

## **Week Two: *The Giving Houseguest***

*1 Kings 17:7-24*

### **Spend FIFTEEN – Day One**

1. As we begin our week with a closer look into 1 Kings 17, begin your time with God by reading the entirety of chapter 17. Record your thoughts and reactions in the space below.
2. Why did Elijah pray for a famine to be brought upon the land? (See preceding chapter.)
3. Recall a time in your life when you prayed that God would turn people from wickedness. How would you expect God to do that?
4. Elijah had to deliver hard news from God. Recall a time when you had to do the same. How was it received? How did it make you feel?
5. What was unusual about God wanting Elijah to seek shelter and food with this woman? Why do you think God chose this?
6. Do you find it difficult to receive from those who may be inconvenienced by the gift they are giving? Why do you feel that way?
7. If we understand that God and his grace are unlimited and readily available to those who seek and even those who do not seek him, how could that change our perspective on how we pray? Finish your FIFTEEN today by praying that God would allow you take in and be a willing recipient and giver of his grace.

### **Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two**

8. In your relationships with people who are not Christians, how do you think people view your faith? What evidence do you give of your faith?
9. Going back and reading 1 Kings 17 how do you think the widow and her son viewed Elijah at first? Why do you think she allowed Elijah to share in what seemed to be the meager supply of food she had for her and her son?
10. Read Matthew 5:38-48. In what ways was Elijah's kindness toward the widow reflective of God's goodness?
11. Think of ways that others have brought unexpected or undeserved blessing into your life. How did that work to inspire or change you?

12. As you finish your FIFTEEN in prayer, pray that you have the courage and confidence to love others unconditionally and commit to serving with a heart that pursues God's Kingdom.

### **Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three**

13. Today we will take a closer look at how the widow was surprised by God's grace and how we identify with different characters in a familiar parable. First, go back to 1 Kings 17 and note the reaction of the widow when her boy apparently died. What expectations did she have of God?

14. Now read Luke 15:11-32 and the story of the prodigal son.

15. In the story that Jesus tells, how does the father portray and represent the heart and character of God?

16. Which character in the story do you identify with? Why?

17. What expectations do the younger son and the older son have of their father?

18. How have you been surprised by God's generosity or grace in your life?

19. As you close your FIFTEEN, call to mind your favored status as one of God's children. Read Colossians 3:12-17 and let it work in your life today as a prayer.

### **Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four**

20. We have seen how Elijah's relationship with God benefited both him and the widow. Elijah even obeyed God when it was difficult. Recall a time in your life when you obeyed God even when it was difficult.

21. Read the familiar Psalm 23. Write down your emotions and feelings on each verse in the space below.

22. As you wrote down your thoughts on Psalm 23, recall some specific ways your relationship with God has benefited you.

23. Read and meditate on Psalm 103 as you close your FIFTEEN today.

### **Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five**

24. Describe a time when you enjoyed privileged status or the ability to have access to something based on your

relationship to a person. What feelings come to mind as you recall your experience?

25. In 1 Kings 17, the widow enjoyed a blessing that came to her life because of an association with a man of God. Think about a time when the community benefited from the church's presence. What did it, or what would it, look like?
  
26. Jesus refers to his church as his "bride" in Revelation 19:7-10, and it is referred to as such in other places of the New Testament. What status do we have as Christ's bride?
  
27. Read Hebrews 10:19-25. What are we called to do as Christ's church? Make a list of all that is mentioned.
  
28. Referring back to Hebrews with our previous question, how do you think that our community could benefit from a greater presence of Christ's "bride"?
  
29. As you finish your final FIFTEEN this week, consider all God is calling us to be. Where has he placed you? What passion or care has he placed on your heart? Take time to ask for more of his Spirit to move you toward greater reliance on him and greater impact for his kingdom.