



Sunday, September 22nd

Sermons:

- **Divine Internships by Rev. Dr. Sedric Roberts**
- **You Can't Be Better Holding Onto Bitter by Min. Rasheem Rooke**
- **Blessed Be The Ties That Bind by Rev. Laura White**
- **Disappointed, But Not Defeated by Min. Elijah McDavid III**

Scripture: 2 Kings 2:1-15

Sermon Summaries & Key Points:

Saturday 6 pm - Divine Internship: Four Things You Need to Know

- 1) God Selects Imperfect People for Divine Internships
- 2) God Requires Deference While in Training
- 3) You May Be Required to Take Something Off
- 4) Serving the Lord Will Pay Off "After While"

Sunday 7:30 am - You Can't Be Better Holding Onto Bitter

It is inevitable that at some point good relationships with others can go bad. How should we respond when this happens?

- 1) Own the fact that we typically cut people off when we feel that they have harmed us
- 2) Move towards reconciliation through private conversations
- 3) Understand that reconciliation is difficult. If we endure, the power of God will comfort us
- 4) Sometimes separation needs to remain permanent. Instead of making that decision alone, let God make the final decision. Ask the Lord what to do in the situation

Sunday 9:30 am - Blessed Be the Ties That Bind

When we have a strong mentor/mentee relationship we recognize strong bonds on multiple levels. We should always look for:

- 1) The Tie of Promise
- 2) The Tie of Purpose
- 3) The Tie of Position

Sunday 11:30 am - Disappointed, But Not Defeated

Disappointment and grief are inevitable, but we get to choose how we respond. In seasons of disappointment we need to:

- 1) Listen Selectively
- 2) Lean Into God's Confidence
- 3) Leave a Better Legacy
- 4) Love Our Leftovers

Note to Facilitators:

This week's curriculum guide weaves in the sermons from our 4 different preachers from the weekend. While all sermons focused on the relationship of Elijah and Elisha, it is important to note that Villagers in your group may have heard different sermons.

Getting to Know You Questions:

1. The title to Min. Rooke's sermon was "You Can't be Better Holding onto Bitter". What was your initial reaction to this title?
2. Min. Rooke stated that the process of reconciliation is difficult. What prevents you from initiating a private conversation with someone for reconciliation?
3. Min. Elijah said God always has more after loss and grief. Where in your life have you seen God replenish your life after loss?
4. Dr. Roberts stated that in "57 years of learning, I learned God always wins the fight." In whatever year of your life you find yourself in now, what is one thing you have learned about God after facing loss or disappointment?

Into the Bible Questions:

1. Dr. Roberts points out that when God confronts Elijah in 1 Kings 19, Elijah is running from Jezebel. It is during this time that Elijah hears from the Lord to call Elisha to be his successor. How could challenging moments you've experienced be used to influence the generation coming after you? What could they learn from your moments of fear, loneliness, etc.?
2. In 2 Kings, Elisha journeyed in 3 cities before Elijah was taken from him and after his loss, we see in the text that Elisha revisits those same cities. How do his reactions reflect the difficulty in visiting places that represent relationships lost?
3. Min. Rooke stated that Elijah and Elisha seem to have a good relationship in 2 Kings 2. However, the relationship wasn't always a good one. He took us back to 1 Kings 19 to discover the tension between them and to discover that it is often difficult to move from following what we "want to do" to pursuing "God's will". What can you take away from their experience concerning ignoring God's will in order to follow your own thoughts and desires?

Life Application Questions:

1. Elisha was still trying to hold on to Elijah even though God was calling Elijah on to something else. How do you deal with transition or loss? (ex: aging parents, loss of a child, professional loss, declining health, etc.)
2. Min. Rooke mentioned that there are some moments we should offer reconciliation to those we cut off and there are times when we need to stay separated. Just as Pastor Wesley detailed last week how to discern who is a "Nathan" in our lives, how can we

discern when God is leading us to reconcile with people or keep them at a healthy and godly distance?

