

WHO IS CALLED TO SERVICE IN THE KINGDOM

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Text: 1 Kings 19:19-21

Many say that they want to be greatly used or at least used in some way in the Kingdom of God, and yet, the **lack of action** in their lives betrays their words. However, the truth is that if we do not want to be considered by God to be an “unprofitable servant” we had better **make a decision** to be used by God no matter what the call.

Furthermore, if we are to be called into service in the Kingdom we must actively seek to be a recipient of God’s call. Simply put, we must want to be used.

- We must pray to be useful.
- We must ask God for opportunities.
- We must step out in every area of service possible.
- We must pray until we pray ourselves into the work.
- We must pray and work until we are profitable servants—and then keep working and praying.

Using the story of Elisha’s literal call to ministry as an allegory, we can draw several **truths** from this passage concerning whom God chooses to call into a work for Him.

I. HE WAS IN THE FIELD WORKING THE SOIL (v. 19).

A. Elisha was faithfully working in the natural realm.

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. (v. 19) NIV

Primarily, God calls those who are active.

B. Due to his servant-like attitude in the natural realm God called him to activity in the spiritual realm.

He was obviously the son in the household. There were others plowing with him because he was only driving the “twelveth pair” of oxen. Perhaps the others were servants.

Elisha led by example, not merely by command, even when leading servants of his own household.

In Matthew 20:20-28 Jesus puts forth the principle that in order to be great one must become the servant of all. **The scripture reads...**

Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him.

"What is it you want?" he asked. She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom." "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?"

"We can," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father."

When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

II. HE WAS ATTENTIVE TO THE CALL OF GOD.

Verse 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?" NIV (Italics added)

A. God was calling Elisha to service—not Elijah.

B. The decision to follow God was his and his alone.

“Elijah's reply indicates that he himself had not called Elisha; it was God's call. Whether Elisha would follow that call was his own decision.” (Expositor’s Bible Commentary)

No one can make our decision for us when it comes to service in the Kingdom. Leaders may offer a position or task, but we must offer ourselves up for service.

III. HE WAS RECEPTIVE TO A NEW WORK.

Verse 21 So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his attendant. NIV (Italics added)

A. Leaving his present work, family and friends was the price of following the call of God.

B. He walked into the future with no thoughts of returning to the past.

Elisha meant business for God. Taking his leave of Elijah, Elisha returned home to enjoy a farewell meal with his family and friends. The meat was cooked over Elisha's own plowing equipment. Thus he had burned his past behind him. Henceforth he would serve God. However this first meant learning more of him through Elijah. (EBC)

CONCLUSION

In 2 Kings 2:9 Elisha would later ask for a double portion of Elijah. Note that his whole life had prepared him to receive it. In the story, Elisha had to see Elijah when he was taken from this earth.

Elijah tried to separate himself from Elisha. He appealed to Elisha's natural needs and his mental reasoning in order to find a way to leave him behind. Yet, Elisha would not let Elijah out of his sight.

My point is that one does not receive that kind of a blessing on a whim. One is not live a life of that kind of determination without having made devotion a part of his life many days prior to the challenge.

Do you want to be used? Do you want to receive God's blessings? If so, the journey begins now with the decision to serve God in whatever capacity that He may call us into.