

Simple Steps to Avoid Spiritual Burnout

By Marcus Peters

Introduction

Although the Christian life has its joys, sometimes we have those moments where we get tired. Do you ever feel tired of being a Christian?

- You're late for work person driving slowly (doing speed limit).
- Just cleaned the house in preparation for the Sabbath only to return and find that the sink is filled with dirty dishes.

If we're honest with ourselves, we'll acknowledge that we do have those moments when we grow tired of being a Christian, where we become weary in doing what Jesus would do.

Malachi 4:4-6

Last Words of the Old Testament

Chapter addressing the last days (vs 1). The principal characters are:

Moses – The Lawgiver

Elijah – The Prophet

7 Similarities Between Moses & Elijah

- Both represent the Law & the Prophets (Antitype: Commandments of God & Spirit of Prophecy).
- Both appeared at the Mount of Transfiguration.
- Both are in heaven right now.
- Both represent the two classes of the righteous at the end of time (resurrected and translated).
- Both of their ministries ended prematurely.
- Both were succeeded by others who finished the work that they had left undone.
- Although spiritual giants; both were burnt out in their ministries.

As we study their lives, we would discover the major cause of their spiritual burnout. We would also realize that the same cause exists in our churches today.

Moses: Numbers 20:1-12

His experience w/ the Israelites

- Numbers 11:1-2
- Numbers 12:1-2, 9-10, 13
- Numbers 14:1-2, 5, 10-13, 19-20
- Mention this in passing [Numbers 16:1-3, 31-35]

A general pattern occurs in each of these passages. The Israelites murmur, God threatens to destroy, Moses intercedes, God spares.

Enter Numbers 20:1-2

- Miriam just died.
- People were angry with Moses because there was no water.
- God told Moses speak to the rock.
- Moses response was unprecedented (he lost his cool) and so was God's (He did not vindicate Moses).

- Weakness manifested (vs 10).
- When God didn't stand up for Moses, he gave in. Although faithful up to this point in his ministry, he grew tired of the bearing with the Israelites. Because of his indiscretion, he was forbidden to enter the promise land.

Elijah: I Kings 19: 1-3

- His reason for fleeing. (vs 9-10 & 13-14)
- "I have been very jealous... I even I only am left and they seek my life"
 - Do you sometimes feel like you're only doing everything?
 - Only one playing the piano.
 - I am the one doing healthy supper club. Teaching Sabbath school / pathfinders / fill in the blank.
 - These are the people who are most at risk of being burnt out.
 - God's remedy is found in verses 18.
- Inconsistencies (vs 2, 10, 14).
 - The narrative says that Elijah fled because of Jezebel's death threat on his life. However, when God asks Eleijas as to his reason for fleeing it turns out he left because of his frustration with the Israelites. Apparently, Jezebel's death-threat was not his main problem it only served to bring to surface a greater spiritual issue that Elijah was facing.
 - Herein lies the major cause of spiritual burnout – God's people.
 - Most people don't leave the SDA Church b/c of its doctrines. It's primarily b/c of people.
 - Most people don't step down from Church positions b/c of the responsibilities.

Last Day Implications

Jeremiah 12:5. If some challenges wear us down, then how will meet the greater tests to come?

4 Steps to Avoid Spiritual Burn-out

- **Wait on the Lord.** Isaiah 40:28-31
 - Had Elijah waited on the Lord, he would have noticed that God 7000 who were still faithful.
- **Remember the Reward.** Galatians 6:9-10
 - One reason that we don't reap is because we faint
 - The greatest opportunity for doing good is also the greatest challenge for doing (within the household of faith)
- **Consider His Sacrifice.** Hebrews 12:3-4 & Isaiah 42:4
 - Jesus never failed nor was he discouraged. He has left us a pattern that we should follow.
- **Remember to Rest in Jesus.** Matthew 11:28
 - Avoid incessant labor
 - Those who are serving the Lord faithfully are in most danger of becoming weary.
 - God designed that faithful labor should be accompanied by sweet rest (in Jesus).