

Need a Man of God

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Go with me to 2 Kings chapter 3, and we're going to be in verse 11.

Sometimes you just need a man of God. Sometimes you just need a prophet of the Lord. Sometimes you just need a man of God that could speak to you and be there for you.

So in the story tonight, which is a crazy story, but in the story tonight we have a king, and you'll find his name up there in verse 1, Jehoram. And Jehoram is the son of Ahab, and Ahab dies, and Jehoram's now in charge.

And Jehoram has the king of Moab who has been paying him tribute big time, sending him wool and sending him things up there to him. And so at the right time of year, Jehoram decides, the king of Moab says, I'm not going to pay you anymore.

It's done. I'm not giving you anything anymore. I'm not going to send you any more of the things I have to, because I don't think you're as strong as your daddy. I don't think you can make me do it. And so watch this.

[1 : 06] I'm not going to do it. So Jehoram counts all of his men. He gets through counting his men. He calls Jehoshaphat, and he says, hey, buddy, you know, we're family. We're married together now. Our families are married.

You ought to go with me to fight. And I've got the king of Edom. He's willing to go with me also. And we're all going to go down and whip Moab and make them pay me what they owe me.

I mean, you don't think they ought to get away with that, do you? And he said, of course they shouldn't. And so they took a seven-day trip. And on their way there, they ran out of water. They got the animals they're going to use to eat along with them.

The animals are riding and the animals that are pulling things. They got all their animals. And there's three kings and three armies. And they're on their way down, and they run out of water. When they run out of water, one of the men says, hey, we're in trouble.

There's no water. We cannot go on. No water anywhere we can find it. We're not carrying water. The animals can't drink. The people can't drink. We're in a heap of trouble. And old Jehoram, he does get hysterical.

[2 : 02] And he said, I can't believe it. The God of heaven has brought us out here to kill us and turn us over to the king of Moab. This is terrible. This is ridiculous. I don't know. It's terrible this is happening.

And Jehoshaphat said, whoa, whoa, whoa. You know, maybe there's a man of God we could talk to. Maybe we could find a man of God we could talk to and see what's going on here. And so they said to him, well, you know, oh, Elisha's over here.

We can go talk to Elisha. And they go over to talk to Elisha. We'll talk a little bit about Elisha. So they go over to talk to Elisha. And Elisha, when he comes in the room, Elisha said, hey, I wouldn't even talk to you.

I don't like you. You don't belong in my presence. You may be a king. But I don't like you. And I wouldn't even let you talk to me if it wasn't for Jehoshaphat being here in the room. Okay.

He says, what are we going to do? He said, well, let me get the minstrel. Get the guy to play some music. Let me pray a little bit. And he prayed. And he said, all right, go dig a bunch of ditches. And God's going to fill the ditches up with water.

[3 : 02] This chapter fills up ditches. Next chapter fills up pots. But he filled this with water. And next one will be with oil. But anyway, so he says he'll fill up the ditches with water. Well, he filled up the ditches with water.

So now all the animals got plenty to drink. And Moab's up on top of the hill. And he sees all of them down there. And he's ready to go down and attack. And the sun comes up and shines on all the water and all the ditches.

And it looks to him like it's blood. So he is convinced that Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom and Jehoram have been in a fight. And there's blood everywhere. And so he is just going to go down and pillage the place and pull out all their riches and leave.

So he and his army march right into a trap and get the snot beat out of them. And God wins the battle. The whole story, though, to me, I look at every one of these stories and I say, Lord, what in the world am I supposed to tell them?

None of them are going to be needing to dig ditches to get water, probably. And also, none of them are in a war. Nobody's going out to fight the king of Moab. But here's what I think the story is.

[4 : 05] They needed a man of God. So I want to show you five things about this man of God, Elisha, that I think applies to the man of God that ought to be leading your ministry, the people ought to be teaching Sunday school classes, pastoring, missioning, and everything else.

So read with me, if you would. 2 Kings 3, verse 11. And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord that we may inquire of the Lord by him?

