

# Life of Elijah - Part 1

by Major Ian Thomas

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's authority and submitting to Christ's authority in order to exercise valid authority.*

**Duration:** 59:39

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 5:39, 2 Peter 1:20-21

**Topics:** "Elijah"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker rebukes the theologians of his day, referencing John 5:39 where Jesus tells the scribes and Pharisees that they search the scriptures but refuse to come to Him for life. He emphasizes that the Bible comes alive when it testifies to the living Christ. The speaker also highlights that Jesus never preached from the New Testament because it did not exist during His time. Instead, the apostles and early churches relied on the Old Testament scriptures. The sermon concludes with a reference to Peter's second epistle, where he affirms the authority and reliability of the scriptures as the more sure word of prophecy.

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## Transcript

Thank you, Joe, very much. I need hardly say that I'm thrilled to bits to be back with you all to meet old friends and make a lot of new ones. Thank you for the privilege.

You know where all the big horns are going to be. I'm just the little horn. And I feel, of course, very much at home in an airline conference such as this.

I flew a kite when I was a kid in London. I know that I speak also for David Wenger, who's traveling with me, as also Gernot Kunzelmann, when I say how the three of us delight in the very rich opportunity which is ours to share this conference with. David has been traveling with me.

He assists me. You'll get to know him in the course of these few days. He was born in Pennsylvania.

He lives now in New Hampshire. His father was Swiss-born of the Swiss part of Switzerland. I mean the French French-speaking part of Switzerland.

And so he retains his Swiss nationality, which I'm sure will be a delight to these folks over here. And he can jabber away with you a bit in French, if you know that peculiar language. And I'm happy that he's able to be enriched by his fellowship with you folks.

And I know that you'll have a lot of input into his life. Gernot, many of you have come to know, and I know that he, as I do, appreciate immensely the fact that so many of you have participated in the ski conferences there in Austria. And we have appreciated the immense amount of encouragement that you've given to him and to the staff and team at Tarnhof.

So we appreciate that so much. Gernot, you will have recognized, is over in that corner. And he is thoroughly enjoying himself, renewing acquaintance with those who have participated.

Some of you may know that he is the director of our Torchbearer Center there in Austria, one of the two that we have. He is the counselor for the Canadian Olympic Ski Team, as some of you may know also, and was a member of the Austrian National Committee organizing the World Championship, the longest ski run, pretty well in the world, is at Schladming, right alongside our center there. And he was very much involved in organizing last year the World Championships.

So we thank God for the opportunity that's given to him, too, to minister to many of the sportsmen throughout the world. And he's delighted, I know, to be here with you. Thought I'd just say that so that some who may not have bumped into Gernot will at least know a little bit of his background.

I could tell you a whole lot more, but it wouldn't help. Because he came first to my home when he was about 14 years of age. And we endured that period of time, and happy at the end product.

It's been heaps of fun. So thank you again. It's a real joy to have this opportunity.

Rebuking those who were the theologians of his day, said the Lord Jesus to the scribes and the Pharisees, you may remember John 5 verse 39, you search the scriptures. It's the categorical in the original, not the imperative. If you look in the King James, it says, search the scriptures.

Point of fact, what he said, you search the scriptures, which he knew, of course, to be entirely true. This was their stocking trade. The Bible was their textbook.

But he said, they are they that testify of me. And you're making one fundamental error. You will not come to me that you might have life.

And because you search the scriptures, your academic stocking trade, your theological textbook, but refuse to come to the one of whom it testifies. You've got a Bible that doesn't make sense. A dead Bible.

Because you see, the Bible comes alive only when it testifies to the living Christ. So we are going to turn in these few days to that book to which the Lord Jesus then made reference. Comes as quite a shock to lots of folks, amazing how many folks, that the Lord Jesus never ever preached in the New Testament.

It isn't really that he didn't like it. He just didn't have it. We have to recognize that in their then connotation, all references made by the apostles in their epistles to the early churches referred only to the Old Testament.

When Peter in the first chapter of his second epistle says that no scriptures have any private interpretation. Holy men of God speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. This is the more sure word of prophecy, said he.

What scriptures was he referring to? Only the Old Testament. He didn't have a New Testament. When in the third chapter of his second epistle to Timothy, Paul speaks of all scripture being given by inspiration of

God, profitable for instruction, correction.

