

The Life of Elijah

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[0:00] Elijah means the Lord is my God. Talking about this man Elijah, who was he? What can we learn from his life? and how did God use him?

And some of the features of the life of Elijah that we can learn from. He cared about, number one, he cared about the work of the Lord. In 1 Kings 17, he comes on the scene from verse 1.

1 Kings 17 and verse 1, Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time of fellowship, of this time of learning and of your word. Help us, Lord, to be receptive. Lord, Holy Spirit, speak to hearts, touch lives.

Lord Jesus, minister, we pray, to each one. By your grace we pray. Amen. Elijah enters the scene here, the royal court, in chapter 17.

[1:08] He says about the Lord that the Lord is one whom he stands before, before whom I stand. Elijah is a servant. He's standing in wait.

He's got that sense of a servant waiting for instruction, standing, waiting for the master's call. His life was a life invested in God's service. He was interested in the work of God.

He was a servant of the living God. He was a worker. God's still looking for workers. God's looking for people who want to be used by him. Servants of God, who are dedicated, who are committed.

There's lots of work to do. As we know in the church scene, there's many opportunities to serve the Lord. And here was Elijah. He marched into Ahab's palace. Yet he saw himself not so much as standing before an earthly king, the king of Israel, as standing in the presence of the king of kings and the lord of lords, before whom I stand.

He says, Elijah was a God-centered man. And he was interested in the work of serving the Lord.

And we know nothing about Elijah up to this point, up to this appearance in 1 Kings 17.

[2:25] He was a nobody from nowhere. But he was spirit-led. He was spirit-empowered to do the work of the Lord. And it talks about Elijah in the book of James, chapter 5, verse 17.

It says of him, Elias or Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are. And he prayed earnestly that it might not rain.

And it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. God had chosen him to do his will and to carry his message to a wayward nation.

Now for you, don't think for one minute, any one of you, that you cannot be used by God. You might say, I am a nobody. I am just an ordinary person.

Elijah, it says in James 5, verse 17, he was an ordinary man, an ordinary, everyday man, just like us. And the work of the Lord is what Elijah was interested in.

[3:23] It's what seized him. It's what captivated him. It's what energized him. And what did it mean for Elijah? It meant caring for people. We saw through Elijah's life, he cared for the widow woman.

As he entered her home. Doing the work of the Lord means caring for people. He cared about God's people. He cared about the nation.

It had fallen into apostasy and idolatry. And he cared about prayer. He depended upon the Lord. He depended on the power of God, on faith.

And God, today, friends, he's looking for workers. He's scaring the horizons. He's looking here and there for witnesses. For ones who will stand. For ones who will declare.

For ones who will serve. And later, at the closing time of his life, Elijah found another worker. A disciple. Elisha. To continue the work.

[4:18] And it says of Elijah that he took his mantle and he threw it upon Elisha. Elisha became the new prophet in the land. Elijah chose another worker who was in the field.

Elisha was plowing in the field. God's looking for people who want to work. People who want to be servants of God. And that's what God found in Elijah. The work of the Lord.

What is the work of the Lord today? The work of the Lord, I believe, is what we're about here. It's about the work of the church. It's the church of God. God cares about the church.

The Lord Jesus Christ bled and died that the church would be washed and cleaned as a bride before him. God cares about the church. God cares about the work of the Lord.

And as I said earlier today, another church has closed its doors. It's happening all too frequently. Why? I met with the man. I spoke with him. What was the reasons?

[5:18] What was prompting? What was leading up to this? And it was to a degree about the vision of the people. The energy of the people.

The commitment of the people. The support. The strength of the people. It was waning. It was faltering. It was weakening. And brothers and sisters, we need to be energised.

We need to care about the work of the Lord. It's important. The work of the Lord. The work of the church. It's vital. It's essential. God cares about the church. And he cares about the work.

That we are called to be part of. Every one of you. He wants you to be a working, functioning, active part of his body. As the picture goes in 1 Corinthians. Every part having its function.

