

Third Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map

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1 Kings 19:19-21

June 30, 2019

Live to serve Yahweh. That's life!

- Today - face to face with a "Bible Difficulty"
 - ♦ Jesus' sharp instruction:
 - *Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.* Luke 9:60
 - *No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.* Luke 9:62
 - ♦ Yet Elisha: *Let me kiss my father and mother goodbye and then I will come with you.* And that's more than allowed. It's good.
 - ♦ What looks like a conflict is actually an insight.
- ❖ Our Faith is not about rules. It's about faith's mindset toward God.
 - Hard and fast rules and acts are the religions of human deeds
 - God's goal: restore us to find life in him - the Source of Life
 - Our problems are all First Commandment issues.
 - ♦ Expecting to find life in something other than the Living God
 - Looking up to and living totally **devoted** to another life purpose
 - **Setting our hearts on** a way of life, person, role, goal for fulfillment
 - **Relying** on family, culture, lifestyle for *the life*.
 - ♦ We were made to *fear, love, and trust in God above all things.*
 - This calls for the total mindset shift of repentance & faith.
- ❖ *Come follow Jesus* confronts or confirms our vision/dream of life.
 - A heart set on my vision of life vs. Jesus' invitation to something better
 - Funerals - devotion to family, roots, home - can become a false god
 - Returning to parents who see their children as their life, hope, future....
 - ♦ Not parents to train in the fear of the LORD, but for their happiness
 - Elisha's words and actions - faith's mindset in action and on display
 - ♦ Actively serving Yahweh in his vocation as a farmer - a full life
 - ♦ When called to be God's prophet, didn't look back, but up and forward
 - ♦ The offering of his oxen and plowing equipment to God - not returning
 - ♦ Celebrating God's call with parents, workers, and neighbors - worship
 - A strong witness of undivided devotion to Yahweh in bankrupt time
 - Well aware that the challenges Elijah faced - Elisha would face
 - A love for Yahweh, his word, and God's people
 - Conviction & mindset: there is no life outside Yahweh, even in trials
- ❖ This is a critical criteria for clergy who serve God and his gospel
 - Elisha, and those Jesus called - called for Gospel public proclamation
 - God's goal: lead people to find life in him
 - ♦ life is found in serving him as the Ultimate
 - How can you proclaim with word and actions what you don't get?
 - ♦ Not as straightjacket - but as life, liberating, enriching, the ultimate
 - ♦ Service to the Lord, equips his servants to love others and all his gifts without turning them into false gods - false sources of *life*.
 - ♦ To value people and relationships as gifts of God - not idols!
- ❖ God's role for clergy: equip God's servants to find life serving Yahweh
 - Repent of a heart that sets up people or things as a false god
 - Discover through faith in the Faith - all of life serves Yahweh
 - ♦ Every vocation - every relationship - every role - in service of Yahweh
 - It's a challenge to not set our hearts on God's gifts.
 - ♦ A Test: *Who is the first one you want to see when you get to heaven?*
 - This can be very revealing - what we treasure the most
 - Especially clear when someone says: *If my loved one is not in heaven, I can't be happy. I'm not sure I even want to be there.*
 - Your God = your source of happiness - of life
 - John reveals: *In him (Jesus/Yahweh) was life.* (John 1:4) Nowhere else.
 - ♦ Daily calling: to check what our heart is set on for fullness
 - Need to test our values - what we set our heart on = our actual God
 - Best remedied: discover God's mercy, awesomeness, rich and great promises, faithfulness, fullness in serving him in our everyday life.
 - Looking up to him and forward with all hope in him
 - In him: forgiveness, restored to be our God and we his people.
 - In him: wisdom, instruction, rescue, renewal - life to the full

This *Bible Difficulty* - not a challenge to our faith. Rather it led us to see what only God can reveal:

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