All in righteousness, that the man of God may be fantastically, magnificently equipped unto every good work. He's talking about the Old Testament. And our relationship to the Lord Jesus will, in point of fact, never be less than somewhat superficial, sentimental, and soulish, and a little sloppy.

Unless we see that our relationship to our Lord Jesus has its roots in eternity. That he came finally, born, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born at Bethlehem, the substance of the shadow. The one who brought to its glorious consummation everything that God had had in mind, agreed as between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the eternal ages of the past, before ever the world was.

All comprehended in the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. When the Lord Jesus, risen from the dead, encountered the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, looking sad, he said, what bothers you? And you will remember how recorded therefore is, in the 24th chapter of Luke, they began to tell their risen Lord about their dead Jesus. And he said, fools, slur of heart to believe all this, all the prophets have spoken.

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and went into his glory? Beginning at Moses, right where God began, all the way through the Pentateuch, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, the Deuteronomy. In all the prophets and the Psalms, he expounded under them the things concerning himself. When he suddenly appeared to that bunch of frightened men behind locked doors in the upper room, fearful of every footfall, who had already repudiated the testimony of the women that Jesus was alive, told them idle tales, he's dead, we buried him.

And suddenly the Lord Jesus stood in the middle, a little embarrassing. But it didn't really embarrass them. They shrieked in terror and thought he was a ghost.

What a bunch they were. A little wonder, as many of us know, the Lord Jesus, till he was risen from the dead, told them to keep their mouths shut. Because they didn't know enough to talk sense.

And if you don't know enough to talk sense, and you must talk, you'll talk nonsense. And they were pretty good at it. The Lord Jesus said, behold, my hands and my feet, that it is I myself.

Just handle me and see. You'll discover that I'm pretty substantial for a ghost. And then you'll remember that he said to them, these are the words that I spake unto you while I was yet with you.

That all things must be fulfilled that were written in the law of Moses, in the prophets, in the Psalms concerning me. So to what resource did the Lord Jesus turn that he might instruct his disciples before and after his death and resurrection? The same resource to which the apostles turned when they instructed in the early church how they would grow and become spiritual men and women of God. The only Bible that they had.

Of course, we have a bonus. We have the New Testament, which we may be profoundly thankful, as divinely inspired, of course, as the old. But remember, the New Testament simply tells us that the Lord Jesus did what the Old Testament said he would.

That's all. We're going to turn to the Old Testament, rich in spiritual instruction, and calculated at all times to focus your attention and mine upon the one of whom these scriptures testify. Our Lord Jesus, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things, and to whom alone be glory.

And that, of course, was the good reason that Paul gave by virtue of which you and I should present our bodies now to him, as he once presented his body to the Father. Our reasonable service, not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds, by adopting that disposition toward the Lord Jesus that he relentlessly for 33 years adopted towards his Father. Without my Father, I can do nothing.

So that every new day that dawns for you and for me might be the glorious adventure of proving experientially for ourselves what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God. Would you turn to the first book of Kings, and the 17th chapter, and a man here strides onto the pages of biblical history introduced by nothing more than a conjunction. And that isn't even polite in normal society.

His name is Elijah, one of the most fascinating characters of whom we read very little comparatively in the scriptures. You could probably count on less than the fingers and thumbs of two hands how many chapters in the Bible tell us anything about Elijah. And in some instances, as in the epistle of James, only one verse.

And yet there's hardly anybody, anyway, who doesn't know about Elijah. The first verse of the 17th chapter, the first book of Kings, and Elijah, the Tishbi. That's how he's introduced.

A conjunction. Well, a conjunction normally links together different parts of the same conversation. And if you break into somebody else's conversation with a few other folks, and they say, and John, you might, being unaware of what previously I have discussed, you might say, who's John? John who? And we might look into God's face as he introduces us in this way to this particular individual, Elijah, we say, and who's he? Well, the answer is very simple.

God's friend. One of God's many friends. And the lovely thing you see is this, that God doesn't have to ask your permission or mine as to the kind of friends he has.

Some of us imagine that he first needs to do that, you know, get our approval. But we shall discover in the unfolding of this story that he has all kinds of friends in all kinds of places. And we shall learn how to meet them, how to become one and meet others.

You see God who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past and to the fathers by the prophets, Old Testament, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son. And when the Lord Jesus was born, conceded the Holy ghost to walk this earth and the sinlessness of his humanity. And then upon the cross be made sin for you.