Of playing its role. Of serving a purpose. And every one of you here today. You're here for a reason. You're part of his church. As part of his body. As part of a functioning work.

[6:13] And Elijah prompts us to consider. Are we serving the Lord? Let us speak out like Elijah spoke out. Against sin.

Let us speak up. For truth. And for righteousness. Evil times need godly men. And godly women. Never had the nation of Israel faced. A more testing time.

A more evil time. I know we think. We look back to the good old days. As we said before. But it wasn't any better back then. It might have been a bit more hidden. Now and again. But it was evil times in Elijah's day too.

Just as it is in our day and time. And in the reign of Ahab. And his wife Jezebel. The worship of the nature god. Baal. It flourished in the land.

Idol worship. Apostasy. And the word of God was treated. With contempt and disdain. Thank god. That the time of Ahab and Jezebel. Was also the time of the prophet Elijah.

[7:11] And he cared about. The work of the Lord. So should you. So should I. And he also cared about. The word of the Lord. Cared about the work of the Lord.

The church. The people of God. The ministry. The serving. And he also cared secondly. About the word of the Lord. The word of the Lord. 1 Kings 17.

It says. That he declared the word. And in verse 2. It talks about. And the word of the Lord. Came unto him. And we see that. Through Elijah's life.

The word of the Lord. Came unto him. Through the account. Of his life. We see it repeated. A number of times. Even for example. At the end. In chapter 18. Verse 1. Where he had to face Ahab again.

But here was the circumstance. The nation was in apostasy. In idolatry. Far astray. From God's will. And Elijah marched in. To the very seat of authority.

[8:08] Of the Lamb. And despite the great danger. Despite the fact that people had been slain. For doing the same thing. He boldly brought. A word of God. A word of judgment.

And others had been put to death. Yet Elijah still stood. For the word. He stood for God's word. He stood upon God's word. And the word of the Lord. Came to him.

He was a man. Of the word of God. He heard it. He acted upon it. He spoke it. And like that too. Bro and sister. God's given you his word. The word of the Lord.

Has come to you. It's here in your hands. It's in your heart. As he's given it. In the pages of his scriptures. Declare it. Take it. Receive it. Apply it. And act upon it.

And some background here. As I say. Check out the state. Of the nation. You know. Political leaders have. Now and again. I know in the US. They have the state. Of the nation address. I'm sure there's.

[9:04] Getting less and less. Good things to say. In such things. But the state. Of the nation. The state. Of the nation. Of our fair land. Of

Australia. I think. As much to be desired. Think out.

Now. About the state. Of the nation. Of Israel. Check out the state. Of the nation. These were days. Of apostasy. God's strength. Had been abandoned. Their worship. Was idolatry.

And godless. Here's a picture. Of Baal worship. From a chick trap. It was a mixture. Of bizarre. And degrading. Idolatry. And perversion. And child sacrifice.

The pagans. Believed Baal. Controlled. The rising. And setting. Of the sun. The rains. And ancient Israel. Was an agricultural nation. So they really depended. Upon the rains. And the seasons.

So Baal. Was considered. An extremely powerful. Deity. And Baal worship. Involved sacrifice. And immoral. Sexual activity. Baal worship.

[9:58] Appealed to the mind. And the people's desire. For wealth. And for the flesh. Baal worship. Grabbed the mind. The heart. The body. And ultimately. The soul. And the real danger here.

Under the reign. Of the wicked king Ahab. Was that Baal worship. Was spreading widely. Ahab the king. He was an idolater. He bowed down. To images. And idols. Along with his wife.

Jezebel. The real power. Behind the throne. He was a Baal worshipper. In 1 Kings 16.32. It says.

That he reared up. For Baal. An altar. In the house of Baal.

Which he had built. In Samaria. That's 1 Kings 16.32. He was all out. And out. For Baal. And friends. Today. People desperately.

Still need. The word. Of God. As much abomination. And apostasy. In the so called. Church of God. Today. At times. In different places. We're living. In diabolical times.

