

**The Weekly Word**  
July 21-27, 2014

Somehow we have reached the final full week of July. I pray God's Word blesses you this week. Happy reading...  
Grace and Peace, Bill

To hear the Bible read click this link... <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>.

**Monday, July 21: 1Kings 15- Quite a parade...**

This chapter lists the 4 kings; 2 of Israel and 2 of Judah. Only one of the 4 was faithful to the Lord.

God reminded me that life goes on. The march of days continues (until Jesus returns, of course). Some leaders are good, some not. Some people are faithful to the Lord, some not.

During my reading, God reminded me that the only person for whom I am responsible is 'me'. I may impact others, but I am only responsible for my life and my actions. Each of the four kings will stand before the Lord and give an account of their lives. Some day I will stand before the Lord and give an accounting as well. Will God find me faithful? That rests on my shoulders.

It starts by faith in Jesus. Do I believe in Jesus presented in the Scriptures as the only Son of God, fully God and fully man? Did I confess Jesus as Lord and do I follow Him?

When my march of days concludes and I rest in death I, and every person whoever lived, will stand before the Lord. What answers will your life and my life give?

*Jesus, I pray that today I live faithfully. And then tomorrow I will pray the same thing. As you taught us to pray: Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give me today my daily bread.*

*Forgive my sins even as I forgive people who sin against me.*

*Lead me not into temptation and deliver me from the evil one.*

*For Yours in the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

**Tuesday, July 22: 1Kings 16- What will they write about you?...**

Reading the five brief descriptions of these Israelite kings, popped this thought into my head, "What will be written about me when I die?" This thought didn't grow from an ego point of view. How will history remember me? No, I began to wonder how my life will stack up faithfulness wise. Will I be known as a person who sought the Lord, or one who did his own thing? Will greed, dishonesty, chasing after false gods, backstabbing, etc., characterize my obituary as it did for these men?

What will my family and close associates not only say but really think about me when I am laid to rest?

Reading the lives of these men, I realized that I am building my 'legacy' and writing my obituary every day I live. You don't start being a scoundrel when you turn 30 or when you become king... you groom a scoundrel life from early on. David didn't become a man after God's own heart when the crown of Israel was placed on his head. He began grooming his love for God when he tended his father's sheep as a young boy. I am grooming my life today and I started decades ago.

Statistically I have decades still to live, so I can change my legacy for good or for ill. The whisper of God came strongly, “Bill, will you build a legacy that honors Me?...”

*Lord, I cry in response, Yes. I will love You. I will serve You. I will live for You. And Lord, this is an every day –even moment by moment decision.*

*I pray for Holy Spirit fruit to blossom in my life. I pray that my time in Your Word will be the fertilizer to aid Holy Spirit fruit production in my life.*

*I love you Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit and I bow before You, my Lord and my God! Amen.*

### **Wednesday, July 23: 1Kings 17- Trusting God...**

Elijah pops onto the pages of the Bible suddenly. He is an intriguing person who deeply trusts the Lord. When God asks Elijah to do something, he does it. PERIOD. End of story.

After delivering a word of judgment to King Ahab through a drought, God tells him to disappear and sends him across the Jordan. Elijah is told a brook will give him water and ravens will feed him. Um, really? Ravens will feed him?!? But Elijah trusted God and goes where God directs and ravens do feed him twice a day with bread and meat!

Then God sends him to a widow who is down to her last bit of flower and oil. Don't worry he tells her. Make me a small cake and then some for you and your son, neither the flower nor oil will run out. And so it goes... God speaks and Elijah believes and acts accordingly. That is FAITH! That is TRUST!

*Oh, God, that I would have the faith of Elijah. Oh, God, that I would trust You completely!!! This is my prayer, through Jesus, my Lord. Amen.*

### **Thursday, July 24: 1Kings 18- Go all in...**

Elijah was an incredible man of faith. One of the great prophets of the OT. As I read this chapter, my heart was strangely attracted to verse 21: *Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.”*

A show down between the Lord and the prophets of Baal was about to ensue and Elijah was calling people to stake their claim. Who did they follow? Who did they believe in?

Elijah's second sentence was poignant... a call to obey and follow. *If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.”*

Reading this it hit me. Wavering, vacillating, keeping all your options open is the easy way out. The person who does this, does not truly believe anything.