And for me, that we might be reconciled to a Holy God. And he risen from the dead come to re-inhabit our humanity in part afresh to us that life that was lost in Adam, in Christ, when he was born, that was the biggest thing God ever said. But it was the consummation.

It was the culmination of a whole lot that God had been saying to mankind all down through history. And Elijah, you see, was simply part of that conversation. And Elijah, Elijah the Tishbite, we don't know whether he was a Southern Baptist, a Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, or a Plymouth brother, just the Tishbite.

For we know he might've been a flea bite. He suddenly appears like a comet coming out of space. God's friend, Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead said unto Ahab, as the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand, there shall not be dune or rain these years, but according to my word.

And that being your first introduction to this particular gentleman, Elijah, you might think, man, that's somewhat egotistic. What a bombast. I mean, he comes elbowing his way in like a storm.

Now don't misunderstand him. He's long since been God's friend. He's part of God's conversation, part of what God has been saying and continue to say until it's found, it found its glorious fulfillment in the birth of that little baby at Bethlehem.

You see what Elijah was saying in so many words was this, the God of Israel is alive and he's my God before whom I stand. I'm fully cognizant that he is the observer of everything I do. And he is the silent listener of everything I say.

And it is my privilege to make incarnate part of what he has to tell you. There shall not be dune or rain these years, but according to my word. Now he didn't for one moment seek to indicate that the authority exercised derived from himself.

His authority derived from his total submission to God's authority. That's the only kind of authority that you and I can ever exercise. And we need to learn that right at the very outset.

When a man speaks like this, thus saith the Lord, he's got to know the God in whose name he speaks. He's got to be sure of his territory. There are a lot of people saying thus saith the Lord, but they haven't a clue to the source from which the authority derives safe from themselves.

And they have nothing worth saying. The authority that you and I exercise is that authority exclusively that derives from our submission to God's authority. Normally, in areas of authority, we seek, first of all, to find out who a person is or who he thinks he is and how much he knows.

Normally, we credit authority on the basis of who a man is, the office that he holds, the auspice on which he operates and what he knows. And those of us who travel around a whole lot, as some of us do, are constantly confronted by that quest on the part of those who may be strangers to us and we strangers to them. In their casual, courteous conversation, they want to discover who you are or under whose auspice you operate.

Where do you derive, you see, the authority that you want to exercise? They'll then want to know how much you know, where you got your schooling, what is your background, how much experience you've got, all that's reasonably valid in the world in which we live. But that isn't the ultimate authority that you and I exercise as children of the living God, who created man that he might have authority over all the works of his hands, but an authority that would derive exclusively from his submission to God's authority. And that's where man fell.

When Satan came, you can be your own God, master in your own house and king in your own kingdom. You can be a man without God. That's where things went wrong.

When man tried to conquer space on the basis of his own humanistic know-how, dollar expenditure and animal guts that produces a situation in the world in which we are all too acutely aware the threshold of nuclear holocaust. That's man exercising an authority that derives from other than his total submission to God's authority. If ever there was a man that walked this earth who had the right to exercise authority on the basis of who he was, who would you say that man was? Jesus Christ, he just happened to be God.

The God who created the universes and threw them into space and the stars into the far corners of the night. The one who at this very moment, while I address you, is upholding all things by the word of his power. If ever there was a man that walked this earth who had the right to exercise authority on the basis of what he knew, who was that? The Lord Jesus.

For he was the logos in the beginning, the word who was with God, was God and by whom all things were made and without whom was not anything made that was made in whom alone was that light, which was the light of men. And that word was made flesh and walked this earth. Clothed with the humanity that the father provided for him in the borrowed womb of that virgin girl.

And there wasn't anything upon which his eye fell that he himself didn't think up. In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge. Maybe you've never thought about it, but I mean, if you were the creator God who thought up electricity, wouldn't you have felt, you know, a little undersold to go to bed by candlelight? I mean, had you been God who thought up all the laws of aerodynamics, would you have been satisfied to go around the back of a donkey? I mean, had you been he, God, could you have kept your mouth shut about all the things that he knew were latent that man hadn't yet discovered, but that he created? If ever a man had the right on the base of who he was and what he knew to exercise authority, that man was Jesus Christ.

But he never did. He humbled himself. He emptied himself.

He made himself of no reputation. He was born a human being. And deliberately chose in that role to submit himself to that authority from which alone he exercised his own.

