

The Man of God

by Robert Constable

The sermon emphasizes understanding our identity as holy men of God and the importance of serving Christ with purpose and influence in the world.

Duration: 46:04

Scripture: 2 Kings 4:8

Topics: "Man Of God", "Identity in Christ", "Serving God"

Description

Robert Constable emphasizes the identity and responsibility of being a 'man of God,' urging the congregation to recognize their status as holy and set apart for God's service. He discusses the importance of understanding who we are in Christ, our purpose in life, and the influence we can have as representatives of God. Constable encourages believers to embrace their identity as saints and to serve Christ with conviction, drawing parallels from biblical figures like Moses and Jeremiah who questioned their own identities. He highlights that our lives can have lasting impacts, even beyond our time on earth, if we live for God. Ultimately, he calls for a recognition of our calling and the need to serve Christ as Lord.

Transcript

I thought it might be helpful for us this morning if we shared together something of what the Word of God has to say about the man of God. So will you turn with me to 2 Kings chapter 4. 2 Kings chapter 4, beginning with verse 8. And it fell on the day that Elisha passed to Shunam, where was a great woman. And she constrained him to regret.

And so it was that as often as he passed by, he turned in to her to regret. And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God which passeth us by continually. I perceive that this is a holy man of God.

We are living in a time when people are trying to find their own identity. There was an article in the paper yesterday, as a matter of fact, about some actress who was on a search looking for her own identity. And when Meg and I were in India on one occasion, we found scores of young Americans that were wandering around like lost sheep in India.

And when we asked what they were doing there, we were told that they were looking for themselves. They were looking for their own identity. And I think we live in a time when people are asking the question, who am I anyway? And I would like for us to consider that question.

I would like also for us to go on from there and think about our influence and what we are here for. And then spend a little while on the subject Christ as Lord. Whom do I serve? Who am I? Why am I here? Whom do I serve? Each of these areas I would like for us to think about.

Now the first thing that has to do with the current search for identity. Who am I? I would like to ask this congregation, how many holy men of God there are in the group? Would you put your hands up please? Well now you see I'm somewhat shocked right at the beginning of this talk. Because obviously in this group we have a need for finding out who we are.

So we need a definition of terms I'm sure. Now the word holy. The word holy means somebody who is sanctified or something that is sanctified.

That is to say set apart. And especially set apart for God's use. That's what the word holy means.

In the New Testament, holy people, that is set apart people, are addressed as saints. The apostle Paul in the opening verses of his letter to the Corinthians speaks of them as saints. Now he doesn't speak of them as saintly.

But he speaks of them as saints. They were anything but saintly. But they were saints.

So now we are satisfied are we as to the definition of the word holy? And as you are thinking about what I'm saying, as you apply this to yourself, would you say that you are a saint? That you are one that has been set apart by God from the rest of mankind? I didn't ask you if you were saintly. I asked you if you recognized the fact that you are saints. All right.

Now, men. Holy men. Now we don't, any of us, have any.

We are pressed in on every side by the fact that we are human. Responsible human beings. Now the word men in the word of God is often used in a generic sense.

We're not just talking about the males. We're talking about responsible adults. And I think everybody in this room would immediately put his hand up if I said how many responsible adults are there in the room? Who would have any problem with that? So holy men of God.

Is this what makes the problem? But if you are a saint, if you are one of those people who have been chosen of God and called out from amongst mankind generally, and set apart for the service of God, and you are a responsible adult, and you have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit of God to indwell your personality, you have a relationship with God. You share his life. Therefore you are of God.

Is there anybody in this room who would disclaim that? That would say, oh no, I don't share his life. I'm not involved with God. I think most of the people in this room would immediately claim that.

So that as a matter of fact, you would not raise your hand. How many holy men of God? Everyone here who put his trust in the Lord Jesus is a holy man of God. And we need to know this.

We need to recognize this. I think one of the great needs of our generation is for Christians to stand up and be counted and to recognize what they are in this world. It seems to be some sort of a false humility that leads people to crawl back within themselves when the suggestion is made that they are saints or that they are holy men of God.

But we need to claim this. The Lord Jesus said of the Holy Spirit of God, He shall be in you. And the Apostle Paul in writing to his epistle to the Romans made it very clear when he said, If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of this.

