

Power Living

On Sunday, we continued our sermon series on the life & times of Elijah and Elisha by looking at a story that introduces us to Elisha and gives us insight into how he was able to live with such power.

1. Sunday's sermon began by reminding us of the creation story. "In the beginning . . . the earth was formless and void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while the Spirit of God brooded over the face of the waters." Then, patiently, step-by-step God began turning the chaos into something beautiful. Created in God's image, we are now commissioned and equipped to do the same thing in our lives – to take the chaos of each day and see if we can make something beautiful of it.
 - a. Tell us about something challenging or chaotic you encountered today – large or small. Did you make something beautiful of it or did it get the best of you?
 - b. In general, in your life right now, what's the most challenging or chaotic situation you face?
2. We looked to the story of Elisha for insight into ways we can become more powerful people – more proficient at turning the chaos of our lives into something beautiful. Read II Kings 2:1-8.
 - a. Why do you think Elijah kept trying to get away from Elisha?
 - b. Why do you think Elisha refused to leave Elijah alone?
 - c. Suppose Elisha had deferred to Elijah's request to leave him alone. How might that have changed things?
3. Three times Elijah tried to ditch Elisha, and three times Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." In this, we see the first thing that made Elisha so powerful – his deep loyalty to Elijah and their prophetic cause. From this we drew a principle: **Powerful people are deeply loyal to the people and causes they commit to, because they realize great relationships and great accomplishments almost always require great persistence.** In the Bible, this way of thinking and feeling is called "hesed" [KHEH-sed], a Hebrew word that means "a profoundly loyal love and commitment that never gives up."
 - a. Read Psalm 103:1-5. In verse 4, the phrase translated as "steadfast love" in is "hesed." This passage, and many others, use the word "hesed" to describe how God feels about each of us. What does it mean to you to know that God feels that way about you?

- b. Tell us about a time when you saw “hesed” love and commitment at work in a relationship between two people. What happened? Did their attitude of “hesed” make them more powerful?
 - c. Tell us about a time when you saw someone display “hesed” love and commitment toward a cause or task they were involved in. What happened? Did their attitude of “hesed” make them more powerful?
 - d. Tell us about someone in your life to whom you now offer “hesed” love and commitment. How does that change or affect your relationship with that one?
 - e. Tell us about a cause or task in your life that has been a recipient of your “hesed” love and commitment.
 - f. In your opinion, why is “hesed” love and commitment so important to living a powerful life?
4. Read II Kings 2:9-10. Here Elijah asks Elisha if there’s anything he can do for him before he departs. Elisha goes big! He doesn’t just ask to have the same awesome spirit at Elijah did; he asks for a spirit twice as awesome. And as the story continues, his request is granted! Here, then, is a second reason why Elisha was so powerful. **Powerful people never underestimate the power of “the ask.”**
- a. Read Matthew 7:7-8. Tell us about a time when you boldly asked God for something, and God gave you a yes.
 - b. Read James 4:1-3. Tell us about a time when you boldly asked God for something, and God said no.
 - c. Tell us about a time when you boldly asked someone for something, and they said yes.
 - d. Is there something in your life right now that you should be asking for (from God or someone else), but aren’t. What is it?
5. Read II Kings 2:11-14. Here is a third insight into why Elisha was able to live with such power. God let him see Elijah’s transition from this life to the next. As a result, Elisha was able to live with faithful abandon, confident that not even death could snuff out his eternal soul. **Powerful people live like there’s always a tomorrow – because there always is.**
- a. Do you think people who believe in eternal life are braver? Why or why not?
 - b. What’s the scariest thing you can imagine ever happening to you? Suppose that scary thing actually happened. How would that affect your eternity?