



Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

Sacrificing the Good for the Best January 14th, 2018

(1 Kings 19:19-21)

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-by,” he said, “and then I will come with you.”

“Go back,” Elijah replied. “What have I done to you?”

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.

1. What are some resolutions people make that require them to sacrifice something good? What’s the “better” thing that they’re willing to sacrifice those good things for?
Which would you say is easier: Sacrificing something bad to carry out a resolution? Or sacrificing something good to carry out a resolution?
2. Based on the description we find of Elisha in verse 19, why do his actions in vs. 21 showcase an incredibly strong faith?
3. We might think Elisha’s words in vs. 20 are an excuse to buy himself more time before he had to give up the good things he possessed to become a prophet. However, why do his actions in vs. 21 show us that this wasn’t the case? What is symbolic about Elisha’s actions here?
4. Read the Epistle lesson for this weekend from 1 Corinthians 7:29-31. How do Paul’s words in the beginning of verse 29, and at the end of verse 31, help to explain the importance of being willing to sacrifice every good thing in order to follow Christ?
5. Honestly evaluate your own life, and identify some good things in your life that can become dangerous distractions to following Jesus if you’re not careful. What are some ways you can ensure that those good things don’t become the “best” thing in your life? How does the gospel become of utmost importance when we fail to keep Christ as the best thing in our life?
6. Elijah and Elisha are often included in a trio of Bible pairs, along with Moses and Joshua, and John the Baptist and Jesus. Moses, Elijah, and John the Baptist are the “beginners” of important work, and Joshua, Elisha, and Jesus are the “finishers” of important work. Discuss what important work each of the “beginners” and “finishers” carried out. How did each point ahead to the ultimate finishing work of Christ?
7. Give at least 3 different reasons that following Jesus in faith is by far the best, compared to any of the good things in our lives.