes, you raise children. Yes, you do these things. But the greatest calling of all is to be my child and to extend my gospel and my kingdom through the church.

I've given you, no matter who you are and what your gifts are, you have spiritual gifts and the Lord is calling you to follow him in this incredibly dignifying calling of gospel ministry.

and then he came for us relationally. He calls us into a personal relationship with him. One of my favorite verses in the Bible is John 10, 28 where Jesus says, I give them eternal life.

They will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand. When we're burned out, we think, of all the times, we think, maybe this is the time when God will lose his grip on me.

I feel so alone. I feel so tired. The promise of the gospel is that will never, ever happen. God will never let you out of his hand even and especially when you are weary.

[35 : 16] So this is astounding love from God because if he loves us when we're burned out, when we're on the very edge, when we have nothing, then that means he always loves us, right?

When we realize that we utterly have nothing to give him and God moves toward us with this astounding grace, it means that there is no time in all of your life, burned out or not, when God is not moving toward you with special love and grace if we will receive it from him.

Sometimes that's the hardest thing for us though is we just have a hard time saying, yes God, I just receive your grace for me and that's just all he wants from us.

That's all he wants from Elijah in this passage is for Elijah to recognize, wow, what love God has for me and that's all he wants from you this morning is to say, wow, what love God has for me.

A broken person, dust, made of the dust and yet the Lord has fixed his love on me, me. Alright, let's pray. Alright, let's pray.