

Reactions to the Truth

When Paul preached his famous sermon on Mars Hill in Athens, his teaching received three distinct reactions. "And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed..." (**Acts 17:32-34**). Do you see it? Some rejected the teaching immediately. Others procrastinated or withheld judgment, and did nothing. But some enthusiastically accepted the truth and acted upon it.

The same three reactions are in evidence to this day — even among members of the Lord's church. Consider this scenario: The preacher preaches a "hard" sermon that exposes sin and worldliness. It's one of those sermons that "steps on toes" and hits "close to home." Some Christians will grow angry. The things taught suggest the need to change, and they are not willing to do so. They are happy to hear preaching on things they already agree about, but if a lesson contradicts their existing views or practices, they get mad. They are like those in Athens who "mocked."

By Greg Gwin

Some other brethren hear this same sermon and, while it plainly shows that there are things they need to change in their life, they postpone any action. These are the ones who commend the preacher as they go out the door: "I really needed that!", or "You really stomped on my toes today!" And, yet, they do nothing. They continue in their former ways. "We will hear thee again of this matter."

Thank God that there are those who are tenderhearted; those who are always looking to bring their lives into closer harmony with the will of God. These are the folks who, upon hearing the truth, respond by putting it into practice in their lives. If it means changing from what they previously believed, they will do so. Their commitment is to the Lord. Serving Him is their first priority. May their tribe increase!



| Sick | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Sam Cox (Friend of Anna Stallings) | Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son) | Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad) | Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister) |
| Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters) | Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier) | David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father) | Kate Miller (Daughter of Brandon and Erin Miller) |
| Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother) | Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother) | Roger Whatley (Daphene Whatley's son) | Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman) |
| Betty Bradford | Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather) | Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother) | Sandra Qadeer (Rafia Qadeer's mother) |
| Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father) | Meredith NeSmith (Jessica Anderson's Cousin) | Emily Stallings (Anna's sister) | Madi Wise (Friend of the Robert's) |
| Marty Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews) | Joe Perkins (Scott Perkin's Dad) | Toni and William Herd | Tom Davis (Walker Davis' Uncle) |

- August Birthdays**
- 2 - Emma Miller
 - 2 - Heath Donahue
 - 4 - Will King
 - 5 - Andrew Cagle
 - 6 - Isaac Burton
 - 7 - David Golden
 - 7 - Anna Leigh Peek
 - 9 - Elliott Weldon
 - 9 - Troy Swenson
 - 10 - Sarah Tam
 - 11 - Walker Davis
 - 12 - Jon Coleman
 - 13 - Brendon Kirby
 - 14 - Elizabeth Wiggs
 - 15 - Kalee Reid
 - 16 - Cade Smith
 - 18 - MaKayla Chittam
 - 19 - Brettlyn Currier
 - 16 - Me-Shell Looney
 - 20 - Caleb Law
 - 24 - Sophie Hall
 - 25 - Emily Jones
 - 27 - Chip Freeman
 - 27 - Stephen Ambrose
 - 28 - Larry Rouse
 - 28 - Cole Johnson

- News and Notes**
- ☒ - We have had a new family identify with the church! Let us welcome Casey and Taleesha Hergett and their 2 year old son Aiden to our number.
 - ☒ - Faye Guy Ashton's and Bailey Guy's grandmother has been diagnosed with liver cancer.
 - ☒ - Let us be preparing for our upcoming meeting with Bryan Gibson, August 25-29.
 - ☒ - Continue to remember Owen Mauldin in your prayers.
 - ☒ - Kay White's father, Robert Driggers, had a successful procedure this week on his pacemaker.
 - ☒ - Ryan Hasty will begin working with the University church on August 11!

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The Auburn Beacon

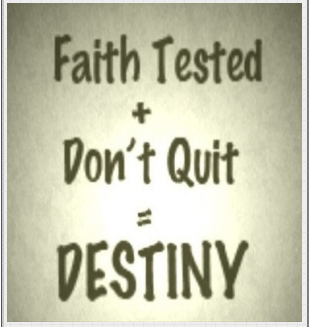
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)



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Elijah's Temptation to Drop Out

By William C. Sexton



Thoughts to Ponder

Do not ask the Lord for a life free from grief, instead ask for courage that endures.