Keep the place there in the first book of Kings and 17, but turn to the Gospel of John and chapter 10. And we'll need to make many, many, many forays into other parts of the word of God in order to discover the true content of the passages that we will be exploring there in the first book of Kings and elsewhere. So keep your fingers licked.

And a goodly supply of saliva in reserve. In the 37th verse of the 10th chapter of John, if I do not the works of my father, in other words, said the Lord Jesus, if I'm not being told by my father what to do and doing what I am told, if my father is not in what I do incarnate in what I'm doing, if by what I say my father is not incarnate in what I'm saying, if it's other than possible for you to look at me and see him, don't believe me. Don't believe me.

No matter, even though what I tell you is true, you have absolutely no justification for believing me. That's fantastic. That's frightening.

If I do not the works of my father, believe me, not the only thing that validates that validates the truth of what I'm saying is what I am, what I do, and what I say in terms of my relationship to the one who sent me, my father. What then is the authority that you and I exercise if it is to be valid? Only that which derives from our submission in totality to the authority of Jesus Christ. As the one who having reconciled us to a holy God to restore us to that relationship that allows us to be functional, are once more by the gift to us of the Holy Spirit in his co-equality in deity with the triune Godhead and through whom father and son indwell our redeemed humanity, he Christ as king back in his kingdom calls the shots.

Then we can speak. Thus said the Lord. And I'm not talking about being in a pulpit.

I'm talking about dad and mom in the home. The only authority spiritually that you will successfully ever exercise among your own children is that which derives from your total submission that is transparently obvious to them, your submission to Christ. When they see that reality in your relationship to Jesus Christ, you will induce a reality in terms of their relationship to you.

You'll be exercising an authority. That's why of course to appoint anybody to exercise authority within the family of God other than one who has already exercised spiritual authority within his own family circle is forbidden. If a man can't exercise headship in his own home by virtue of his relationship to the headship of Christ, then he cannot exercise any authority within the company of God's people.

We've long since thrown that out of the window and that's why there's chaos in our evangelical constituencies. And the authority of the church has been minimized by the fact that those who operate it have no authority themselves on God's terms of reference. That's frightening.

I can't turn to my kid and say, you've got to believe it. I'm your dad. He doesn't have to believe anything unless he can see what I say is behaving.

I can't get into a pulpit and say I've got my theological degrees and I know what you don't. You've got to believe I said he has absolutely right, even though what he may say is true. Unless it's behaving.

The person in his congregation will have to leave that church, go somewhere else and hear from the lips of somebody else something that he has the right to believe. Authority. But if I do, said the Lord Jesus, if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works.

And he said I recognize your dilemma because some of you knew me as a helpless child being nursed by my mother In Nazareth, you saw me as a little kid romping in the street Playing with my chums learning my trade as an apprentice at the bench I realize your problem In identifying who I am Then what's the quality of my life what I do what I say and what I am and recognize what a relationship If I do though you believe not me believe the works that you may know and believe That the father is in me And I am in him That a relationship exists between myself as man on earth and my father as God in heaven that allows him my father as God to be Incarnate in terms of what I am as man So that when you listen to me you hear him When you look at me, you see my father When you've discovered what I am like, you know what God is like That's authority But it's an authority that gave you and God gave to you and to me to exercise For remember the Lord Jesus in the sinlessness of his humanity was simply demonstrating the innocence of a pre-fallen Adam Discharging in his role as man though the creator That office which you and I initially were created But remember There That man was so engineered that the presence of the creator within the creature is indispensable to his humanity That man is distinguished in normality from the animal kingdom by a quality of life that has no possible explanation But God himself he resident in the man That's fundamental to our understanding Of our humanity and fundamental to our understanding of the gospel Because the good news of the gospel was never designed to get men out of hell in the heaven But supremely as i've told many of you on past occasions to get God out of heaven into men So that he can be who he is God in action Authority derives from relationship In other words, it's the word of God behaving It's truth behaving And when the word of God truth behaves God behaves And God behaving is righteousness.