And one of the king's servants answered and said, Well, here's Elisha, the son of Sapphath, which poured water on the hands of Elijah. And Jehoshaphat said, Well, the word of the Lord's with him.

So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with you? Get you to your own daddy's prophets and to the prophets of your mother.

And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay, for the Lord hath called these three kings together to deliver them into the hands of Moab. I know what God did. He got us all together. He got us out here so he could kill us.

[5 : 07] Turned over to the king of Moab. Verse 14. Elisha said, As the Lord of hosts lives before whom I stand, Surely were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee nor see thee.

But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, and the minstrel played, That the hand of the Lord came upon him. Father, I pray now that you'd help us learn a little bit about the man of God, the prophet of the Lord, the guy that you would have as a pastor, the guy that you'd have as a missionary, the guy that you'd have serving in a pastoral role, the guy that you'd have doing this, the men of God that we'll train and send out.

And I pray you'd help us to see that, and we'll give you praise and honor and glory for it all. In Jesus' name, amen. Now, this message is not about me by any stretch.

This is about Elisha and about the man of God. But there will come a day, not too far hence, when I will no longer be the pastor here. Because I happen to be 62 and a half years old, and sooner or later, y'all are going to put me in a casket and push me off.

And so we ought to know what to look for in a man of God. And I find it very interesting that this chapter shows us exactly five wonderful characteristics of a man of God. Number one, I want you to write this down somewhere.

[6 : 21] The man of God is known for who he serves. The man of God is known for who he serves. Look if you would at 2 Kings 3, verse 11. That's what he was known for who he serves.

The Bible said, but Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord that we may inquire of the Lord by him? Look at that. Prophet of the Lord.

Now, what you've got to understand, and I'm going to show you as we go, I'm going to show you a little bit as we go through it, but as we go through this, you need to understand, Jehoram has his own state religion that he runs.

He made up the whole religion. He's got two calves that are golden calves like he learned from Aaron in the history. He's got, one of them is located in Adan and another in Bethel.

These kings are going to war. Jehoram, the son of Ahab, who rules from Israel. Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, the king of Edom, who are the descendants of Esau. They're going to war against that guy.

[7 : 23] And he's gotten hysterical. Well, I wonder if you would before, look at verse 10 so you'll know I think he got hysterical. And the king of Israel said, Alas, that's King James for getting hysterical in case you didn't know it.

Alas, that the Lord had to call these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab. Is that a guilty conscience I hear speaking there?

To get afraid so quickly? Is that him thinking that the other guys are an excuse for how bad he is? Jehoshaphat wants to know if they shouldn't talk to God right now.

Jehoram's like, man, we're in trouble. Jehoshaphat says, let's look to God. Jehoram's a wicked king. Look at 2 Kings 3, verse 2. 2 Kings 3, verse 2.

Now I want you to listen to this.

[8 : 22] Everybody, just pay real close attention to this. You know, right and wrong is not determined by society. And right and wrong is not determined by what you and your friends think is okay. And right and wrong is not determined how you feel about something.

The verse, and you should underline this every time you see it, they did evil in the sight of the Lord. I'm going to stop and just say this. They didn't do evil in the sight of the country because the country was in agreement with him.

They didn't do evil in the sight of the country because the country is going and worshiping these false gods. And so the whole country could be wrong, but we want to stand on what God says. Wicked, evil, and sin are determined by what God says, not by you or society.

And God is the judge of the whole earth. It appears, though Jehoram, though he's a wicked king, I'm going to show you a little bit about his religion in a minute, but it appears that he doesn't want to be like his parents.

It appears to me that he's trying to break out of what mama and daddy taught him. Look with me, if you would, at 2 Kings 3, 2 again. The Bible says, he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord, but not like his father and like his mother.

[9 : 29] Father, I could stop right there and preach to you for the rest of the night. What in the world is going on that this guy learned to do wrong from his mama and his daddy?