Elders
Walker Davis
(334) 703-0050
Larry Rouse
(334) 734-2133

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

E-Mail:
larryrouse@aubeacon.com

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

If the phrase "a prophet of God" is spoken, the Bible student would likely think of Elijah. He was a powerful prophet in the Old Testament; when Jesus was transfigured before certain of the apostles (**Mt. 17:1-5**). He appeared with Elijah to represent the prophets Jesus referred to his acts (**Lk. 4:24-26**); James mentioned him as evidence of the powerful effect of a righteous man's prayer (**Jas. 5:16-18**); Paul pointed to him as one being mistaken about his lonely state because many faithful peoples were serving God (**Rom. 11:2-5**).

Elijah was a great prophet, who achieved much, giving evidence that he was serving God and that God is powerful (**1 Kings 18:21-46**). He spoke out against evil, opposed the prophets of Baal, as a spokesman for God. Yet, Elijah was a human, with the weaknesses which characterize mankind. He was, like most of us are at some time, tempted to drop out and give up (**1 Kings 19:1-21**).

The character of this man and the occasion in his life (just after achieving a great victory) make us unprepared for what he does in this respect! Yet, I suspect that here is just one case of the many in the word of God which point each of us to self-examination, to discover our humanness, We sometimes miscalculate reality! If Elijah, a prophet of God could and did so misperceive things, then certainly we ought to recognize that we, too, may do the same and be in need of assistance!

His Character

He manifested his courage and determination in (1) announcing to wicked Ahab that there was going to be neither "dew

nor rain" (**1 Kings 17:1**) due to the evil behavior of the king, (2) challenging the people to make a choice to decide whether the Jehovah is God or Baal and to follow the real one (**1 Kings 18:21ff**). He had manifested his kindness and relationship to God in dealing with the widow and her child (**1 Kings 17:17-24**).

Depression After Having Gained A Decisive Victory

Elijah called the people together and asked for the prophets of Baal to call on their god to manifest himself to show that he was alive, able, and willing to respond to their needs. This allowed all to witness the complete failure of Baal. After the failure of Baal and his prophets, Elijah called on the Lord God and He responded, burning the sacrifice and drying up the water. This was a powerful demonstration of God's power and Elijah's relationship to Him. It would seem reasonable to expect all observers and knowledgeable people to recognize the power manifested and submit to it. One would expect Elijah to be elated, walking on cloud nine!

Yet when his work was conveyed to the king's wicked wife, Jezebel, she promised to continue her opposition and resistance to him (**1 Kings 19:2-3**). With his experience and recent victory over Baal's four hundred prophets, we would expect him to face up to the threat, pointing to the fact that God had manifested Himself in such a powerful way that it would be foolish and fatal to oppose Him in the manner she was threatening. However, we are surprised again! He runs for his life!

His Action Of Requesting To Die

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It is hard to understand that this character at this time would run away from such a one as Jezebel and sit down under a tree requesting "for himself that he might die. . ." (19:4). Even with such behavior, the Lord did not let him have his request. He sent an angel who "touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat." He was strengthened and traveled for forty days and nights to Horeb, the mount of God (19:8).

Yet, Elijah was not ready and prepared to face reality. Rather, he went into a cave. The Lord, as He had done before, challenged him as to what he was doing there. The answer was not really a response: "I have been jealous for the Lord of Host: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and 1, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (19:10, 14).

Truly, Elijah had been jealous for the Lord and such was both good and correct. It was sad that the people of Israel had forsaken the covenant, thrown down the altars built to God and slain the prophets. However, the question addressed to Elijah was: "What doeth thou here?" Why are you here and what are you doing here? Now, not yesterday or days gone by, is the period of time in question.

This is a rather common problem or response, I'm afraid, for any or all of us! We become obsessed with a response that is not really pertinent. When asked a question, we repeat that response!

Lessons To Be Learned From Elijah's Action

I believe that we all can learn some valuable lessons from this account of his behavior on this occasion; perhaps that is the reason that it is recorded and preserved for us.

1. Like Elijah, all of us fail at times to live up to what we should do based on our knowledge and experience. Quite often, the unreasoned behavior occurs shortly after a victory! Man is more vulnerable right after a battle, even one which he has won! He is exhausted, with his guard down!

Many people have dropped out after great achievements! We expect an inexperienced person to become discouraged and give up and/or in; but the man who has been on the firing line and gained many battles of significance, too, can be overcome!