3. Rev. White pointed out that sometimes “replacement sounds like a pink slip.” Have there been moments in your life when you felt like the Lord was replacing you? What did you feel and do in that moment and would you consider doing anything differently the next time around?
4. God ordained a “divine internship” between Elijah and Elisha. How is God developing your Christian character through your divine internship experience(s) either as the mentor (Elijah) or mentee (Elisha)? What part of the experience are you embracing or resisting?
5. Min. McDavid III revealed that sometimes beneficial situations and relationships must end because they’re too comfortable. In order to grow, we must be moved. How have you dealt with a separation from something or someone that has proven influential in your growth and development?

Can I Push It?:

1. Min. Rooke encouraged us to talk to people that we are talking or gossiping about. We can often find ourselves talking about family members, coworkers, even other church members. In what areas of your life could you use some help changing this behavior? What are some reasons we use to justify talking about people rather than talking directly to them?
2. Min. Rooke commented that we live in a “cut off” society. We are fortunate that God does not cut us off so easily. Looking back at your relationships, are there moments when you could have been cut off or cut someone else off but grace was extended? What has that experience taught you about second chances? Are you now open to reconciling with people who have harmed you?

Spirit Work:

1. At the 6pm service, we learned that “God requires deference while in training.” Take some time this week to journal some areas in your life where you are struggling to have deference (finances, relationships, ministry, etc.)? Don’t stop there, think of one actionable way you are going to defer to God in one of these areas and share that new choice with a village member who will be your accountability partner.
2. Make a list of some relationships in your life that may need reconciling, and in prayer this week, turn to God to give you instruction. If the Lord moves on your heart on any of these relationships, think about what steps you can make towards initiating reconciliation.
3. Rev. White reminded us to “be mindful and prayerful of who you want in a mentor.” List the qualities you desire in a mentor and prayerfully consider whether your potential list of mentors reflect these qualities.

Activity:

1. **Miracles or Messes?** We learned that grief can take us on a roller coaster ;ife of emotions. Elisha's grief led him to perform miracles that helped people and also make messes that hurt people because of his emotional instability. Have each group member share a miracle and a mess they've made as they write it down on a post-it or index card. Compile the list of miracles and share to inspire your Village throughout the week. Ball up the messes and toss them in a trash can in the center of the room as a symbolic act of letting go. Then pray a prayer of forgiveness/healing for the mistakes of the Village.

Additional Questions for Married Couples Villages:

1. Min. Rooke reminded us that when we don't talk, our expectations will be based on misinformed assumptions. In what ways have you set up expectations for your partner based on assumptions? How has that contributed to conflict or miscommunication?
2. Min. Rasheem, encouraged us that there is nothing you cannot endure when you know God will comfort you. In your journey as a married couple, what difficult things have you been able to triumph over and what have you learned that will help you for future challenges?

Additional Questions for Young Adult Villages:

1. Rev. White pointed out that sometimes we enter into various types of relationships without knowing what we are looking for. In the relationships you are pursuing, what would you say you are looking for?
2. After being followed in 3 towns by a crowd of 50 prophets, Elijah and Elisha finally had a moment where they had an opportunity to communicate, absent of outside voices. What areas in your current relationships would benefit if shielded from unnecessary commentary?

Additional Questions for Parents' Villages:

1. In what ways do your children observe that you practice forgiveness of them and others, and that you seek reconciliation in broken relationships?
2. What natural examples of Christian parenthood serve as your Elijah (mentor) as you seek to raise God-fearing children? How could you follow their example more fully?

Additional Questions for Women Villages:

1. Where have you seen the characteristics of Elijah/Elisha embodied in women leaders, and how have you served as an Elijah to others?

2. Elijah could have missed out on the opportunity to reconcile with Elisha because he felt that Elisha's actions in the past demonstrated that his own commitment to the relationship was stronger than Elisha's. At that point, Elijah stopped communicating with Elisha. Think about a time when you've made assumptions about someone's motives/actions and drew the wrong conclusions?