**Table Talk**

**Sermon Series: Reboot Your Life Emotionally**

 **January 3, 2021**

**Introduction (8 min)**

Table Talk Groups (45 minute study) begin by watching the video and sharing the story below, then open up the discussion with the questions provided.

Southside Home (35 minute study) can skip to “Starting the Discussion” as a follow up to the worship experience.

**Table Talk Video: Reboot Your Life Emotionally**

Several of my friends have a New Year’s tradition where they pick a word for the upcoming year. This word is supposed to help them focus their dreams and passions and help summarize their hopes both personally and professionally for the upcoming year. This word will be recited often in their prayers, find its way into daily conversations, and even be written into long range planning sessions.

It is a tradition full of hope that our attitude and attention can influence the way we experience the coming year.

I don’t know if you have ever participated in this tradition or not, but if I were a betting man I’d have 50 bucks that your word for the year on January 1, 2020 was not “pandemic.” However, that has been the word for many that has shaped their attitude and attention and has influenced the way they experienced almost everything through our previous year.

If I were to pick a word for 2020 in retrospect I’d be tempted to pick “exhausting.” As we felt reality changing around us, we watched as loved ones got sick and some even died. We tried to relearn how to shop, worship, celebrate, care for one another, and navigate school and work. 2020 sucked up every last ounce emotional energy the world had to offer. Perhaps, that is how you feel about it too, that it “sucked.”

But there are other words that describe 2020 as well. It was a year of learning and scientific advances, for some fortunes were made, people were more genuine in helping one another, and some showed off their God-given creativity in learning how to do things differently. It was a year filled with intentional caring, even if from a distance. Babies were born. New jobs were created. Heroes were celebrated. Friendships deepened. There were many awesome experiences over the last year that matter every bit as much as the difficult parts.

It takes both highs and lows to make a rollercoaster. Many of us felt like that’s what we were on for the last year. A year like that can leave you emotionally exhausted. Remember, it’s not a sin to be exhausted. If that’s you, it’s time for a reboot. God wants to do something new in your life.

- Pastor Reggie Phillips

**Prayer (2 minutes)**

Life giving God, you know the deepest needs of our hearts today. You know the struggles and worries. You also know the joys we celebrate and the daily victories we enjoy. As we read your word today, may it shape our attitude, regardless of the lies our emotions try to tell us, and help us to impact the world for you! In Jesus’ name, amen.

**Starting the Discussion (3 minutes)**

1. What event or challenge most exhausted you emotionally this year?

**Unfolding the Biblical Story (24 minutes)**

**Read 1 Kings 19:2-3**

1. Elijah had just come down the mountain from a massive victory over Jezebel’s false prophets. Why might he have been so quickly driven away by fear?
2. After that victory, Elijah could have expected to have time to celebrate. Instead his celebrating was replaced with founded fear and retreating. Have you missed out on joyful experiences and celebrations this past year due to fear of disease or the fear of judgment from others? What are some of the most important things you missed?

**Read 1 Kings 19:4-5**

1. Elijah is so exhausted he doesn’t want to go on and cries out to God in desperation. Next he naps and receives a miraculously delivered meal. Have you ever thought you had a spiritual problem only to realize you needed a good meal and a long nap? When is the last time you unplugged and rested from all your worries and labors?
2. We are tempted to think God might be mad at us if we were to hit bottom like Elijah did here. But how does God respond to Elijah’s emotional needs?
3. Not every emotional need is specifically spiritual, but it will effect our spiritual development over time. What are some healthy ways you can recharge emotionally to stay in healthy place spiritually?

**Read 1 Kings 19:11-14**

1. Elijah was able to discern when God was speaking and when God wasn’t, even in the midst of some pretty loud and chaotic events. Have you heard God speak this year in the midst of the chaos you were enduring?
2. These verses make it clear that in order for Elijah to hear the Lord, he had to be intentionally quietly, listening for God. Have you been carefully listening for God to speak into your exhaustion?
3. The Lord invited Elijah on the mountain, but asked why he was there. Have you taken time to reflect how you got into some of the most exhausting situations you faced in 2020? Why were they so exhausting?
4. It is common to feel alone when facing extremely difficult circumstances. What is God’s promise to Elijah in this moment? How might that translate for us today?

 **Invite someone to read 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24**

1. Have you surrendered completely, including your emotional responses, to the Lordship of Jesus?
2. Take a couple moments as a group and discuss what it means to be sanctified. If you or another group member has experienced sanctification have them share about their experience.
3. Sanctification isn’t something we can accomplish on our own. We can consecrate (set apart or give ourselves over to God) but only God can make something holy. Have you asked God to sanctify you and fill you with his Holy Spirit, cleansing your desires and empowering you for His mission? If not this is a great time to do so. Pray for the members of your small group.

**Prayer (2 minutes)**

Righteous God, you are always faithful and trustworthy. You are a God who keeps your promises. We trust that you desire to sanctify us through and through that we might walk blamelessly before you. We are thankful, God, that you also desire to sanctify our emotions. Strengthen us and make us holy that we may truly love others in your name. In Jesus’ name, amen.

**Wrapping Up (2 minutes)**

See if anyone has lingering questions or insights to share from your time of study and prayer. Summarize the group discussion as a reminder of what you learned together.

**Scripture Challenge (4 minutes)**

This week try to memorizing 1 Thessalonians 5:23. Use any of the following tools to help you: write it out, repeat it a few times as a group, set it to music, or draw an image that incorporates the words. Hold fast to his promise this week!

**Bonus Challenge**

As mentioned in the sermon this week, you can go to the You Version Bible App and download the Bible Project New Testament in a Year reading plan. This is a great way to download God’s word into your heart and mind, as well as stay grounded in God’s word on emotionally exhausting days. Click the link below to find the reading plan:

<https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/13233-new-testament-in-one-year-with-the-bible-project>