

SERMON OUTLINE

STUDIES IN THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ELISHA

'Elisha: the messenger of salvation' - 1

1 Kings 19 v15 - 21 & 2 Kings 2 v1 - 18

Sermon Theme - 'God buries His workmen, but carries on His work'
(Charles Wesley)

Context - God raised up Elisha to take over from Elijah in a day of religious pluralism. Apply to the religious pluralism of our own day when it's anything but easy to bear witness to the gospel of the Jesus who is alone the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. See - Acts 4 v12.

What is there in the story of the life and times of Elisha that will encourage us and strengthen us in our Christian witness and service?

1. HOW ELISHA WAS CALLED TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Context - Elijah was fearing for his life and was feeling very much alone. See - 1 Kings 19 v1 - 2, v10 & v14. In order to encourage him, God said 2 things....

(i) 'You are not alone'

See - v18

(ii) 'I'm giving you someone to help you'

See - v15 - 16

Note - How did Elisha respond to the call of God?

A. HE RESPONDED WHOLEHEARTEDLY

He left everything to follow Elijah in the service of God. Everything for Elijah meant both his family and his future. See - v20 (his family) & v21a (his future).

B. HE RESPONDED JOYFULLY

See - v21b. He had a bar-b-q - He threw a party. In other words, he wasn't mourning the cost of giving up everything - rather, he was rejoicing in the privilege of being called to serve God.

C. HE RESPONDED HUMBLLY

See - v21c & 2 Kings 3 v11. Key Point - God did not choose Elisha be-

cause of his many gifts. He chose him because, like Jesus, he had a servant spirit. See - Phil 2 v5 - 8

2. HOW ELISHA WAS EMPOWERED FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Key Question put to Elisha. See - 2 v9a. Elisha's answer (his request - v9b) was nothing to do with arrogance and pride, but had everything to do with a sense of complete and utter inadequacy for the task he had been given. What he asked for, he was given. See - v13 - 14.

Note - Striking the water was a reminder of the days of Joshua when the waters of the Jordan were divided to let the people enter into the Promised Land. This teaches us 2 things:-

A. GOD'S POWER IS NOT LIMITED TO A PARTICULAR ERA

B. GOD'S POWER IS NOT LIMITED TO A PARTICULAR INDIVIDUAL

See - v8 & v15

Key Question - Who are we looking to and trusting in with respect to the future of God's work and God's church? This is what verses 16 to 18 are all about. They looked for Elijah because they felt that they couldn't do without him. Our faith is not to be on the Elijahs and Elishas of the church - but upon the God of Elijah and Elisha.