I'm not going to ask you to raise your hands again. But I'm going to ask you to answer to yourself. Am I a holy man of God? And I do not see how anybody in this room who has put his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior can detract this.

Can back away from this. And so I am talking to a congregation of holy men of God. And this is an amazing... But it is a reality.

And I think the reason why we are afraid of it is that it carries with it an implied responsibility. So we are very much afraid that is too much for us. And of course, this is exactly what God intended.

Now you may not feel like a holy man of God. But what have your feelings got to do with it? The things we have been dealing with here with what the Word of God and our sense of inadequacy and our inability... How many men of God are there in the congregation? Because of this sense of inadequacy. And that is quite proper that you have that sense of inadequacy.

But rather than leading you to deny the fact and just losing your true responsibility... We need to know who we are. We need to come to a true sense of who we are. And of our true identity.

Now when God looks at us, He sees us as we truly are. And He calls us by name. But we must recognize who we are if we are to respond properly to God.

If we don't know what our name is, pay attention to what our name is. It is only as we are very sensitive to our own identity that we are going to respond. And to respond obediently.

And to respond with blessing to others. Now I want to look at some people in the Word of God with you that have this same problem. Let's turn to Exodus chapter 3. And let's begin our reading again in verse 9. God is speaking, and He is speaking.

And Moses... Now therefore, behold the cross, so seeing the oppression, come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh and Moses said unto him, Who am I? That I should go unto Pharaoh and that I should bring forth the children of Israel. Who am I? Moses speaking of his own identity. Who am I? That I should do this thing.

And with God said, Certainly I will be with thee, and this shall be a token unto thee. God didn't answer his questions. This is who Moses... Moses was a man who had served for 40 years.

He had been a shepherd at the backside. I will be with thee. And when you have... And it was in the strength of this word God is prepared and wants to give a demonstration.

The being chosen of God. We are the possessors of the hope. All of that... All that the Holy Spirit can do, He can do through us.

That's who we are. I'm not asking or suggesting. But I do suggest that you deepen in your own... That you have put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This woman's record, and it is intended. Who am I? With the presence of God. Turn to Jeremiah chapter 1. The people of Israel had sinned so grossly that judgment was set.

And God said, The judgment is going to come. And nothing is going to stop it. And Jeremiah, I want you to go out.

And I want you to warn the people of what is ahead. Let's begin our meeting at verse 4. Then the word of the Lord came unto me. Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee.

For thou shalt go to all that I shall do, not afraid in their faith. He said, You don't need me. I'm only a child.

When I call you, don't you answer me. I am a child. I'll put the words in your mouth.

And whatever you say, I'll back it up. Now, this touches on the experience that we get a call from God. And we say, I can't.

Now go. But you know we're not going to go unless we have a conviction that's called every one of us to a usefulness that is far beyond anything we ask. He has given us His word, which is for us.

And make it clear to people And anything He has called you for, He has prepared to equip you. Now there's another person in the Old Testament that's turned to the book of Luke. An entirely different kind.

Now let's see. Luke has been gleaning in the field. And in order to claim this kinship, Naomi has suggested that a woman to go down to the threshing And she tells him who she is.

And he says, everybody, let's begin at this school. And Luke laid his feet on Naomi, just a morbidish widow. Now she's been taken under the care and the custody of Boaz, who is to make her his bride.

Who art thou? She had a different story to tell Naomi when she came back than she had to tell her before she left. She had come into relationship with Boaz and they had an understanding. So it's important that we understand who we are.

Remember that the Lord Jesus said, you haven't chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you the chosen of God. Men of God. Now the second question we have to consider is why am I here? And I would like to turn for our talk here to the illustration.

Turn back to 2 Kings, chapter 2, beginning at verse 9. And it came to pass when we were going over to Elijah, ask what I shall do for thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And Elisha said, thou hast asked a hard thing.

Nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee. And it came to pass as they still went on and talked, that behold there appeared a chariot of fire. And he cried, my father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen.

And he took hold of his own clothes and went them in pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him and went back. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him and swam away to the waters.

They parted hither and thither and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets returned to view the spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to him and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

Now the first requirement here was if Elijah was to be who he wanted to be and to have the identity that he wanted to have nothing could pull him. He stayed with the man. It is as we and we are going to represent him in the earth as being here for him.

