

Elíjah Chooses Elísha

1 Kings 19:19-21

MEMORY VERSE

1 KINGS 19:19

“So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A piece of cloth for each pair of children, approximately 2 feet long.

One white handkerchief for each child, one permanent marker, and several multi-colored markers.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Let's Follow the Lord Together

Today, we will be learning about Elijah and Elisha. They followed the Lord together. In this activity, let's see how we can follow the Lord with our friends. This activity will be a variation of a three-legged race. You will need a piece of cloth for each pair of children.

Have the children form partners, then using the piece of cloth, gently tie each child's leg to his or her partner's leg as in a three-legged race. This will be like a three-legged race, except it will be a relay race. Divide the pairs of children into two equal groups (if the number of groups is an odd number then choose one pair to go twice). Have a starting line and have the children race across the room and return. They will then tag the next pair, and they will do the same. Tell the children that they and their partner need to work together to follow your instructions. Encourage the partners to help each other to finish the race.

Allow the children to complete their race, and then have them sit in a circle and ask the following questions. What was it like racing with a partner? Was it harder or easier? Did it become easier as time went on? How did you help your partner? Explain that Elijah and Elisha both followed the Lord. They were friends and helped each other. We can help our friends to serve the Lord by encouraging them to do what is right. Can you think of some ways that you can encourage your friends to do what is right (read Bible, pray, go to church, etc.)?

LESSON TIME!

Have you ever wondered what God would have you to do in your life? We might think that great Bible characters like Elijah and Elisha were super-human. We may feel they were able to do so much more for the Lord than we could ever do. Not so! They were people just like us. They were once children who loved to play and, sometimes, be silly. God used them for great things because they were *willing* to be used. God can use our lives for great things when we are willing to be used. **God has wonderful plans for our lives.**

In today's lesson, God will call Elisha to replace Elijah as a prophet of God.

1 KINGS 19:19

So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him.

Elijah departed from Horeb and found Elisha, (meaning God is Savior) the son of Shaphat at Abel-Meholah, in the Jordan Valley. Note, Elisha was busy working when God called him to the ministry. He was not just sitting around waiting for God to use him.

Elisha's father may have been wealthy, having twelve yoke of oxen, yet Elisha is out working in the field. Those who learn to be diligent and devoted to the tasks God has called them to today, doing whatever they do "...heartily, as to the Lord" (Colossians 3:23), will be those who are best prepared for any ministry God may call them to tomorrow. The work of the ministry requires constant self-sacrifice and tireless devotion to our duties.

How might we as children prepare ourselves to be in the Lord's service? We can obey our parents, be careful to do all of our chores around the home as unto the Lord, do our best in school, serve others, and tell others about Jesus. As we learn to be faithful in all of these things, the small tasks we are called to do now, the Lord will continue to bless us and use us for greater things. **God has wonderful plans for our lives.**

When Elijah cast his mantle, the insignia of his office, upon Elisha, it was the call to the office of prophet. Though a mantle was simply a piece of clothing that went over Elijah's shoulders, it meant that Elijah had the call of a prophet on his life. By casting his mantle onto Elisha, Elijah made it clear that the calling of God to be a prophet was now being passed on to Elisha. Some have commented that as Elisha plowed his earthly field with his 12 pair of oxen, he was now to plow the spiritual field of the 12 tribes of Israel.

For Elisha, this call would mean a drastic lifestyle change. He would leave the farm and everything he had become familiar with to become engaged in the work of the ministry. 2 Timothy 2:4 tells us that the servant of Jesus Christ must not “entangle himself with the affairs of this life.” What are we willing to give up to follow God’s call upon our lives?

1 KINGS 19:20

And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?"

Elisha, understanding what was meant when Elijah gave him his mantle, left the oxen standing, ran after Elijah and said to him, “let me kiss my father and my mother, then I will follow you.” In other words, “Let me tell my parents good-bye before I leave to join you in your ministry.”

Elisha showed humility by asking permission of his mentor. He was not delaying his obedience to the call; he was a loving son. Actually his readiness to break the ties that might hold him back was proof of his obedience to his call. Perhaps Elijah’s question, “...what have I done to you” was to prompt Elisha to be sure he had counted the cost of God’s call upon his life.

When the Lord calls us to His work, we should be ready to “go.” Let us be praying now that the Lord will reveal His plans and purposes to us and prepare us for the time He calls us to “go.” **God has wonderful plans for our lives.**

Who Will You Follow?

Before you begin this activity, set up an obstacle course, using books, tables, chairs, wastebaskets, etc. Have the children get back into the same pairs from the previous activity. Have one child be the leader and the other child, the follower. The follower will have the cloth gently tied over their eyes as a blindfold so that they cannot see. The job of the leader will be to guide their partner through the obstacle course successfully.

Allow all of the children to have a turn going through the course. Take turns as to who can be the leader. After everyone has had a turn, have the children gather together. Ask the children to share their experiences. As the follower, was it easy to get from one place to another? As the leader, was it easy to give directions? Is it easy for us to follow the Lord when we do not always understand or see what is ahead? Do you think it was easy or hard for Elisha to leave everything and follow Elijah? What if Jesus asks us to forsake all and follow Him? We will have to rely on Him like our blindfolded person had to rely on their leader to get them through the path.

1 KINGS 19:21

So Elisha turned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and boiled their flesh, using the oxen's equipment, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant.

Here we see Elisha rejoicing in God by offering up a sacrifice. Perhaps, it also gave a closure to his previous profession. When we are called, we must renounce every other interest or distraction from our lives. Responding to God's call, Elisha then followed Elijah. He became a servant, for the time being, ministering to Elijah.

Though Elisha would be greatly used by God, now he was to be a servant to Elijah. The greatest of men must first become the greatest of servants (Matthew 23:11). How do we view God's calling upon our lives? Do we desire to be out in front, or are we willing to be the servant of all? God's preparation often puts us in the background for a time to learn about God, His ways, and true servant hood.

Elisha's response to God's call is a good example for us. He was hard at work when he was called; he gave up everything (his profession, his family, his comforts) to answer God's call for his life. Are we faithful in the things that God has us to do now? Are we willing to give up comforts and present ties to answer His call? Are we looking forward to seeing God's will and plan accomplished in our lives? Are we willing to be a servant and lay down our lives for others?

Again, God is not looking for super-human people to do His work and accomplish His purposes. He is looking for those who are *willing*. Our lives can be as exciting as Elijah's or Elisha's as we answer God's call and allow Him to fulfill His purposes in us. **God has wonderful plans for our lives..**

Mini Mantles

For this craft/activity you will need one white handkerchief for each child, one permanent marker, and several multi-colored markers. Using the permanent marker before class write out Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." Give one to each child (just for fun you could go by each child and cast the "mini-mantle" onto each child). Next give the children markers and allow them to draw a picture of what they think God will use them to do. It could be a future career, a special ministry, or just serving in some special way.

Make sure they write their names somewhere. Encourage the children to display the cloth somewhere so they can remember that God has a plan for their life.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to seek the Lord's will for their lives and be faithful to obey His plans. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.