And the Holy Spirit of God would say, write this down. He's a wicked guy, but not as bad as his mama and his daddy. That's a pretty sorry thing. He put away the image of Baal that his father made.

What an influence a parent could have on their children. What an influence a parent has on their children. Will your children need to break away from your influence so they can serve God?

Will your children need to say, hey, mom and dad weren't that on fire? And I work with young people. I think you should know that I may be old, but most of my friends are very young.

And I always sit down with them and I say, tell me your story. Where are you from? Tell me about your parents. And often a young person will say to me, well, my parents were Christians, but they weren't faithful.

[10 : 31] My parents were Christians, but they didn't love Jesus very much. My parents were Christians, but they're against me trying to serve God. I think that verse is a little bit telling for all of us.

Why not make the changes now so your children don't have to? Why not make the changes now so your children don't have to? Won't you make a change and be really faithful to your spouse?

You know, that's serving God. No flirting, no courting, no sex outside of marriage. Faithful to your spouse. Faithful to your Lord.

That would mean faithful to church, faithful to read the Bible, faithful to pray. Faithful. See, Jehoram's a wicked guy. Jehoram's a wicked guy. Not as wicked as his parents because he took one step, but Jehoram's a wicked guy.

But he's still involved in false worship. The worship he set up, it goes really not him, but back to Jeroboam. Look at 2 Kings 3.3. Look at 2 Kings 3.3.

[11 : 32] Nevertheless, even though he was a wicked guy, but he quit doing everything. He wasn't doing everything that he did. He still hung on to the sins of Jeroboam. The son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin.

He departed not therefrom. You see, he seems to be wanting to make a break. He's taking one step, but he won't step away from the biggest thing, the most popular thing.

And that's why in a little bit, do you remember what Elisha says to him? Why don't you talk to your own preachers? You done bought preachers. You own them. You pay their salary.

They worship the way you and old Jeroboam wanted them to. They had two golden calves. One in Bethel and the other in Dan. They'd set up their own priest and set up their own form of worship.

They even made up new feasts. You know, like we have the feasts of the Passover in the Old Testament. They made up their own stuff to go with their own religion. They'd gone all the way back to Aaron's sin. He even got renegade Levites because you can always find a preacher for sale.

[12 : 35] You can always find a preacher for sale. You flash enough dollar bills in his face and he'll change doctrine in a heartbeat. That's one of the things that happens on the mission field. I have actually been told by the ABWE mystery of more than one place in the southern part of Peru where a church would have more than one sign.

And when the Seventh-day Adventist visit, they pull that one out. And when the Baptist visit, they pull that one out. And when another group visit, they pull that one out. I don't see that personally, but that's about what's going on here.

These renegade priests. Their worship fit better with Egypt and other pagan nations than it did with God. Worship of two golden calves? How much does the church want to be like the world to get people?

He not only sinned, but he helped others sin and get away from God. So here's the lesson applied. We need a man that's known for being a servant of God. He said, do we not have a prophet of the Lord we could talk to?

Be careful who you link up with because it gets you in trouble. Jehoshaphat, what are you doing with Jehoram? Didn't we have, what are we with you in a way have just a chapter ago?

[13 : 46] What's wrong with you, buddy? Who are y'all hanging around? Who are you running around? If they don't love God, you won't love God. If they walk in sin, you'll walk in sin. If they want to put the things of God down, you'll put the things of God down.

Jehoshaphat, what are you doing there, buddy? But Jehoshaphat at least knew to call on the man of God. There'll be less emergency prayer needed when you seek God before making decisions.

You should get that one. There'll be less emergency prayer needed when you seek God before you make a decision. I think this is a funny story. Oh, Jehoshaphat's over here. Jehoram says, hey, y'all want to go to war together?

Not a mention of prayer. Not a mention of seeking God. Not a mention of finding out God's will for it. But they head off. And when they get down there, they run out of water. And they're like, we don't have anything to drink. We need to do something.