There is no source of righteousness other than God himself That's why the moral law that God gave to Moses on mount sinai Can describe the quality of righteousness that derives from the life of God But in itself it cannot restore to man the life of God from which righteousness derives And that's why the law in

itself will never give to you and to me the moral competence to satisfy its perfect demands The law of the Lord itself is perfect But all it can do is convert the soul That is to say demonstrate to you and to me in that it stops our mouths exposes our sin proves us guilty That we don't have what it takes to satisfy the demands of a holy God Made upon a man who was designed to reflect God's image Takes more than the moral law To make a man of God It takes God himself in the man To

fulfill the moral law And the restoration of the life of God to the soul of man Which is indispensable to the likeness of God in the character of man is what the bible calls new birth spiritual regeneration The renewing of the holy ghost to the human spirit so that from within the human spirit He may gain access to the human soul And teach the mind so control the emotions and directs the will that once more God from within the man can become the origin of his own image And the source of his own activity and the dynamic of his own demands And at all times and without exception the cause of his God's own effect So that if you and I were in normality others looking at us would see the son in us as others then looking at him saw the father in the son There's the sublime simplicity of it And

you see only as a shadow of that good thing that was to come to be gloriously Demonstrating the person of God's incarnate son We have a man stepping onto the pages of biblical history and speaking with a divine authority, but saith the lord Unashamed and unafraid and the word of the lord verse 2 of chapter 17 back in the first book of kings The word of the lord came on him saying get thee hence in other words go Turn the east to it and hide thyself by the brook cherith that is before jordan And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook And I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there so verse five He went and did According unto the word of the lord He went and did According to the word of the lord in other words in terms of his humanity the word of god behaved truth behaving He

made his humanity available for god to accomplish some divine end That's the very heart of the christian life As you and I now allow the lord jesus to be incarnate in us as once he allowed the father to be incarnate in him So that no matter what vocation in which we may be engaged under whatever circumstance We may find ourselves at any given time or context A threat problem or opportunity We are so related to jesus christ that we allow him So to govern our behavior that others by whatever we may be doing the mother at the kitchen sink There is a demonstration of deity in terms of our humanity It's also gloriously simple Once the relationship has been Restored In the simplest possible way to explain it dad may say to his boy go and mow the yard Well, if he is typical of any youngster he

could think of 50 other better ways of occupying his time But if there's a relationship between that boy and his dad whereby out of a sense of duty Or affection better still or at least submission to authority Without complaint he does as he's told he gets the mower out and he mows the yard All right All right in the true sense of the term who is actually behaving Well the father Vicariously in the humanity of the son, you see it wasn't the son's idea.

He he had plenty of other ideas Which you would have chosen every time given liberty of action over the idea that was first Aroused within his father's mind But his father you see communicate what was in his mind to the son and allowed the son by virtue of a relationship To translate what was in the father's mind into action.

He mows the yard So it's really dad mowing the yard But in the most convenient way possible Now if you want to know what the christian life is there it is it's god behaving God But he's given to you and to me the incredible fantastic privilege of being that humanity on earth in which he god behaves The word was made

flesh and dwelt among us the lord Jesus though the creator played the role of creature though the god who created man was willing to be the kind of man whom he As god created without my father I can do nothing the father who lives in me Who inhabits my humanity and to whom I make myself gladly available the father who lives in me He does the work even the words that I speak unto I speak not of myself They don't have their origin in me. I give utterance with my lips to what my father wants to make articulate fantastic So god said go and he went And there's a very simple principle that runs all the way through the word of god And it is this that if you're sent and went you're poor And that's all you need to know If you're sent and when you're put so long as you know who sent you and if it's god who sent you it's god Who put you and if it's god who put you nothing can frighten you? No matter what the circumstance some you may remember in the fifth chapter of the book of the acts when The apostles were thrown into jail the angel of the lord Opened the jail and set them free and he said go stand speak Unto the people all the words of this life Not the life to come this life that life for which man was made the life of god Go and tell them in other words said the angel tell them and come alive tell them that they can enjoy that Redemptive transaction will allow a risen christ to come and invade their humanity And by his presence in life death will be abolished and they can be raised from the dead Go and tell them all the words of this life that from the moment they enter into this redemptive transaction with jesus christ in a spiritually Regenerate by the coming of the holy ghost that adds them as new members to his body so that he can behave They are alive in god. Go and tell them Go said he go Stand and speak Go where you're sent stay where you're put and give what you got And nothing's changed Nothing's changed go said god to elijah and he went Sent sent and when he was put So, how do you become a friend of god Well, it's a state of heart It's spelled out make a note of this in the margin And maybe look it up later though.

