

296.1: Still Small Sacredness (OT Gospel Doctrine Lesson 28, Updated)
“After the Fire a Still Small Voice”

wake
to the fire
in the stillness

Framing

Reading Review

Productive Sunday School

1. Learning to experience God in the whisper, the “still small voice
2. Dealing with discouragement
3. Dangerous dynamics, power of trials
4. Conclusion

Some people say miracles don't exist. Others say that every aspect of life is a miracle. I put myself in that category.

We like to focus on the exciting, dramatic, blockbuster spirituality. But really everything, from spirituality to relationships to working to an entire life... everything is made up of the still, small moments. We are called to find the sacred in the mundane, and in doing so, redeem the everyday nature of our existence. Sacredness and holiness and well being, its' not in the fire and storms... but in the quiet moments.

Reading Review:

Main takehome:

Class Member Reading:

1 Kings 16:33 Ahab, king in the time of Elijah, is especially wicked (as measured in worshipping other gods)

17 Elijah predicts a drought (which he then suffered from as well!) Touching story of the widow of Zarephath. She shows faith in her poverty, is miraculously sustained, and then despairs and gets angry at Elijah when her son dies (perhaps his illness was related to the famine?). Elijah raises her son from the dead (Luke seems to have been influenced by the story of Elijah as he

told stories about Jesus).

18 This hardship and famine went on for THREE years! Elijah and the prophets of Baal have a bakeoff. Elijah mocks Baal with wit. Elijah wins the bakeoff very impressively and Elijah himself it seems kills all the prophets of the competing God. Elijah assures Ahab, and then prays to God for the miracle of rain. The rain comes slowly and requires repeated faithful checking, but then the needed storms come.

19 Elijah flees for his life from the queen and is discouraged, even wants to die. An angel comforts him, he is nourished, and the Lord talks to him. A wind, earthquake, and fire all come, and God is not in them. But Elijah hears God in a gentle whisper. Elijah throws his cloak onto Elisha (where we get the idea of “the mantle of a prophet” and “passing the mantle”

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1996/04/a-handful-of-meal-and-a-little-oil?lang=eng>

Productive Sunday School

Learning to experience God in the whisper, the “still small voice” (this is one of my greatest focuses in my own life. Being present, grateful, noticing small details. Each moment has a wealth of wonder. There is sacredness in every day. We crave dramatic manifestations and miracles, but I love that the climax of a story of miracles is Elijah’s quiet and intimate encounter with God)

Shinji Moon, Self-Portrait

*There are certain things about myself
that I romanticize, like the way I have Orion’s belt on my chin
or the way my grandmother gave me her hands:
gift-wrapped and covered in flour.*

*Yesterday, I found a birthmark on my inner thigh
of a heart or split milk
and this morning I found that
there’s nothing that a person can do
to make me feel more beautiful, than to
trace me like I hold
simpler lines
beneath me.*

*It’s so easy to fool myself into believing that yes,
of course there are constellations on my skin, or
freckles in the night, as if my body
is a pool that reflects the sky.*

*But all of this
isn’t me being a dreamer,
or a spilt-milk, heart-shaped romantic.*

*It's just me
trying to turn this husk of muscle and dirty fingernails
into something more,*

*as something
that I can hold like
my grandmother's hands,*

*as something
I can keep closer to me /
than my own flesh.*

Annie Dillard, *Holy the Firm*, 14-

David Whyte, *Everything is Waiting for you*

Your great mistake is to act the drama
as if you were alone. As if life
were a progressive and cunning crime
with no witness to the tiny hidden
transgressions. To feel abandoned is to deny
the intimacy of your surroundings. Surely,
even you, at times, have felt the grand array;
the swelling presence, and the chorus, crowding
out your solo voice. You must note
the way the soap dish enables you,
or the window latch grants you freedom.
Alertness is the hidden discipline of familiarity.
The stairs are your mentor of things
to come, the doors have always been there
to frighten you and invite you,
and the tiny speaker in the phone
is your dream-ladder to divinity.

Put down the weight of your aloneness and ease into the
conversation. The kettle is singing
even as it pours you a drink, the cooking pots
have left their arrogant aloofness and
seen the good in you at last. All the birds
and creatures of the world are unutterably
themselves. Everything is waiting for you.

David White, *Consolations*

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“Work”

5. Dealing with discouragement (Take care of our bodies, reach out to the “angels” in our lives, be honest with ourselves) Sometimes we just need to hold still ourselves for a moment, recover and adjust.
6. Dangerous dynamics, power of trials (It took years of hardship to humble Ahab, and then there were dramatic miracles, and then there was the easing of the hardship, and then even after all of that, Jezebel tried to kill Elijah)
7. Conclusion: Increase wonder, connection and relationship with God, and use that to deal with discouragement and opposition.

Find the sacred in the still small things

296.2: Still Small Sacredness (OT Gospel Doctrine Lesson 28, Sunday School) “After the Fire a Still Small Voice”

Dr. Sheldon Greaves teaches this lesson, which addresses topics such as revelation, divine intervention, and miracles in the context of Elijah’s ministry.

296.3: Still Small Sacredness (OT Gospel Doctrine Lesson 28, Study Notes) “After the Fire a Still Small Voice”

Dr. Sheldon Greaves continues discussing Elijah from a literary and historical perspective.