[10:54] Why? Because the word. Of the Lord. Has been put. To one side. There's churches. Where they scarcely. Open the Bible. And read from it. Friends.

The word. Of the Lord. Must be a. Rule of faith. And conduct. Our standard. Our guide. For life. If the word. Has been abandoned. No wonder.

We're in trouble. And the king. Has described. Who was this king. Who ruled the land. In 1 Kings 21. Verses 25. Onwards. It says. But there was none. Like unto Ahab.

Who sold himself. To work wickedness. In the sight. Of the Lord. Whom Jezebel. His wife. Stood up. And he did. Very abominably. In fine. Idols.

According to all things. As did the Amorites. Whom the Lord cast out. Before the children. Of Israel. Ahab built. A temple of Baal.

[11:47] In Samaria. He sold. Out to Baal. He'd gone out. After idols. And here's the context. As Elijah entered the scene. Here was Elijah. He stood up.

He spoke out. The word. He confronted the king. He brought the word of God. To the very seat. Of authority. Spoke against the corruption. Of his day. He went right. To the highest authority.

Of the land. Where the apostasy. Span from. And the people. Didn't care about the word of God. It's like that today. That there's a famine. Of hearing the word. Of the Lord.

As a famine. In the land. They didn't care about the word. They didn't care. About the truth. They. Didn't read. What it says. Or they didn't hear.

What it said. About. Not worshipping. Worshipping images. As we know kids. Don't we? In the Ten Commandments. Not to bow down. To images. And follow them. And it forbidden the worship of other gods.

[12:43] And of idols and images. Yet we're seeing that. As we know in some church circles. There's images everywhere. And friends. We're not to do that. We're told not to. Specifically. Yet the people.

They just did their own thing. They ignored what God had said. And at the end of chapter 16. It tells us how. They rebuilt Jericho. This was in rebellion. And in Joshua 6 verse 26.

They were told not to. But. They faced a great curse. On those who dared to rebuild it. If a builder was to begin this work. Joshua 6 verse 26.

Prophesied. That their son. Would die. That eldest. Son. Would die. And then. At the close. As the gates were built. That the youngest son. Would die. And that's exactly what happened.

God's word. Was treated with contempt. And friends. Today. The word of the Lord. The word of God. Is treated with contempt. Why are they in dialogue. On such things as homosexuality.

[13:40] The Bible says. It's an abomination. Unto the Lord. Shouldn't even be in consideration. Friends. The word of God. Is treated with contempt. That's why we've got organizations. Like the Festival of Light. Who are standing up. For morality. And truth. And decency. And order. And yet. The word of God. Is treated with contempt. And the builder.

Just went ahead. Without reverence. For God's judgment. For God's word. And sure enough. Judgment fell. From the Lord. And in our day to day. The word of God. It's abandoned. It's put on the shelf.

It's. They try to cut bits out. And. And. You know. It's tried to. To make it fit. Their immoral lifestyle. It's treated with contempt.

There's a story told. About a council meeting. A city council meeting. In San Francisco. And they met. The council there. In San Francisco. Concerning a homosexual rights issue.

[14:34] And there was a man. A local citizen. Named Chuck. Who decided to go to the city council. To hear the debate. And he felt he couldn't just simply. Ignore the issue. And let it pass. He didn't take anyone with him.

Didn't take any placards. Or march against them. He just went to the council meeting. He sat there. And he listened. And the council was about to take a vote. And the chairman said. Is there anyone who has anything to say.

I don't say that in our local council by the way. Suddenly the councillors get to talk. But. In this council. The gallery. Had an opportunity to say something. And. He replied.

Well. I'd like to say something. And he went to the platform. And the. Chairman asked him. What would you like to say. He replied. Well. I'd like to say nothing.

For myself. But I would like to quote. Three individuals. That I've respected. For years. And he read to them. From Moses. In Leviticus. From one of the Psalms.

