



Sermon Series: Elisha: Seeing the Hand of God at Work

To be used with Session 1: God's Hand in Calling Us to Serve

Sermon Title Possibilities: Pass the Baton

Scripture: 1 Kings 19:19-21; 2 Kings 2:7-15

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the Bible study “Elisha: Seeing the Hand of God at Work” this sermon dives into the type of person God calls. We look at the outer appearance, but God knows the hearts of people. God sees our potential to serve Him.

Introduction: It is expensive to find the right employee for the right position. When one factors in a recruitment team or an internal human resource team, career fairs, job posting fees, background checks, testing services, referral bonuses, relocation expenses, onboarding cost, and training; the time cost and financial cost can add up. Companies can anticipate paying from \$4,000 to \$20,000 to hire a new employee, not including salary and benefits.¹ This demonstrates the importance of finding the right person. Likewise, the cost can be high in the church. It is important to know what is needed. What should we be looking for?

1. Look for those who are AVAILABLE (1 Kings 19:19–21).

Elijah had been ordered to by the LORD to anoint Elisha, the son of Shaphat, to be his successor. He left and found him plowing with twelve yoke of oxen (v. 19). Elijah threw his mantle on him. Elisha stopped the plow, ran to the prophet, expressed that he would bid his family farewell and follow him (v. 20). Elisha's actions showed that he was willing to forsake his old life. He killed the team oxen for food and used the plowing equipment for firewood. Elisha demonstrated that he was available. His old job was done, and he became available to be the servant of Elijah (v. 21).

¹ https://www.indeed.com/hire/c/info/cost-of-hiring-employees?gad_source=1&psafe_param=1&gclid=EAlaIQobChMI0bvIrZ_kigMVZS3UAR1kvzqkEAAAYiAAEgInFvD_BwE&aceid=&gclsrc=aw.ds

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Peter told Jesus that the disciples had left all and followed Him (Mark 10:28). Jesus proclaimed that this was a requirement for discipleship (Luke 14:33). We must be available to be used by God. Being saved means that we have become a new creature in Christ Jesus; old things are passing away and all things have become new (2 Cor. 5:17). Yet, I have discovered that we often refuse to let the old life go. Therefore, we do not have time or room for the new such as: worship, Bible reading, praying, serving, instructing, giving, and witnessing.

2. Look for those who are FAITHFUL (2 Kings 2:6-11).

Elisha would not leave Elijah, even when told to do so (v. 6). Elisha wanted to make a double impact for the LORD God because he asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit (v. 9). What a contrast? Earlier Elijah wanted to die because of Jezebel's threat (1 Kings 19:4). He felt like he was the only one left who was faithful to the LORD (1 Kings 19:10, 14). Yet, the LORD told him that He had reserved seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed their knees to Baal (1 Kings 19:18). God gave Elijah a glimpse of this through Elisha. A man who wanted to be the mouthpiece of God, who wanted to carry out the will of God and exalt the name of the LORD.

Just like Elijah, we may feel that we are alone and that no one else is faithful to the LORD. Yet, God has always raised up the faithful. Moses had a Joshua. Paul had Timothy and Titus. We should be looking at those around us. Are you faithful? Are you persevering? We are looking for you!

3. Looking for those who are TEACHABLE (2 Kings 2:12-14).

Elisha was a good student. He faithfully showed up every day. As said earlier, even when Elijah tried to separate them, he stayed close to his teacher. Therefore, he placed himself in a position to what everything his mentor did. In this passage, we see his actions up close. When they came to the Jordan river, Elijah took his mantle and struck the water, and it departed (v. 8). So, after the ascension of Elijah, Elisha came to the Jordan, and he did what he saw Elijah do. He "took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?" (v. 14).

We must also be teachable. Have you allowed someone to teach you how to share your faith in Christ, interpret the Word of God, give godly counsel, give your time, talent, and treasure, and how to serve? It is time to show that we are teachable.

Conclusion: Elisha was a mighty vessel for the LORD. He was used to pronounce God's judgment, to execute God's provision, and to show God's power. What a loss it would have been if Elijah went to the grave and did not pass along the wisdom and knowledge given to him by the LORD. What a tragedy it would be if we neglect to identify someone to pass along the knowledge and wisdom God have given you. Are you looking for the faithful, the available, the teachable? God is!

Author Bio

Dr. Brian M. Carmichael Sr. is married to Stacey of twenty-seven years. They have four grown children (three boys and one girl) and two grandchildren. He is the pastor of Holy Temple Baptist in Memphis, TN. He is also on faculty with MCUTS of Union University. He received his BSCL from Union University (Jackson, TN) and his MDIV and Ph.D. from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. As a Christian leader, he has a passion for preaching, teaching, disciple-making, and all things church related.

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