It's a beautiful beautiful verse that you ought to have heavily underlined It's the second book of chronicles and the ninth chapter in the 16th verse two chronicles chapter 9 verse 16 The eyes of the lord Run to and fro Throughout the whole earth. It'd be good Lick your finger and find it quickly because it's much better to see it It's only a page or two farther on second book of chronicles Did I say the ninth chapter It was the 16th chapter And the ninth verse I just put it that way around to make more difficult for you Okay It's the second book of chronicles the 16th chapter in the ninth verse The eyes of the lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth. And what do you think they're looking for a big pot-bellied? oil tycoon No, he isn't interested the cattle on a thousand hills are his and the silver and the gold and all the oil that was ever put underground So that doesn't impress him too much a man with a five-inch chin Dominating personality or scintillating wit A man who's gone to university so many years that he's got degrees like a daisy chain hanging around his neck No The eyes of the lord aren't looking for anything like that They're simply looking for a perfect heart And don't misunderstand what he's saying.

That mean doesn't mean a perfect man woman boy or girl. It's simply a perfect heart Perfect heart That disposition that has recognized that man is utterly dependent upon god and god is never ever dependent upon man That he is always indispensable to us and we are never ever indispensable to him the perfect heart That disposition that doesn't try to be man-sized for god, but is prepared in all due humility to let god be god-sized in the man That's the perfect heart It's a disposition called faith that lets god do it that's all that's what it says The eyes of the lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in the behalf of them Whose heart is perfect toward him God showing himself strong on the behalf of some boy go man a woman whose disposition is such that they will let him do it Then he become one of god's friends somebody who'll let god do him let god behave How do you meet god's friends That's how you become a friend of god you're sent and you're when And you're put Not very good grammar excellent theology Well, it's a very simple way if you wonder how to meet god's friends Be sent and win And

wherever you're put you'll meet god's friends. It's incredible It doesn't matter where you go timbuktu you'll meet god's friends so long as you're there because you're put All right, keep the place then one king 17 and turn to the gospel of mark mark's gospel And the 11th chapter When they came nigh to jerusalem under beth phage and bethany at the mound of olives the lord jesus sendeth forth two of his disciples And notice the little word that the lord jesus uses here as he does again and again And has always all through time and will continue so to do until he comes and for all we know into eternity the word is go go Let me say this in parenthesis.

Nobody is called into the ministry Nobody is called to the mission field. Nobody is called to the pulpit We're called to christ The lord jesus said come unto whom me When the lord jesus stood up on the great day of the priest and said if any man thirst let him come Who do you say we were to come to? me Come unto me he said and drink That is the command that the lord jesus gives to those who are to come to him when you say come That's one thing But when you say go there's another The lord jesus said come to me But then he says once you've come to him Go Then you're sent You see you're not called to the ministry. You're sent into the ministry You're not called to the mission you're sent to the missionary god help you if you went because you were called by the need Then you're on your own You come to christ and he disposes of you as he the head of the body thinks fit and he says go When the lord jesus said that we should evangelize the world of our generation What do you say go into all the world and preach? He didn't say come He said come to me.

I'll send you where I put you All too often we respond to the call to go to the mission the call to go into the ministry Was sent how shall they Believe on him of whom they have not heard. How shall they hear without a preacher? How shall they go except they be? sent sent If a man says i've been called to this that he's suspect You have immediately to investigate who called him But if a man says I came to the lord jesus and placed myself totally at his disposal and he Sent me that's different That's the only place where you're safe in the place where he Sent you if you went and you put Said the lord jesus to these two of his disciples go Your way into the village over against you and as soon as you be entered into it, you will find a donkey A colt tied whereon never man sat And said the lord jesus just untie him and bring him along Well, can you imagine how these two disciples felt He said what do you mean? You you mean we just go down to the village and we see the first donkey that's around the place and we untie it And bring it to you He's well in in jail You you just can't come go into a village and just undo the first donkey that you've seen walk off with Did you ever think about that I mean i might say to you, you know, I I really need transportation this afternoon Do you mind going down to them to the first cadillac you see? Would you? Just jump on board and bring it along Would you cooperate? You'd soon be part of the prison ministry So, uh The lord jesus Reading their thoughts as he always did Said if any man say to you why do you do this? Just say the lord hath needed him And straightway he will send him hither. Well, that was almost as astounding As though I might say to you go down to denver and pick up a cadillac and if anybody, you know protest just say well The lord needs him Do you think that would uh impress them If you would just say the lord needs the cadillac and i'm going off with it But at least they did a smart thing Even though they had their misgivings their doubts It says in verse four They win And when you're sent and wait what happens you put The They went their way and they found the donkey tied by the door without in a place where two ways met And they began to untie the donkey and they'd hardly begun to untie the donkey Then certain of them that stood thence.

