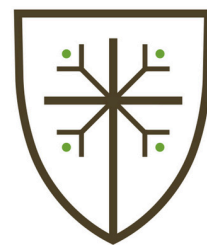




ELISHA

Renewal in the Spirit

SERMON NOTES



June 16, 2024

SERMON INFO

TITLE

“Frustrating Deliverance”

PREACHER

Rev. Brent Baker

TEXTS

2 Kings 5:1-15

Ephesians 2:4-9

Luke 4:22-28

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think of an issue you have been struggling with and have been unable to solve. Have you given it over to Jesus? Not just prayed to be delivered, but entirely surrendered yourself and the problem? Share that time with someone.
2. Brent said, “The Christian life is much more about what God has done for us, rather than what we have done for God.” Why? How does this principle work out in your own life?
3. Have you surrendered your intellect, rights, abilities, skills, and pride to Jesus? Why not? Do it now!

SERMON IN SUMMARY

Brent talked about the frustration of being a non-mechanical son following two generations of gifted fix-it men — you see a dilemma, but you just can’t solve it. For a believer, however, self-sufficiency is the harbinger of spiritual death. God sent Naaman a problem he couldn’t solve to teach him humility, to draw him to Himself. He does the same for us.

The Dilemma

Naaman’s case, a rare example in the Old Testament of someone outside of Israel who receives God’s mercy, starts with a nameless orphan Jewish girl who offers the most outrageous solution to Naaman’s leprosy. Israel would have scoffed at the prospect of an enemy receiving healing from God; but Syria, under Naaman as general, had conquered Israel, so Naaman believed they had also conquered the God of Israel. In his culture, gods and their nations were inextricably united. Thus, when Naaman hears the little girl’s story, he goes through political channels, first to the king of Syria and next to the King of Israel, skipping Elisha entirely. Naaman’s self-sufficiency dictates that first he uses his connections, prestige, and power to solve this problem, believing that the conquered god would obey the rulers of the conquered nation.

Naaman can’t see the bigger problem: he has the wrong God. The answer to his problem is not physical but metaphysical. As Jesus said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven” not “You can get up and walk.” The sin takes precedence over the miracle. When Naaman gets no satisfaction from the Kings and when he approaches Elisha at last, he comes face-to-face with a servant who won’t let him in. Naaman is failing at this task, so his servants intervene again, encouraging him to do as the prophet commanded. But Naaman has to lower his pride, leaving his wealth, power, and prestige behind, and physically lower himself into the muddy Jordan River in order to heal. The lesson for us is: we all come to the point where we must abandon our self-sufficiency in order to experience deliverance.

Deliverance — The front door of deliverance is surrender to God.

Once we realize that deliverance comes from God alone and not by anything we do, are, or have, we can “Go down.” God’s saving grace meets us at the bottom. Brent talks about his own walk-through Lupus and his frustration, anger, and grief over this illness. A friend counseled him that “God sees you, and until this point he has something to say that you could never hear. He’s waiting for you to drown, and He wants you to know he’ll meet you at the bottom.”

Deliverance comes from letting Jesus’s resources wash over us — His righteousness, His healing, His life and His death. Ephesians 2:8,9 says it all. “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.” Jesus laid down His rights, sufficiency, and pride. He went “down” so that we can follow His example.