

The Time Is Now:
Fatherhood
June 18, 2017

I **SLIDE** Return to Elijah and Elisha

A) **1 Kings 19:19-20 (NIV)** ¹⁹ So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he himself was driving the twelfth pair. Elijah went up to him and threw his cloak around him. ²⁰ Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. "Let me kiss my father and mother good-bye," he said, "and then I will come with you." "Go back," Elijah replied. "What have I done to you?"

1) **SLIDE** Suddenly

1) **Isaiah 43:19 (NIV)** ¹⁹ See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.

2) **John 17:16-18 (CJB)** ¹⁶ They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁷ Set them apart for holiness by means of the truth — your word is truth. ¹⁸ Just as you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

3) Neither Elijah nor Elisha were of the world, but God was sending them back into that world

4) We are not of this world, but He is sending us into it

5) Elijah and Elisha were sent together - a generational hand-off

6) Sudden call was met with an immediate response

II The Call

A) **SLIDE 1 Kings 19:20 (NIV)** ²⁰ Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. "Let me kiss my father and mother good-bye," he said, "and then I will come with you." "Go back," Elijah replied. "What have I done to you?"

B) Oxen

1) 12 yoke = 24 oxen **2 SLIDES**

- 2) Not all yoked to each other or to one plow
- 3) Multiple plows and Elisha was in charge
- 4) Significance?
- 5) **SLIDE** Elisha knew what it meant to be yoked
- 6) Those oxen had to be equally yoked so they would work together and not against each other
- 7) Those oxen had to be taught to follow Elisha and not their own desires
- 8) This was difficult, tiring work that would pay off in the end
- 9) God is now yoking Elisha to Elijah
- 10) **SLIDE 2 Corinthians 6:14 (NIV)** ¹⁴ Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?
- 11) **Matthew 11:29-30 (NIV)** [Jesus said,] ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."
- 12) When Elijah placed his cloak on Elisha knew that God was calling him to be yoked to Elijah
- 13) Elisha knew this would take humility, patience, obedience, endurance, faithfulness, and servanthood
- 14) God is calling Elisha, not Elijah
- C) **SLIDE** Elisha tells Elijah to wait
 - 1) **1 Kings 19:20 (NIV)** ²⁰ Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. "Let me kiss my father and mother good-bye," he said, "and then I will come with you." "Go back," Elijah replied. "What have I done to you?"
 - 2) Reminded me of another young man
 - 3) **Luke 9:59-60 (NIV)** ⁵⁹ [Jesus] said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." ⁶⁰ Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."
 - 4) Another conflict? No.

- 5) **SLIDE** The man said he would follow Jesus but only after he had taken care of his other duties
 - 6) His father was probably not dead at this time
 - 7) He said he would follow Jesus after his father died, after he had received his inheritance, and after he buried his father
 - 8) He would follow Jesus at his convenience
 - 9) Jesus repeated, "Follow me." No excuses. No waiting.
 - 10) Jesus comes first.
 - 11) Elisha's response was immediate! He simply wanted to say good-bye
 - 12) He was ready to follow God by following Elijah
- D) **SLIDE** Jesus calls us
- 1) Elijah answered, "'Go back. What have I done to you?"
 - 2) This does not mean Elijah did not care because he did
 - 3) Elijah is telling Elisha that God is calling him to service, not Elijah
 - 4) Cornerstone does not call people to be elders; Jesus does
 - 5) Cornerstone did not call Gary and Don to be Associate Pastors; Jesus did
 - 6) Cornerstone did not appoint Carol, Stephanie, Lee, Lori, and Gina to be the praise team; Jesus did
 - 7) Cornerstone did not call Gail to help with communion and the children; Jesus did
 - 8) **SLIDE** This goes for every one of us
 - 9) Now, can people appoint people? Yes
 - 10) Can people call people? No. Only Jesus can
 - 11) We said earlier that God was calling Elisha to be yoked to Elijah
 - 12) This was the beginning of a Father/Son relationship
 - 13) Elijah was going to become Elisha's spiritual father

III **SLIDE** Fatherhood

A) God's command to fathers and mothers

- 1) **Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NIV)** ⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.
- 2) God created Adam first and, so, has given fathers great responsibility and authority
- 3) Fathers are the spiritual heads of their families
- 4) This is not sexist; it is God
- 5) Raising children in the way they should go is not the responsibility of the government, the schools, psychologists, or even the church
- 6) Parents: fathers and mothers are responsible

B) **SLIDE** Spiritual Fatherhood

- 1) Another type of fatherhood: spiritual fatherhood
- 2) Elijah was going to become Elisha's spiritual father
- 3) Elijah was not to become a spiritual father to Elisha because Elisha's father was no good
- 4) Just the opposite
- 5) Elisha was raised to know and obey God
- 6) Elisha loved his father and wanted to honor him
- 7) Yet, for the task that lay ahead of him, Elisha needed a spiritual father who could train him
- 8) **2 Kings 2:12 (NIV)** ¹² Elisha saw this and cried out, "My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!" And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them apart.

- 9) **SLIDE Genesis 45:8 (NIV)** [Joseph said to his brothers,] "Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt.
- 10) **1 Corinthians 4:15 (NIV)** [Paul wrote to the church in Corinth] For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.
- 11) Note: we also have spiritual mothers: Naomi to Ruth; Elizabeth to Mary

C) Father's Day

- 1) God's timing is amazing: this message on Father's Day
- 2) Elijah knew victory when he defeated the prophets of Baal; he also knew defeat when he ran and hid in a cave
- 3) Elijah knew obedience; He also experienced disobedience
- 4) Elijah knew the power of humility; he also knew the dangers of pride
- 5) He understood the mountain tops; he understood the valleys
- 6) As Elisha's spiritual father, he would teach Elisha the old stories and what he knew to be true because he lived that truth
- 7) **SLIDE** Sign at Mercy Hospital: Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."
- 8) That is what fathers and spiritual fathers are to do.
- 9) This is what Elijah will do.
- 10) This is what the church must do