And Jehoram is like, oh, God brought us here to kill us. But Jehoshaphat said, time to pray. And I'm like, well, Jehoshaphat, if you'd thought of that, in fact, first this chapter, we wouldn't even be here. Can I get an amen right there?

[14 : 44] You won't need to pray so many emergency prayers if you'll do right now. Most of us will not acknowledge our real need of God until we get in trouble. That's a story here.

Isn't it amazing? You know, you've got to get to rock bottom before you'll start looking up towards God. You've got to get knocked on your back before you'll straighten up. There was a fellow in the second church I worked in as a young kid.

I was like 22 years of age. I'm working in this church. And there was this man that was a shut-in. And a larger, not a larger, wasn't as big as us, but it was a Southern Baptist church with a lot of history.

So they had a lot of shut-ins because everybody had gotten old and they couldn't go to church. And this one shut-in, though he was not that old, he was maybe 45 years old. And so we always had to go see him.

And his hand wasn't closed. It was like that all the time. And he laid on the bed all the time. And I remember talking to him and I said, what's going on here? And he said, you know, I wouldn't look up.

[15 : 39] He said, I was strong and powerful and I didn't need God. And I did what I wanted to do, when I wanted to do it, and the way I wanted to do it. And people tried to get me to serve God. I knew what I was supposed to do. And so God hit me with a disease, put me in this bed.

I've been here already 10 years. And they say, I'll never get out. And he said, now I can only look up. How come we have to wait till we get in that situation before we would seek God? Number one, a man of God ought to be known for who he serves.

A man of God. He's a man of God. Not so big an emphasis on him. It's just he's the man that works for God. Number two, the man of God is known for being a servant.

They said, let's look for the prophet of the Lord. That was first. Now look at this. 2 Kings 3 and verse 11. If you would, the Bible said, but Jehoshaphat said, is there not here a prophet of the Lord that we may inquire of the Lord by him?

And one of the kings of Israel's servants said, here's Elisha, the son of Shaphaphat, the guy who's doing big miracles. Last chapter, the kids were making fun of him.

[16 : 45] And two she-bears came out and ate 42 of them up, you know, tore them limb from limb. Great man of God who cured the water and cured the land. That's not what they said. They said the guy that poured water on the hands of Elijah.

Look at that. I don't like that. He was a servant. He was a servant. Now don't forget who he was. He was rich enough that when he was working for his daddy, there were 11 teams of oxen before his team of oxen, 12 team of oxen.

He came out of a family with enough money to have all the people working for him and have all those oxen, have all those servants. But he was a servant and he accepted being called a servant without argument or complaint.

You know, people are calling this guy the guy who pours hands on the water. He's not saying, oh, just one moment. One ratito. Here.

Here's my business card. Not the guy who poured hands on the water. I'm Austin Gardner, Pastor of Vision Baptist Church. I'm not the guy who pours water. Excuse me. I used to be. I'm not now. That was my position.

[17 : 48] No, he's not like that. He's not pretentious or seeking recognition. He's not looking for position. He's not fighting for personal reputation. He's not trying to make a name for himself.

He's just God's man pouring water on the hands of the man of God. That's what Jesus taught us to do. Every servant we ought to ever look at, every person that we'd have in mind, he ought to not worry about his title and his recognition.

I don't think I got enough time, but I'm going to shoot at you just a little bit with this. Matthew 23, 1. Jesus is speaking to the multitude and his disciples.

So this is for the crowd. He was speaking to the crowd and the disciples. And he said, there's scribes and Pharisees that sit in Moses' seat. They're the religious leaders of our day.

And he said, I want you to not do after their works. You can do what they say, just don't do what they do. For they say and they do not.

[18 : 53] And they put heavy burdens on you in verse 4. And in verse 5, all their works they do to be seen of men. These weren't preachers. These weren't men of God. These were guys who were like, notice me.

They used to walk to the corner of the street and hold their hands up to pray so everybody know that's praying. Check it out. Check me out. I'm the man of God. Praying. Everybody notice. I'm praying. That's what they were doing.