What are you doing with that donkey? And they all went, you know, why does she Here we go, this is just what we told him we're going to end in jail anyway You know the christian life is fantastically exciting In or

out of jail And the apostles more often in than out I remind you that Certain of them that stood there said unto them what do ye loosing the car so they went through the formula They said even if jesus had commanded they said The lord needs the donkey And to their amazement They let them go They let them go And when they came back with the donkey, they said we didn't know you had friends down the village Although jesus said of course I have friends everywhere. Do I have to tell you about all my friends? Do I have to ask your permission? How do you meet god's friends you're sent and when donkey and all And you'll meet god's friends You may have certain misgivings you may wonder how it's going to work out that's not your business That's not your problem. No, man There's a marvelous place to be in where you're put Because then you know god's in charge You make a fool of yourself.

You're not sin And when Moses tried that he went out you remember To bring succor to his people. It was motivated by deep compassion concern for his own people But within 24 hours, he'd made a fool of himself and chased into oblivion The back side of the desert In horror as we shall discuss later Because it's part of the story 40 years later God sends him And he finds himself put With a whole bunch of cry babies around his neck Right on the edge of the river, you know the red sea Certain death in front And the sound of the egyptian armies chasing them behind It was certain death in all directions death in front death behind And a whole bunch of people saying you brought us here to destroy us But you see he was in An invulnerable position because he was sent and went and put And when you're in that position, you can look up in god's face and say death in front death behind This place stinks But that's not my problem I did exactly as you told me I was sent went and now i'm put and it's your baby Isn't that great? This is the christian life. This is more than conquering And of course there was panic in heaven Oh God said I never thought it would work out that way But Aren't we childish and God said quick march And as soon as moses put his foot in the red sea god opened it which the egyptians are saying to do were drowned to the last man and moses discovered That when you're in the place where god puts you the problem in front is designed to swallow up the problem behind.

Isn't that great? Then you're more than conqueror Through him that loved us we reign in life by one christ jesus Well Look at uh, mark chapter 14 And the 12th verse first day of unleavened bread when they killed the passover his disciples said to him, you know, we've left things a bit late Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover? I mean, it's almost honest we haven't even made any reservations Holiday inn or howard johnson Even if you do get confused between the one and the other And so the lord jesus verse 13 said to two of his disciples Very simple little word go Go ye into the city and there shall you meet a man bearing a pitcher of water follow him And Wheresoever he shall go in say to the good man of that house the master's there Where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

Now first of all note the instructions given He said go to these two and you'll see a man with a pitcher on his head. Follow him So there must have been something rather unusual about a man with a pitcher on his head And of course it was because they were that you know, that that was a good old day Men just didn't wear I mean Pictures on their heads that was the woman's job I mean she did all the real work I mean if there was only one donkey in a big family Well, it was the man who rode the donkey and the wife came along with the kids and the baggage I mean they were the days None of this women's lib stuff and to see a man with a pitch on the head must have been unusual Otherwise, of course, I might say to you go downtown when you see a man wearing a pair of shoes follow him Well, that would confuse you You'd probably have to move in about 12 directions all at one But the lord jesus knew perfectly well that this was something which they would not normally see And when they got downtown there you are But uh, have

you got friends downtown Yes They may well have said to the lord jesus what he said yes But you didn't tell her No, I don't have to tell you about all my friends not until they need it Just follow that man And wherever he goes Then address yourself to the goodman the owner of that house and say where is the guest chamber?

Well, I shall eat the passer with my disciples And he will show you a large upper room furnished and prepared bear mate ready For all of us And although a little bewildered and mystified The disciples did a very smart thing Which is the secret? of being more than conquerors reigning in life Falling on your feet instead of on your head In verse 16 his disciples went They went forth and came into the city and found as he had said unto them because when you're sent and went you're put When you're put then, you know if god put you You'll see god at work And they made ready the passer how do you meet god's friend Be told what to do and do as you're told And wherever you go, you'll meet god's friends who'll be there precisely at the right moment at the right time in the right place To provide your needs or you to provide theirs makes life incredibly fulfilling But somebody has to be boss Because you see the economy is such that you and I could never organize it Only god a god who knows the end from the beginning And the excitement of the christian life is to be able to look back having yielded obedience And see the mosaic of god's divine planet Everything fitting together.

