🛞 Study Guide: Falling Upward – How to Rise from Disappointment with Dignity

Core Scripture Passages: 1 Kings 19:1–18 John 21:15–19 Romans 5:1–5

Part I: Elijah's Cave

When God Finds You in the Fallout 1 Kings 19:1–18

"Then he came to a cave... and spent the night in it. Suddenly the word of God came to him: 'Elijah, what are you doing here?'" – 1 Kings 19:9 (MSG)

Reflect:

- 1. What recent "mountaintop moment" in your life was followed by unexpected burnout or despair?
- 2. How does God's whisper to Elijah challenge your expectations about how God shows up in your struggles?
- 3. Wesley said God fills "empty" vessels. What distractions or noise do you need to silence in order to hear God's whisper?
- 4. Elijah ran—but God still found him. What does this tell you about God's persistence in grace?

Practice:

• Take 10 minutes this week for *intentional silence*. No requests. Just listening. Journal what stirs or what seems to whisper within that stillness.

Part II: Peter's Beachfire

When Grace Rewrites Your Story John 21:15–19

"After breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?"" – John 21:15 (MSG)

Reflect:

- 1. Jesus meets Peter in the same place where Peter failed—around a fire. Where might Jesus be inviting you back to rewrite your story?
- 2. Peter didn't need to be perfect, just willing to say "yes" again. What "yes" is God asking of you right now?
- 3. How might your past failures actually prepare you to "feed" or encourage others?

4. How does Jesus model restorative grace in contrast to how we often handle others' mistakes?

Practice:

• Write a short "letter from Jesus" to your past self—after a moment of regret or failure. What would grace say? Read it aloud in prayer.

Part III: Paul's Letter

When Suffering Becomes Soil for Strength Romans 5:1-5

"We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles..." – Romans 5:3 (MSG)

Reflect & Discuss:

- According to Paul, how does suffering lead to hope? Can you trace that process in your own life?
- 2. C.S. Lewis said, "Failures are finger posts on the road to achievement." How has failure pointed you toward a greater calling?
- 3. What does the art of kintsugi teach us about grace, healing, and purpose in brokenness?
- 4. John Wesley taught that grace is "power to grow." How have you seen grace give you strength—not just forgiveness?

Practice:

• Choose an area of your life that still feels "cracked." In prayer, ask God to begin filling it with gold. Visualize it as being used again—differently, beautifully, and more powerfully.

📝 Threaded Reflection: Resilience Reimagined

Three Themes of a Resilient Disciple:

- 1. **Discomfort:** A refining fire that clarifies truth
- 2. **Disagreement:** A grace-filled opportunity to grow

📜 Final Thought to Ponder

"Jesus didn't make his disciples invincible—He made them redeemable."

What would it mean to live today not as someone trying to avoid failure, but as someone being redeemed *through* it?