He said in verse 6, and they love the chief seats. And they love to be greeted in the marketplace. They love people to call them teacher, teacher, rabbi, rabbi. He said, but don't let anybody call you rabbi.

Don't let anybody call you master. Because Christ is your master. And you're just brothers. Look at verse 8. You're just brothers. All ye are brethren.

Call no man your father, neither be called masters. He that's the greatest among you shall be your servant. Servant. Whose servant shall exalt himself shall be a base.

[19 : 54] And he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. So Elisha's a servant. He just pours water on the hands of the man of God. That's kind of how Jesus taught his boys, isn't it? Just pour water, boys.

Just be servants. Jesus taught us all to serve. Pastors are never lorded over God's flock. 1 Peter chapter 5, if you would, in verse 3.

I just want to remind you, because one day you'll be picking a pastor here. But when you do, he doesn't need to be hung up on his title. He doesn't need to be hung up on his position. He needs to be hung up on the person of Jesus.

He needs to be hung up on God. In 1 Peter chapter 5, in verse 3, it says, Neither is being lords over God's heritage. Don't you go jerking around God's people. I know pastors that are like, I decide what you do.

And when you do it, I'll tell you what to do. No, you're not the boss. You're just an example. Read the verse. You're just an example. Missionaries, this might help you. And God's men are to be accountable.

[20 : 53] That's my last thing here for that. God's men are to be accountable. Did you know there's nowhere in Scripture that the pastor doesn't have to answer? In 1 Corinthians 5, 19, the Bible says, Don't you dare bring an accusation against an elder, a pastor, or a leader.

Don't you do that unless you've got two or three witnesses. By the way, you know what he says everywhere else in the Bible? Don't bring it against anybody without two or three witnesses. Not just the pastor. But then he says in verse 20, And if they do sin, rebuke them before everybody.

So I'm not out of, I can't do what I want to do. I ought to be responsible and accountable to you. A man of God, a true man of God, has no right to jerk God's people around.

He's got to be a gentleman. He's got to be kind. He's got to keep his mouth shut instead of trying to be the Lord over the heritage. I get an amen there or y'all did. Number three.

I love this. Number one. Number one, he was known as a man of God. Number two, he served. And number three, he had the word of God.

[21 : 52] Look at 2 Kings 3, verse 12. I love this. This is my favorite of all of it. Just telling you. 2 Kings 3, verse 12. And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the Lord is with him.

I love that. I'm just going to say, I just love that. He said, we're looking for a man of God. Is there one? Yeah, we know where one is. He just poured water on the hands of the man of God.

That's good. That's good. He's a man of God and he pours water. But you know what he's got? He's got the word. He's got the word of God. They knew he would know what God wanted and thought.

Men quickly act without consulting God or his word. But Jehoshaphat said, we better talk to God about this. There's a famine in the land for the word of God.

In Amos chapter 8, verse 11. Behold, the days come, says the Lord. I will send a famine in the land. Not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.

[22 : 49] Nobody will know what God thinks. Nobody will know what God has to say about it. And so you ought to look for a preacher who's got the word. Say amen. You need a preacher that's going to preach what the book says and not what he thinks.

God's men should rightly divide the word of truth. You know that verse. 2 Timothy chapter 2 and verse 15. You learn the Bible. God's men should preach the word of God.

Should preach the word of God. And this is a passage of scripture you know well, but I'm afraid you don't know the context. I'd like to ask you to look it up with me. Look at 2 Timothy chapter 3, verse 12.

Because you were automatically thinking, I know where he's going. I know where he's going. He's going to go over where it says all scripture is given of God. I know that's what you were thinking. But check out the context, would you?

Verse 12. 2 Timothy 3, 12. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. That's the context. You're living for Jesus.

[23 : 45] You're going to suffer persecution. And verse 13. And evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse. Deceiving and being deceived. You know, they get in this web of being deceived.