And that is the second thing. This being here for him the spirit of Elijah doth rest upon Elisha. A different personality altogether.

A different kind of person. The man God took up in the place of Elijah and who he used so greatly. Now let's read on a little bit but I am going to continue.

And the man of the city of Jericho said to Elisha How do we get the water in this town? You take care of it. You have chemists. That is not my business.

Or if the attitude of our Now there is many lessons could be learned of our influence. In Kings chapter 1 verse 20 And Elisha died and be buried in it. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land of the Cumberland.

And when the man was let down and touched It is one with which I can relate somewhat. Because when I was over and all of a sudden without any you never saw anything happen. Only I was sitting up and I didn't know what.

And we rattled along in this bus for a few yards and he said Is there anybody back there? I said You see a group of Moabites over there? So they all dropped. We really dropped down. So I know what it is like to have an excited and noisy bunch of Jews around.

Well, let's go back to the story. There is a group of men and one of their friends has been killed by one of the Moabites. And so they are taking him out to bury him in the cemetery.

And I suppose they are one on each corner of the blanket you know carrying this man along and suddenly there are some soldiers show up on the crest of the hill. And the fastest thing they can do is get out of sight. And so they take the blanket and they throw this fellow into the nearest hole in the ground which happened to be a license tomb.

And he rolls on down and I guess he wondered where he was. And so he begins walking up out of this tomb. And while these fellows are still running away from the guerrillas trying to save their lives one of them looked back and he saw this man coming out of the grave.

And I think he ran four times as fast from that point on. Now what is this all left here in the Bible for? Why is this story told to us in such a period of holy writ? It is because God wants to say to you and to me you can live your life in such a way that even long after your death you can be having new dreams for God. That's what Elisha was doing.

His body had grown long since. His bones were lying there in the grave. This man touched them.

Came alive. We could live like that. I could live like that.

So that long after we're gone not just while we're here but when we're gone there could be an influence for God. To be here for God and for blessing. Now the last section of what I wanted to share with you this morning has to do with who do I serve? Christ as Lord.

We are looking out for opportunities in our day to be so used. If we are men and women of God and God intends that we should have an influence then we need to be alert as to what the opportunities of having an influence are. And if we were to turn to Isaiah chapter 5 and verse 30 we would learn that as you look unto the land you see nothing but darkness and clouds and dark clouds and storms.

You look around there are lots of opportunities. There's darkness all around us. And as we seek for the meaning of life we enter into somewhat the experience of the disciples.

Now these were thinking men. Sometimes I think we get the idea that the disciples were just a bunch of teenagers that happened to be fishermen that happened to be a tax collector and so on that didn't have a thought in their heads. These were thinking men that Jesus picked up.

These were men of tremendous potential within their own personality. And as he came by and he would say to one follow me and he would rise from his receipt of testament and leave everything and follow Jesus. That man had been thinking about what a mess the world is in and how he needs somebody to have the answers.

And if he ever comes by here again and gives me the opportunity I'm going to follow him. And when James and John are sitting there mending their necks they're not just sitting there not saying anything mending their necks they're talking about the mess the world is in. They were living in an occupied territory.

Things had gone to smash so far as Israel was concerned. They were deeply concerned but when Jesus came to town they formed the opinion and the conviction in their hearts this man has got the answers. So when he came by later and he said come with me they left their necks and followed him.

Here were men who had found the answers. And this answer was exemplified in the response of Peter on one occasion when the Lord Jesus said whom do men say that I am? And he the answer the alternative answer Jesus said who do you say that I am? And Peter said thou art the Christ the son of the living God. Ever think about that statement? Man that is a statement.

And then you remember after the resurrection when Thomas came into the second meeting of the disciples and the Lord Jesus said Thomas come on put your fingers into my hands and thrust your hand in my side and Thomas said my Lord and my God they had a conviction about who was the master. Whom say ye that I am? These were the answers that these men gave. So what does Jesus say himself about who he is? Let me read you from Revelation 22 verse 16 I Jesus have sent my angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.

I am the root and the offspring of David the bright and morning star in the land there is darkness and turmoil and men are lost will not always be so the day star is at hand meanwhile we are here for him to make known to the sons of men the glory of his kingdom and his will to save let us not lose sight of who we are why we are here and whom we serve and God will bless our ministry.

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