



Heroes & Villains Series, No. 36: Elisha, II Kings 2-13
Mike Halpin ~ August 25, 2019

Intro: Zeal in the service of Christ like faithfulness.

John 2:17



Main applications in our imitation of Christlike faithfulness—

1. Sometimes faithfulness in the image of Christ requires zeal. (Qualify: zeal here is a commitment or determination that helps us be faithful in accomplishing God’s purposes.)
2. Faithfulness in many of the particulars of your life won’t necessarily look like faithfulness in the lives of others.

I. Holy Zeal—

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1Kings 19:19-21

The half-hearted call of Elijah doesn’t put Elisha off, he puts his old life behind and chases after Elijah.

2 Kings 2:1–8, sometime later...

Elisha’s persistence in following Elijah pays off when he finally gets to make a request...

2Kings 2:9–12

Faithfulness in Elisha’s service started with a zealousness that laid hold of Elijah; later he displayed a zeal that refused to let Elijah leave him before he could ask for the blessing that would enable him to be faithful and successful in his own calling.

Faithfulness sometimes means a refusal to give up, a willingness to lay hold, to hold on, to enthusiastically determine to see God’s will accomplished.

- 2 Kings 13:14-19
- Luke 18:35–43

What area of life do I need to cultivate more zeal in order to be faithful? _____

What would zeal in that area of life look like for me? _____

II. Faithfulness Isn't A Competition—

It's always a challenge to avoid comparing ourselves with others to determine our level of success, and that can be especially true if we follow behind someone of great stature, such as Elisha replacing Elijah.

How do we live up to the measure of someone who's gone before us? We don't.

Elisha doesn't compete w/ Elijah's legacy and in fact his ministry is of a very different sort. At least 7 of the 14 or so miracles associated w/ Elisha were helping others. Examples:

- Fresh water to prophets, and armies, 2 Kings 2:19–22; 3:14–20
- Oil and income to a widow, 2 Kings 4:1–7
- Poisonous food made safe, 2 Kings 4:38–41
- Bread and grain multiplied, 2 Kings 4:42–44
- Blind eyes given spiritual sight, 2 Kings 6:17–19

It appears Elisha got his request, a double portion of Elijah's prophetic spirit; yet the outworking of that in Elisha's life was quite different than Elijah's.

Our faithfulness in Christ isn't about doing what someone else would do, or how someone else would do it, but faithfully doing what God gives us to, w/ the gifts and provisions he gives us.

2 Corinthians 10:12–13

Avoid the temptation to compare your life to others. There are many things we don't control, but we can determine to be faithful in the time and place and with the gifts and resources God entrusts to us.

III. Faithfulness in My Life—

1. The first act of faithfulness to God is to obey the gospel through faith in Jesus Christ.

On what basis do I believe my sins can be forgiven? What is my hope for eternal life, living forever in God's presence? _____

(Compare your answer with these scriptures: John 3:16, John 20:31, Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 John 5:12-13)

2. A Christian's faithfulness is first about cultivating our relationship w/ the Lord through scripture and prayer; faithfulness in our gifts and service flow out of that relationship.

How am I currently cultivating my relationship w/ the Lord? _____

What (else) could I do to draw near to the Lord? _____

In what area of faithfulness is my zeal greatest? _____ Least? _____

In what area of life do I need to stop comparing myself to others? _____

If God granted me the kind of gift, calling or impact I've seen in someone else's life, who would that person be whose impact I admired and what would their "spirit" in my life look like? _____

But the Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame. Isaiah 50:7