Each of us need to be challenged: "What doeth thou here?" We need to be challenged, repeatedly till we get off that obsession! We need to have the significance of that challenge to penetrate our conscience!

2. Christians, like Elijah, need to see that there is and will remain temptations, but there is no justification for dropping out, till God calls us home!

We need, therefore, to allow the double challenge to sink in: Just what are we doing where we are? It does

not matter how much we have done; rather, it's what are we doing now? There is never a time when we can stop and rely on the past record - till our time allotted here expires, and God is the judge and determiner of that.

3. Like Elijah, we need to climb a mountain, get a different view!

And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord, And behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountain, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice ... And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on the way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou cometh, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: and Jehu the son of Nimshi shall thou anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-me-holah shall thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him (19:11-12, 15-18).

It is evidence that Elijah has miscalculated: he was not the only one left faithfully serving God! Seven thousand others were alive and serving. We, too, when we get so discouraged, thinking that we are the only one left, need to look again! Somewhere, out of our sight, there are others!

At times we need to climb a mountain and get a view from a different perspective! Hear the Lord say, "Go!" Get back into the stream of activity! Go about doing your job, and see that you can still do something for the Lord's cause! We can assist others. We can still tell the story of Jesus (Mt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16).

Conclusion

Every person who has served God, will at times feel as Elijah, feel like dropping out! I'm no better than the others who have gone before me, they suffered and died, I might as well die now! But the Lord is the, only one who can decide that accurately. So, let us keep on being faithful as long as we are allowed to live and serve. Let us ask ourselves: are we doing what we can now according to His word and directions?



Divorce ... For Any Reason?

By Jason Longstreth

"Some Pharisees came to Jesus testing and asking, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?'" (Matthew 19:3)

I'm sure we have all read this question before. This verse (and the verses surrounding it) has been the center of many religious debates over the years. And what Jesus taught in this passage is just as applicable today as it was in the first century. The subject of marriage, divorce and re-marriage has been a hot topic for many years. I am amazed how many people do not seem to know anything about what the Lord taught concerning this subject. But I am even more astonished at those who should know it, but do not follow His commandments.

This is puzzling to me because, when it comes to Jesus' teaching on marriage, the basics are really quite simple. Consider Jesus' response to the earlier question. "And he answered and said, 'Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, "For this reason man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.'" (Matthew 19:4-6)

Now, as I said before, this is very easy to understand. In fact, I believe anyone (and everyone) can understand it! Jesus was simply teaching that a man and a woman should not get divorced. Period. And I want you to notice that this is where He placed the emphasis - don't get divorced. However, this is not where we often place the emphasis. Instead, we focus on the exception to the rule - we focus on Jesus' answer to the next question, "When can we get divorced?" We get into all the nit-picky little legalistic answers in an effort to defend our own actions. Let me ask you, is this what we should do? I don't think so. But we do.

Too often, I hear Christians focusing on divorce when they should be focusing on what Jesus said about marriage. It's true, Jesus did give one exception to the rule (when adultery has taken place), but shouldn't we place our focus on the rule instead of the exception? God hates divorce. (Malachi 2:16)

This has never changed. And although God may ALLOW divorce (in one case), that does not mean He WANTS it. Jesus said that what God intended "from the beginning" was for a man and a woman to be joined together for life. This is what we should all be striving to accomplish.

But I hear Christians say that it is okay to get divorced "as long as I don't remarry". They say, "I'll get divorced and just remain single." Is this what Jesus taught? Not at all! Although a person who has been divorced may need to remain single if they want to be right with God, this is not meant to be an 'acceptable alternative' to remaining married. If so, this would have been the answer to exactly what the Pharisees asked when they said, "Is it lawful to get divorced for any reason?" Jesus would have said, "Sure, as long as you don't remarry." But He didn't. His answer was "No." Remember **Matthew 5:32**, "But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery." Notice what Jesus said in the first part of this verse. "Everyone who divorces and his wife...makes her commit adultery." In this case, the man commits a sin even though he did not remarry. The sin was in the divorce.

Now, you do not need to remind me of the exception. I know it is there. But, do you see where Jesus placed His emphasis? He did not come to teach us when we could divorce. He did not come to teach us an exception. Instead, he taught his followers to remain married. And if we would spend half as much time trying to save our marriages as some people spend trying to find a reason for a divorce, we would all have much stronger marriages. Let's focus on what the Lord focused on. For it was that way "from the beginning."