They deceive and get deceived. Deceived and get deceived. Poor guys can't get out of it. And they're evil men. And they're trickers and seducers. And they get you to do wrong. He says in verse 14.

But don't you do that, Tim. Continue thou in the things that thou hast learned. Well, underline that in your Bible. He said, Tim, hang on to what you learned, buddy. You know what I taught you? I taught you the book.

I taught you the book. Stay in what I've taught you, son. The things that thou hast learned. And the things that you have been assured of. Knowing, it says, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.

And from a child you have known the holy scriptures. Because mama and grandmama taught you the holy scriptures. That made you wise unto salvation. Now I'm to the verse you wanted me to read. He was already planning my message for me.

[24 : 42] I know you were. You sat there going, oh, we know he's going to say. You've got to get to that. But you notice when you need the word of God so much? When evil men and seducers are getting worse and worse. I think you're living that day in case you don't know it.

Fourth thing. Man of God is known for who he serves. Man of God, in this passage. The man of God is known as a servant. The man of God is known as having the word.

And I would only want to go to church where a pastor had the word. I don't think you need a really good preacher, thank the Lord. Because that means you can put up with me. But I'll tell you what you do need. You need a guy that says, let me just show you what it says here.

And you ought to be able to go home tonight and say, yep, that's okay. Austin was all right. He's on target. He said what it said. And if I don't, you need to stop me. Because it ain't about me. It's about the book. We're just talking about the book. We're talking about the book.

But the next thing, I love this. He was courageous. He was courageous. 2 Kings 3 and verse 13. Elisha said to the king of Israel.

[25 : 42] I love this. Can you imagine this? Three kings have come to see you. Check that out. Three kings. Big shots. They walk in with the secret service.

The secret sword service. But their swords probably aren't secret. They got big ones out there hanging out. They come walking in. They got their shields and their spears and their swords. And they come in. Three kings. They find this humble little preacher in the back office.

Back here and open the door and walk in. They don't know. I got a 357 minute. But anyway, they come walking in. And they step into the office. And they say, we're here to talk to you, son. And Elisha said, I wouldn't even talk to you, buddy.

I don't know what you're doing here. I love this. You've got to read this again. Because it's so good. Verse 13. What am I to do with you? What do I got to say to you, buddy? Get you to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother.

Why don't you go see the ones your mom and your daddy hired? Why don't you go work for them? Why don't you find one of the preachers on the payroll? Why don't you call them now? You're in trouble now, huh? Now you need a real man of God. Now you need a real man of God.

[26 : 44] Them that you pay can't get you an answer. So you came to see me. I got it. And he said, I wouldn't even talk to you. Elijah wasn't impressed with the position or the power of the king.

He was angry because Jehoram was still following the sins of Jeroboam. And how can you be the man of God and not be against ones that still want to destroy worship of the God of heaven?

How can you not be mad at that guy? You say, well, Elisha wasn't very nice. He should have been politically correct. I think God didn't think so. That's why God put it in here like that. I think Elisha was saying, I stand for God.

I'm the man of God. Remember that? That's where we started this message. God's men were never to make decisions based on how much money you had. Your position, your power, your popularity, they were to do it on truth.

Leviticus 19.15 says, Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty, but in righteousness shalt you judge. You make decisions right.

[27 : 47] That's how God told his men to do it. It takes a work of grace to be courageous like this missionary. You know, you're going to step out on the mission field soon. You'll have to share the gospel and big shots are going to come and police are going to come and politicians are going to come and little people are going to come and you have no right to ever treat somebody bad because they're poor.

Skin color doesn't matter. Heart conditions, what matter? We're talking about Jesus. But you're going to need God to do something. That's what happened with Jeremiah. Jeremiah said, I'm afraid. The Lord said to Jeremiah, be not, Jeremiah 1.8, be not afraid of their faces.

I touched your mouth and I put my words in your mouth. And we got his words. We got his words. We got his words. The man of God must remember who he works for.

God. Not people. Not organizations, but the God of heaven who called him. Last one. Four minutes. Quick. 2 Kings 3.14.

