

# Life Group Notes

*These notes are to serve you as you lead your group.*

*Please feel free to select the passages and **only use the questions which are most relevant to your group** and for the way you want to lead the session. (There are more questions here than you'll need)*

- *Please choose (or adapt) the questions which you believe will **bring about the most honest, faith-building and life changing conversations**, and add others if you want to.*
- *The readings and questions develop from one section to the next. Please **take time to move through the ones you want to use, giving time for discussion and sharing - ideally leading to a response to God's word.***

# Life Group Notes

## Theme: Saying Yes Saying 'Yes' to Going Again

The last two years have been hard for many of us, with continued pressures, and with life not returning to what we knew as 'normal'. In this week's study we see how God meets us in times of struggle and challenge, and through meeting with us, calls us to 'go again' in his provision and strength.

### Introductory Section - Concept

1. On Sunday we heard about a psychologist's revival of the term 'languishing' to describe the state in which people are not flourishing, but nor are they depressed. How did this description resonate with you?

### Read Luke 5:1-11

The disciples knew how to fish, and had done all the right things, yet they had caught nothing all night. Jesus met them, taught from their boat, provided fish for them, and called them, precisely at their point of need. Sometimes we do the right things, and still don't get positive results. This passage encourages us with God's response in such times.

2. This may (or may not) be a familiar passage to you. As you read it again now and pause to reflect on it, what are you noticing afresh?
3. What do you notice about the disciples in this account?
4. What stands out to you about Jesus?
5. How does Jesus' instruction to the disciples to 'go again,' by putting out their nets one more time, speak to you today?

### Read 1 Kings 19:1-9

If the disciples were having a bad day, Elijah was feeling even worse. He 'was afraid and ran for his life' (v3), ending up sitting by a tree, wanting to die.

6. Elijah had only just seen God do amazing things, answering by fire, and ending a drought. Given this, it might seem surprising that he was then so terrified and distraught after hearing of Jezebel's threat. Why might he have been so affected, to the point that he felt like he'd completely failed (v4)?
7. God's response to Elijah shows us that he didn't see Elijah as a failure, but as one who was loved and who had been faithful. How can this story help us to put into perspective God's desire for our faithfulness versus our desire for 'success'?

*[The two can be the same, but aren't automatically linked. Sometimes we are faithful to God and seemingly unsuccessful in our own eyes- like Elijah was here. Elijah did the*

*right thing, despite not achieving the result he hoped for. Often results are best left in God's hands, as only he knows what is really a 'success' in the long term.]*

8. Elijah got up to 'go again' on a longer journey (v8), where he would meet with God and receive a recommissioning. How does this speak to you today?

### **Read Genesis 21:8-21**

Hagar had previously been provided for by Abraham as part of his household, and it was Abraham who gave her a skin of water, which ran out as she wandered in the desert. This dramatic story reaches a terrifying moment where Hagar thought she and Ishmael, her son, were going to die. Distraught, Hagar lay down sobbing, with seemingly no hope left.

9. What did Hagar discover about God as a result of his intervention in her time of desperation?
10. What else do you notice about God's interaction with Hagar and Ishmael?
11. Hagar is called to 'go again' in a direction she'd not been before - away from Abraham's household, and into the desert, where God would be her provider. How does this speak to you today?

### **Pause, reflect, respond**

In all these accounts people were struggling in some way, were met by God, were called to 'go again', and were re-commissioned by God as they did so.

12. How are you encouraged or challenged by these examples?
13. How is God speaking to you about 'going again'?