[15:30] By David. And from Paul. In Romans 1. He didn't preach. He didn't scream. He didn't sermonize. He just closed his Bible. And sat down. Wait. Before you sit down.

Who are those people? Moses. And David. And Paul. And someone said. You're reading from the Bible. Aren't you? Yes. He said. I am. And one of the council members. Spoke up and said.

I vote against the proposal. It was a proposal in favour. Of some homosexual agenda. Then another of the council members. Said. I vote no. And another. And another. And it didn't pass.

He sat down. There is power. In the word of God. The word of God. Is our authority. Is our truth. We can hang on to it. We can declare it. And we should declare it.

Like Elijah did. Elijah declared. The word. Of God. He declared God's word. He cared about the work of God. He cared about the word of God. And he cared about.

[16:24] The worship of God. The worship of the Lord. Elijah lived. A life of worship. We see. In Elijah's life. He prayed. Prayer was a feature of his life.

Faith. Dependency upon God. When the famine struck. He was down at the brook Cherith. And then he went to the widow woman's house. And the Lord multiplied the oil.

And kept the family sustained. In the midst of great times of suffering and famine. And then the woman's son died. And he prayed.

And the Lord graciously brought life back. Into the woman's son. It was a life of prayer. A life of worship. A life of faith. A life of dependence on God. And in his day.

The people's worship was a strain. Instead of the worship of the Lord. They were worshipping Baal. The true worship of God was not popular. Elijah challenged the idolatry of his day.

[17:18] And declared that Jehovah was the true God of Israel. He prayed that it would not rain for three years. Because he wanted to show the people it wasn't Baal that was in control of the rain.

As they had thought and believed. It was God who was in control of the rain. Who brought the water, the life, the fruitfulness to the land. And he depended on God.

It was a life of worship. A life of faith. And as I say. As he went to the widow's home. The Lord honoured his faith with a miraculous provision. Of the flour and oil that did not run out.

And of the raising of the widow's son. Meantime. Across the land. The famine sat in. Three years. There had been no rain. The ground turned brown. And began to crack. Cricks died up. The crops failed. And the Lord then said to Elijah. Go and see Ahab again. God told Elijah to go.

[18:15] The second time. In 18 verse 1 it says. And it came to pass. When Ahab saw Elijah. That Ahab said unto him. Art thou he that troubled with Israel.

The word for trouble here. It means snake. He was calling Elijah a dirty snake. That's what the king thought of God's prophet. And Elijah turned the tables and said. In verse 18.

I have not troubled Israel. But thou and thy father's house. In that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord. And thou hast followed Balaam. You followed the Baals.

You followed the false worship. You the one who's brought the trouble. And yet. It might be said of you or me. You're a troublemaker. I know we're talking folk that do a bit of open air preaching.

And witnessing in the city. There's a new annoyance law they're going to bring in for the World Youth Day. You know. If you annoy the Catholics on the World Youth Day.

[19:11] Watch out. You could have a \$5,000 fine. So better have some money in your bank account. If you want to go and protest about the Pope. You know. We can't be Protestants anymore. We should be.

Shouldn't we? Protesting. About the false teaching. You know. We don't believe in bowing down to Mary. As a co-mediator with God. The Lord Jesus Christ.

There is one mediator. We don't believe in confessing our sins to a priest. Confess your sins to God. The Lord. There's much else we could say about the Catholic Church.

And their false teachings. But we need to be out and out. And outspoken. When it's called for. To speak out for the truth. And even if at risk of being called a troublemaker. People need to be troubled if there's wrong teaching.

If there's error and danger. We need to speak out. And in verse 19. Elijah asked the king to bring all the people together. The prophets of Baal. And of Ashtoreth. And to Mount Carmel.

[20:08] To make a choice. Elijah was a man in touch with Almighty God. This was a great challenge. And at their point in time they met on Mount Carmel. Elijah challenged the people to make up their mind about who to follow.

Some wanted it both ways. To sit on the fence. To choose to serve Baal and God. He said now is the time to make up your mind. Make a choice. Choose you. Which way?