Elijah is calling out to people to decide. If you believe the Lord is God follow Him. Live as He wants you to live. Do what He wants you to do.

But Elijah says if you believe Baal is god then follow him. Live as he wants you to live. Do what he wants you to do.

The same call to choose could be issued today:

If you believe Jesus is Lord and God, follow Him. Live as He wants you to live. Do what He wants you to do.

But if you believe Allah is god, then follow him. Live as Mohammed instructs you to live. Do what he teaches you to do.

Of if you believe some form of New Age Eastern Religious philosophy is true, then live as that philosophy instructs you to live. Do what it says.

This sentiment could be written for any religious or life philosophy....

What I heard Elijah say is ‘get off the fence, choose what you believe and go for it’.

Now I hope and pray that you choose the Lord, as I have. But whoever you choose to believe in... get on with it... follow and him/it. Stop wavering and dabbling, go all in and follow!

My prayer is that you follow the Lord...

*Lord, God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I pray that everyone who reads this decides, gets off the fence and goes for it. And, Lord, I pray they follow You. Amen.*

### **Friday, July 25: 1Kings 19- We are not alone...**

Sometimes when I read the scriptures devotionally, God will call my attention to a particular verse or thought. Such was the case today. Verse 18 sparked my thoughts and meditations. *Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him.*

There are times when following the Lord that we can feel alone; like there is no one else walking with Jesus.

- Maybe it’s work and we don’t know if there is anyone else there who loves Jesus.
- Or these feeling may surface during a difficult time and there seems to be no one else around to encourage or comfort us.
- Or these thoughts can erupt when God asks us to do a difficult task and no one is standing with us.

I have been there before and reading this verse sparked something in me. Elijah was in one of those places, feeling alone in the battle.

God’s Word became a reminder to me, as I suspect it was to Elijah back in his day. God is working many angles and God is working in many people, and He may not have clued me into this.

I am, after all, not the center and indispensable hub of God’s plan and workings. I am only one piece.

This thought gives me perspective... it keeps me from getting too puffed up about myself. God is in control, not me.

This thought gives me courage... even when I feel like I am it, the only faithful one, there are, in fact, others. I may not know them, but God does. And the Lord is working His plan.

One more thought. I can trust the Lord, even when I don’t feel like there are other people I can trust.

What thoughts did you get from reading this chapter today?

*Lord, thank You for meeting me in Your Word today. I am so blessed to be able to walk life knowing You. Praise and honor and blessings to You, my God—Father, Jesus Holy Spirit. Amen.*

### **Saturday, July 26: 1Kings 20-...**

Obedience... that word screamed at me as I read. God expects obedience. Ahab actually was doing fairly well until the end of the story when he let Ben-Hadad go free. (see 37-42, especially 42).

Obedience can be a ‘when I want to do it’ kind of a thing. Winning a war, obedience felt good. But Ahab decided that making an alliance with the defeated king was better than obeying the Lord and killing him.

The whisper in my spirit went like this, “I expect obedience, total obedience.”

Even as I typed those last words I realize how often I fall short of this. God says do this, I hesitate. God's Word says this, I balk. I fall short of perfect obedience all the time.

Then I recalled reading the life of David recently. David wasn't perfect. He sinned, but when he did he turned back to the Lord in repentance and sought forgiveness. Consequences came, but so did forgiveness. Thanks be to God!

And the same is true to this day. 1John1:9 is a promise I love. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

*Thank You, Lord, Jesus, for accepting me back time and time again when I sin. Thank You, Holy Spirit, for convicting me of my sin so that I can turn back, repent and receive forgiveness. Thank You, Father, in heaven for the willingness and desire to have me return and for sending Jesus so that His blood can cover my sins. Thank You, my Lord, God. I bless and praise You. Amen*

### **Sunday, July 27, 2014, Sunday Worship**

*If any of my thoughts or the Bible readings spark questions send an email reply and I will do my best to answer all questions from people on the list... I will answer personal questions privately; general questions will be answered in a subsequent email installment.*

*If you are reading along with me from the PCOG website you can send questions or request being placed on the weekly email list by emailing Lisa at [office@pcogonline.org](mailto:office@pcogonline.org).*

Click here for a link to my sermons on the web. Sermons are generally posted within 2 days.