The man of God's got to know how to get in touch with God. In the story so far, we've already, we've gotten, we've gotten the king, Jehoram and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom.

[28 : 54] They've gone down to attack the king of Moab. But before they got to where they could attack him, they ran out of water. They've needed to get in touch with the man of God. They've gotten in touch with the man of God. And in 2 Kings 3.14, the Bible says, Elisha said, He asked God, What am I supposed to do?

What do I tell your people? I need you to talk to me. So he prays. And in verse 16, he said, This is what the Lord says. Make the valley full of ditches.

I don't know what you say here. But in my mind, I see muscle men. I see Braveheart. I see the gladiator.

I see guys with muscles the size of my legs. I see guys with face cut up all the pieces. They're coming out through there. They're ready to go to war. They got swords and shields and spears and bows and arrows.

And Elisha says, You have to tell them to just do what God said. There ain't time for slapping swords around. Then you get a shovel out. Start digging some ditches.

[30 : 15] Make the valley full of ditches. God's people want to do it their way. But God wants you to do it his way. And they obey God. And they use the ditches to hold the water for them to deceive the Moabites.

They don't know it's going to deceive the Moabites. They have no idea. They just know God wants ditches. I don't know if you can see this. Just a patent. Okay. General patent. Eisenhower.

MacArthur. I want you to just imagine. All right, guys. We're going to dig ditches here. Lay your guns down and dig a ditch. It's the craziest thing in the world. In verse 17, God said he'd fill them up with water.

In 2 Kings 3, 17, he said, Thus saith the Lord, they'll all be filled with water. But you won't see wind. You won't see rain. But you don't worry about it. They'll be filled with water.

And then Elisha says, And boys, it ain't nothing big for God to whip the Moabites. Look at verse 17. That's beautiful, isn't it? He said, It's a light thing in the sight of God.

[31 : 12] It's a light thing in the sight of the Lord. He'll deliver the Moabites into your hand. And that caused the Moabites to walk straight into a trap. Verses 22 and 23, They looked down and saw the water and thought it was blood.

And they came down to attack. Elisha knew how to get in touch with God. That's what a man of God's got to know. You get urgent and you get in need. You need to be able to talk to him. By the way, all of us ought to be men of God in this room.

We're women of God. The man of God knows that God does hear and answer prayer and rewards the man that's seeking him. Everybody in this room, we've got to know that.

We're people of God. And thank God you don't even have to come to the preacher to get in touch with God. You've got the priest and the believer straight shot for you, buddy. Straight to the Lord. In Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 6, the Bible said, That we must, without faith it's impossible to please him.

For they that come to him must believe that he is. He is. He really is there. So you say, I got that part of that. But do you believe he rewards those who diligently seek him? The verse says you've got to believe he rewards.

[32 : 14] You know, when you pray, you've got to be like, I know God hears the answer to your prayer. I'm fixing to ask. If you fall into this fatalism and determinism where it's like it's just, whatever's going to happen is going to happen.

You haven't read Hebrews 11, 6 yet. And you can't please God. Without faith it's impossible to please him. You must believe that he is. But that's not enough.

Say, I know there's a God. Yeah, but do you know he's a rewarder of them that diligently seek him? We need to fill ourselves up with the word of God. You want direction?

Like they need a direction. We don't get direction. If you come to me, I'm not going to say to you, bring the minister, let me play a little bit. You know what I'm going to say? Let me read the book and pray a little bit.

I'm going to find it in the book. We need to fill up with the Bible. In John 14, 26, he said, the Holy Spirit will teach you all things.

[33 : 08] He'll bring all things to your remembrance. In Colossians chapter 3 and verse 16, he said, let the word of God, the word of Christ dwell in you richly. You and I ought to fill ourselves up with the word of God.

That's how we know what to do. This is not some ancient textbook. If you believe it at all, it's alive. It is powerful.