Which one? The test was that the prophets of Baal were going to have a sacrifice. And then he was going to have a sacrifice to the Lord.

And in verse 21 of 1 Kings 18. And Elijah came unto all the people. And he said how long holds ye? How long are you going to muck around? Between two opinions.

If the Lord be God follow him. If Baal follow him. And the people answered him. Not a word. It was 850 false prophets versus one man of God.

[21:04] He proposed this simple experiment. That God is going to answer by fire. He is the true God. And the prophets of Baal. They cut up a bull. They put it on their pieces of work.

And then Elijah said to them. Ask Baal to light it for you. He told them. Do whatever you want to do. Whatever you have to do. To make Baal light your fire on your sacrifice.

To send fire. And as this cartoonist has pictured them. But apparently a historical source says that it was likely they actually had hair down to their shoulders.

Here they were the prophets of Baal. As they danced they would scream and beat their drums. And lower their bodies almost to the ground. This is from historic sources. This is what they were like.

They used to beat a lot of drums. And they showed a lot of devotion to Baal. And it would have included screaming and antics. And sexualized antics. They carried on for hours. Oh Baal answer us.

[22:02] Answer us. Nothing happened. Elijah began to taunt them. He began to taunt them. Cry louder. Shout louder. Surely he is a God.

Maybe he is deep absorbed. Or busy here or there. Traveling. Sleeping. He needs to be awakened. Elijah was definitely not politically correct. Not politically correct.

We don't do that sort of thing anymore. We don't make fun of other people's religion anymore. We don't make fun of those things. You get in trouble for doing that today. Just as a side issue.

One of the features of Baal worship was associated in scripture with sodomy. You can't even use that word sodomy anymore. It's same sex relationships now.

But this was something that was a feature of Baal worship. And if you did what Elijah did. You'd get arrested today for a hate crime. When Elijah suggests that perhaps Baal is busy.

[23:00] Commentators have said that it could mean he's off hunting or something. It could even suggest that it means that he's gone to the bathroom. It was quite an insult. What an insulting thing to say about their God.

And in desperation the prophets of Baal got really frantic. Cutting themselves with knives and swords. As some kind of blood sacrifice to their false God. They were desperate. Desperate. But the heavens were silent. Baal had utterly failed. Now friends today I'm just going to take a slight detour. A couple of important things I want to share with you before I close.

The next thing I'm going to show you is a disturbing video. I tried to sanitise it a bit from some of the more disturbing elements. There's lots more disturbing footage that I can show you.

But this will show you. Friends you need to see this. Because this is what is happening in many church circles in our world today. It's happening in America.

[23:57] It's happening in a place called Florida. They're calling it the Florida Healing Revival. And this man Todd Bentley is the man at the centre of all of this. And there's commentary on the pictures here that someone has added to it.

This is alarming stuff. So be alarmed. But I'll explain. I'm not meaning to spoil the holy time that we're having here. But you need to be educated and informed about what is going on in our world today.

This is a man who's got an emphasis on angels instead of the Lord. In fact he's got a couple of names of angels. Both of which are seen in other mythology.

The names of these angels aren't in the Bible. He's got weird tattoos all over him. Most of which he took on after he supposedly became a Christian. He's covered in tattoos and piercings.

Now that's an aside really. But it's something that makes you wonder. Why would someone do such a thing? So please bear with me as we just watch a little clip of this disturbing video.

[25:04] Because we're talking about the worship of the Lord. The worship of the Lord. That's what we want to do isn't it? We want to worship the Lord. This is what some people call worship in our world today.

A little bit of that glory is coming on me. And we're...

We have an international television audience tonight. And I got that vibrating again.

Lord, let everybody vibrate. Come get some.

You know, the Lord told me that this anointing, this anointing would be the most contagious anointing in my ministry. And that this would be the most contagious anointing.

[26:40] Transferable, tangible anointing. Let's go. Well, what's happening?