That's the miracle of the christian life The christian life is essentially miracle miraculous because the lord jesus said without me you can do nothing And he happens to be god and a miracle is that which can only be explained by god But don't confuse the miraculous with the sensational or the spectacular Human beings with enough know-how business acumen and showmanship can produce both sensational and spectacular even in the christian Constituencies you can put on the big thing And all you need In order to explain it is human ingenuity a lot of know-how dollar expenditure But the miraculous is something which is seldom sensational or spectacular But it's impossible apart from god So god who allowed you go so he went and did And he met god's friends in the sixth verse of the 17th chapter the first book of kings The ravens Brought him bread and fish in the morning and bread and Flesh, I beg your pardon in the evening and he drank of the brook God's friends Who were doing what they were told? They were sent and when did you notice in? Verse four it shall be that thou shall drink of the brook and I have what's the word? Command it I've commanded it The ravens to feed thee there.

They're his friends So don't be surprised at the kind of friends god had Because you see god's friends are told what to do and they do as they are Told supposing those ravens hadn't been god's friends Elijah would have been hungry He wouldn't have had breakfast and he wouldn't have had dinner But you see they were god's friends And the ravens did exactly as god told them And he drank of the brook But it came to pass after a while that the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land And it looked as though god's logistics had gone wrong But the word of the lord came unto him saying arise get thee to zarephath go keep moving Which belongeth to sidon and there dwell behold I have commanded A widow woman there to sustain me She's under instructions And elijah verse 10 went You see it's relentless in its consistency throughout the whole of scripture if you want to be in the place where god puts you Be told what to do and do as you're told Just as simple as that He went. Well, can you imagine the thoughts that were going through his mind? God had told a widow that she was to sustain him. He had visions, you know of a great big place like gleniery Hmm a widowed woman been left with a lot of money and a beautiful suite and servants for the guests And he wondered, you know how it would look and what she would look like and on the way looking for this palatial mansion When he came to the gate of the city behold a widow woman was there gathering stings And he called her and said lady fetch me.

I pray thee little water. I'm On my way to my destination and i'm thirsty That I may drink and as she was going to fetch it he said and by the way, please bring me I pray thee a morsel of bread in thine hand And the woman said as the lord thy god liveth. I have not a cake But a handful of meal in a barrel And a little oil in a cruise And behold i'm gathering two sticks That I may go in and dress it for me and my son That we may eat it And die God's logistics This is how god provides for his own a bunch of birds A dried up brook And a bankrupt widow on the point of death exciting wouldn't you say Isn't this so alien from the way we handle things We've got to have everything heavily underwritten all kinds of influential names on our letterhead Make absolutely certain that thing won't collapse How does god provide for his own when they're told what to do and do as they're told bunch of birds dried up brook and a bankrupt widow Any complaints And elijah said unto her in this last two moments then we gotta quit verse 13 elijah said unto her and Don't please misunderstand what he has to say to her.

Fear not go said he and do as thou has said but but Make me thereof a little cake first and bring it unto me what an amazing thing to say. Here's a woman At her extremity Nothing more than a handful of meal in a barrel just a little oil in a cruise She's just about to bake her last piece of bread feed herself and her little boy and then die And elijah strides into the situation says me first Me first What do you say that's arrogance if ever there was to take the little that a woman's got who's on the point of death and Say me first Is that what he's saying? Is that really what he was saying? What did god tell elijah In the ninth verse behold, I have what's the word come on Commanded a widow woman there to sustain Me And elijah was fully cognizant of the fact that only by virtue of her obedience to the commands that god gave her Had she any future? And when you see elijah said me first what he was saying is this remember what god told you god first God first you do as you're told And god will take care of the consequences And she was smart too verse 15 she went and did according to the saying of elijah And she and he and her house Did eat many days And the barrel of meal wasted not neither did the cruise of oil fail According to the word of the lord which he spake by elijah So, what do we learn at the very outset that if you do as you're told if you're told what to do and do as you're told even the birds Will feed you anything else you really need to know Now let's pray We're so grateful dear lord for your word. We're thankful for the holy spirit.

It's author For he alone can illumine our understanding and Through the word give us that revelation of truth that sets men free So, thank you for this conversation in which you have allowed us to break in In all that timelessly you have had to say is god to man And grant that we may not just listen but hear What god has to say in your own dear and precious name Amen

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