And it understands your heart. Memorize it. Study it. Think about it. And then take it out and do whatever you do. Word or deed in the name of the Lord. That's the very next verse. Context.

Last thing. You know God. You know he hears and answers prayer. You fill yourself up with the word of God. Wait on the Holy Spirit to help you remember things out of the word of God to apply to your life.

And you ask for wisdom. You ask for wisdom. In James chapter 1 and verse 8, verse 5 to start. If any of you lack wisdom, if any of you need to know something, need to figure out something, if you lack wisdom, don't understand how to deal with something, well, let him ask for God.

[34 : 12] And God gives to all men liberally. He doesn't fuss at anybody. You go to God and start talking to him. He says, I don't fuss at you. He upbraideth not. You know what that means? He don't fuss at you.

It ain't like you go, God, I'm here to find out something. Oh, get out of here. I ain't got time for you. No, he don't do that. He don't do that. Oh, you know, you can't ask me that. He doesn't do that.

He said, he upbraideth not. It shall be given him. But hey, ask in faith. Trust God. He's going to really answer. Isn't that amazing?

God wants you to talk to him. He wants to deal with you. But if you waver like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed, you ain't going to get nothing from God.

You have to really believe that he is. I really believe he's a rewarder to them that diligently seek him. You have to make up your mind. I'm going to seek God. I want God to work in my life. Because if you don't, you're unstable.

[35 : 09] Now, some of you can't get anything from God. Let's be blunt honest because you're not saved. So the first thing you get from God is salvation. You see, the Bible is clear. Without faith, it's impossible to please him.

You'll go to hell if you don't believe him. So if you're here and you're not saved, today's the day you trust Christ. Today's the day you realize that there is a God in heaven. And he does hear and he does answer prayer.

And so without faith, it's impossible to please him. For they that come to him must believe that he is. You want to get saved? You've got to know there is a God who's in heaven right now ready to save you. Loves you.

Cares about you. Paid your sin debt on the cross of Calvary and you can be saved. But you come to him, believe in him. And he rewards you. He'll give you salvation like he gave the rest of us.

We went to him knowing this. We are dirty scumbag sinners that didn't deserve any help from God. The Bible says in Romans chapter 3 and verse 10, there's not one righteous one. There's none righteous. Not a one.

[36 : 04] No, not one. Not one righteous. Not one perfect. Not one good. Not a one. The Bible says in Romans chapter 3 and verse 23, that all have sinned. Everybody's messed up. Everybody's messed up.

Nobody's right with God. Nobody measures up. And the Bible says just as clearly, that if you're a sinner, your sin will take you to hell. The wages of sin is death.

There's a first death and a second death. The second death is a lake of fire. Second death is a lake of fire. So the sin, the death, and when you get in sin, you're headed to death.

There's only one way out. The gift of God. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He loves you. He wants you to be saved. There's no reason for you to endure the torments of hell, which you will endure if you don't trust Christ.

[37 : 01] But he loves you. He cares for you, and he wants you to be saved. Tonight you could be saved. And Christian, tonight, if I were you, and I were sitting there, and I was hearing about this man of God, and I was a layman in this church, I'd be thinking, well, I'm a man of God too.

That's what happened when he made priests out of all of us. So you're a man of God. You ought to be known as a man of God. Amen. People all look at you, yep, that's one of them. Hey, one of them men of God people.

They ought to know you're a servant. That way, if you're a woman, you ought to be known as a woman of God. You don't need to be known as a man of God. So amen. You ought to know you're a servant. You know, you care about people. And you don't get thanked.

And you just pour water on the hands of the man of God. You're not even getting upset about it. And you got the word of God. You got the word of God. You know what God says about things. And you're courageous. You stand for Jesus when the stinking devil's attacking you.

When the whole world's against you, you stand and say, I trust Jesus. No matter what it costs. And then, and then you know how to get in touch with God. You can talk to him and he'll hear you and he'll answer you.

[38 : 03] If you're not saved, you can be saved. If you are saved, let's be who we were made to be. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.