I'll tell you what's happening. People are getting healed in Lakeland. You need to come and get some. It's alarming stuff, isn't it?

And yet, this is, you know, we've got family in the AOG. And we've got family in the Pentecostal movement. And it's alarming what is going on.

I mean, not all Pentecostals are like that. But I saw on Todd Bentley's website, he's taking it to the UK. He's taking it to England.

He's taking that anointing. And it's all this weird stuff, shaking and vibrating, rolling on the floor.

People going nutty. And, friends, the worship of the Lord.

[28:19] Is that the worship of the Lord? Is that God? It certainly makes you wonder, doesn't it? There's weird, weird stuff. And this is being promoted massively on God TV, they call it, as one channel that promotes it.

And it's alarming stuff. Friends, it's like this sort of thing going on. And there's a crying louder.

There's a cutting of themselves. There's this weird and wacko things going on.

That we need to be careful. But what happened, back to our story now, Elijah restored to true worship. In 1 Kings 18:13, he asked the people to come near.

And they came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. The altar lay in ruins that had been destroyed. He put the 12 stones together as a symbol of the nation, returning now to true worship.

And he said, come near to me. And it's interesting, the timing was significant. As we said, he's had a life of worship with his reaching out to the widow, caring for his country, for the people of God and their apostasy, wanting to restore the glory to God.

[29:25] And they wanted to restore the worship. The altar was rebuilt that God had ordained. He wanted to restore that worship. Elijah built the altar late in the afternoon.

It was about the time of the evening sacrifice. It was the time that God had appointed. But Israel had completely forgotten about it. He dug a trench. They poured water upon the word.

And four large jugs of water. It was soaking wet. Poured all over the ball, over the word, over the stones, in the trench. And Elijah was saying, our God is a covenant-keeping God.

That's why he had the 12 stones. According to his word, he will not turn us away. God will keep his promise. And so at the hour of sacrifice, at the appointed time, everything was ready.

But they needed a miracle. They needed a miracle. So Elijah steps forward and prays a very simple prayer. In 1 Kings 18, 36. It came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice that Elijah, the prophet, came near and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

[30:40] Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. On one side you have 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah, and you have 8, 9, 10 hours of screaming and yelling and whooping and cutting themselves.

We've heard of their screaming today. And you have all these prayers to their fake God. You have all this religiosity. And over here you have one man. One man, the mountain man, God's man.

When he simply prays, it's just some 60 words in English. And what happens? It was 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah versus Elijah. 850 to 1.

But really it was 850 to 1 plus God. That's what made a difference. That's what made a difference, brothers and sisters. And in verse 39 it says, And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces, and they said, The Lord, he is the God.

The Lord, he is the God. It was talking about the fire fell from heaven. God answered Elijah's prayer. And then they seized the prophets of Baal, and they took them to the Kishon Valley where they were slaughtered.

[31:48] They had to kill off the prophets of Baal with their false teaching. They can't do that today. And these false prophets and false teachers that abound in our world today, the so-called faith healers, with their false teachings about prosperity gospel, and so on.

I saw some of this last night. I thought, oh, I'd love to show some of you people some of the wacko stuff that's going on, but probably that's enough to glance at just now. But the people that, you've got prosperity preachers squeezing every little scent out of people, trying to put people under yokes of bondage in terms of their giving.

We don't do that as a church here. You give as the Lord leads you to give, freely from your heart.

We're not putting anyone under a yoke of bondage, under that kind of pressure, under that kind of false gospel of prosperity gospel, which is so widespread in our world today.

And it's a false gospel. It's false. It's wrong. It's against the Lord. It's not scriptural. And friends, God came and visited and burnt up the sacrifice, and it started to rain.

As Elijah then prayed, he asked the Lord, the fire fell, and Elijah prayed. He asked the Lord just a simple prayer. And seven times he sent his servant to go to look towards the sea.

[33:02] And six times the servant saw nothing but the seventh cloud about the size of the man's hand. And when the rain started, Ahab retreated.

And the hand of the Lord was on him, verse 46, and he ran before Ahab.

And it does say there's a moment where he does actually flee from Jezebel. You know, that's the good thing about the Bible. It tells it warts and all. Elijah had his fears too. He had his times of distress and despair and also fear.

He feared Jezebel because she had slain the other prophets of God. But friends, today we're joined to a close. Who are you going to bow down to? Are you going to bow down like Elijah did to the Lord God Almighty?

He said, Jehovah is my God. The Lord is my God. That is what Elijah's name meant. And Elijah, we see, he cared about the work of the Lord. We need to care about the work of the Lord.

We need to be about the work of the Lord. Care about the church of the Lord. The work of the Lord. We need to care about the word. The word of the Lord. That's why they got into trouble. They got away from the word.

[34:04] And that's what we're seeing by and large in many church circles today. They're getting away from the word of God. It's not being declared. It's not being taught. People aren't getting grounded and firmly planted in it.

And this is the danger. We need to get back to the word of God. The word of the Lord is critical. And lastly, we need to see the worship of the Lord. A worship that is based on the scriptures.

A worship that is based on God's truth. And friends, today God is looking for worshippers. He's looking for workers. He's looking for people who care about the word. People who are generally following him.

As Elijah cried out, how long are you going to muck around? How long are you going to halt between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him. If Baal be God, follow him.

And the people answered not a word. The people did nothing. And that's the problem in the church of God today. At times that the people answer not a word.

[35:03] Make up your mind this morning. Make up your mind. If Jesus Christ be God, follow him. If anyone or anything else be your God, follow him. Stop playing games. Get serious today.

Get serious about your commitment. About your faith. Stop sitting on the fence. Take a stand for the truth. And make a full commitment. I'll give life to the Lord Jesus Christ. We're going to close it at this point with a challenge for everyone.

Please. Perhaps you're in the crowd still. Perhaps you're toying with Baal, with the world, the flesh, the devil, as this crowd was, with the false gods, the false prophets, the false teaching of the day.

You consider where are you at spiritually this morning. I pray that every one of you will be challenged to think, don't we need to take it seriously? We need to take the work of the Lord seriously.

This is not just some little social club that you come to once a week when you feel like it, when you can fit it into your agenda. This is the work of the Lord. It motivates me.

[36:03] It drives me that this is important. It's important. Our fellowship is important. The word of the Lord is important. That we get a teaching that is straight down the line, that is biblical, that is strong and true and reliable, that we can count on and apply and not just be a hearer but a doer.

And the worship has got to be in tune with God Almighty. Now, that's not to say there's some more modern songs that are still glorifying to God, but we need to test everything, test the spirit.

We need to test the word. Does it measure up? Is it scriptural? Does it lay up or is it tainted with something that we don't want to have a bar of? I wonder about, for example, these churches that are adopting the Hillsong type songs.

Now, maybe there's some nice songs amongst them, but it's part of the system of corruption that's coming in. That's why, as a church, we choose not to have a bar of it.

We don't want to let a little, incy-lincy bit of it in. We want songs that are glorified to God, that are not tainted with who they come from or with what it belongs to.

[37:18] Because you start introducing Hillsong songs, just for example, and then the people get a taste for that, they get a longing for that, they get the CDs and the DVDs, and they see what else goes along with that, and they end up filing the whole package.

That's the problem. That's the problem, brothers and sisters. That's why we care about the ministry and the music and the practice that we have. Not that we're being stoled to, but that we're being biblical.

Amen? Biblical. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for Elijah, the testimony of his life, for our fellowship time. Help us, Lord, to grow stronger in our faith and trust, to be like Elijah, to pray, to worship, to be Bible-founded, Bible-led, to be Holy Spirit-led in our lives, in our worship, in the hearing of your word and in the practising of it, in our serving of you.

Help us to serve you faithfully and fully, Lord, to follow you and not to mess around, Lord, to make a decision and to stick with it, to hold fast, to hold true.

We pray in Jesus' name. Let us pray.

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