SEA CHANGE CHURCH

THE CURRENT

Elijah: From Drought to Downpour · S2E4

The Ordinary Call of Elisha

A 7-Day Study

"So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him. And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, 'Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.' And he said to him, 'Go back again, for what have I done to you?' And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him."

1 Kings 19:19-21 ESV

Pastor Adam Stadtmiller · September 13, 2026

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

Matthew 6:33

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Each week, The Current walks through a piece of Sunday's passage: a short verse study, encouragement, journal questions, and a daily prayer.

Take one day at a time. There's no need to rush.

DAY 1

Called at Base Camp

> **1 KINGS 19:19 ESV**
>
> *"So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him."*

VERSE STUDY

Elijah does not find Elisha on a stage. He finds him in a field, doing the most unremarkable thing a farmer can do: plowing. No crowd, no platform, no moment of obvious significance. Just a man and his oxen, working the ground like he had a hundred days before.

This pattern shows up across scripture: Moses was shepherding when God spoke from the bush. David was watching sheep when Samuel came looking for a king. Peter was mending nets when Jesus called him. Over and over, the calling lands in the middle of ordinary work, not at the height of anyone's game.

Adam put it plainly: he does not think God is looking for your talent. He is looking for your heart. That should change how we see the unremarkable parts of our week: the school pickup line, the inbox, the same commute. God has never needed a stage to do his best work.

If you are waiting for your life to feel significant before you take God seriously in it, this is the reminder that the significance was never the qualification. Faithfulness in the field was.

TAKE HEART

You do not need a bigger platform to be found by God. He has a long history of showing up in fields, boats, and back rooms, and there is no reason to think today is any different.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What is the most ordinary part of your week right now, and how might God be at work in it?
2. Have you ever assumed a task was too small to matter to God? What happened?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

"O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment, and light riseth up in darkness for the godly: Grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what thou wouldest have us to do, that the spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in thy light we may see light, and in thy straight path may not stumble; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Book of Common Prayer, A Collect for Guidance

ACTION CHALLENGE

Do the next ordinary task on your list today as if it were the very place God plans to meet you, because it might be.

DAY 2

The Weight of Twelve Yoke

> **1 KINGS 19:19 ESV**
> *"...who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth."*

VERSE STUDY

There is a detail here easy to miss: twelve yoke of oxen was serious wealth in the ancient world. Elisha was not a poor farmhand. He came from a family with means, and yet there he is, out with the twelfth yoke himself instead of leaving the work entirely to servants.

It is a picture of stewardship worth sitting with: you can have resources, position, or influence, and still be the one with your own hands on the plow. Elisha was overseeing what God had entrusted to him rather than standing at a distance from it.

One connection worth noticing: the twelve yoke may echo the twelve tribes of Israel, a kingdom currently fractured under Ahab. Whether or not that connection was intended by the author, Elisha is pictured at the head of something whole in a moment when the nation itself was anything but.

Whatever has been placed in your hands right now, whether it looks like much or little to anyone else, is worth tending with both hands. That is exactly where Elijah found him.

TAKE HEART

Faithfulness with what is actually in front of you, not what you wish were in front of you, is the ground calling tends to grow out of.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What has God actually placed in your hands right now: a job, a family, a small responsibility?
2. Are you tending it personally, or have you checked out because it does not feel significant enough?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

"Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!"

Psalm 90:17, prayed as a prayer

ACTION CHALLENGE

Give full attention to one responsibility today that you have been tempted to phone in, and do it as an offering rather than a chore.

DAY 3

Cloak Now, Mantle Later

> **1 KINGS 19:19-20 ESV**
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> *"Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him. And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, 'Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.' And he said to him, 'Go back again, for what have I done to you?'"*

VERSE STUDY

Adam drew a distinction that reframes this whole passage: there is a difference between having the mantle placed on you and actually picking it up and walking in it. Elijah casts his cloak on Elisha here, but Elisha does not become the prophet on the spot. In fact, it is not until 2 Kings 2:13, after Elijah is taken up, that Elisha picks the fallen cloak up off the ground for himself.

One honest admission from the message: he knew he was called to preach at twelve years old, and it was a long time before God actually put him in that place. Receiving a calling and being ready to carry it are two different moments, sometimes separated by years.

The counsel to anyone waiting was direct: be faithful where you are, and wait for the mantle rather than reaching for it. Young preachers are told never to ask to preach. If God wants you on a stage, he will put you there. Until then, sit in the back row and carry water.

If you know God has spoken something over your life that has not happened yet, this is not evidence you misheard him. It may simply mean the field is not finished with you.

TAKE HEART

A calling you are still waiting on is not a calling God forgot. Elisha waited years between the cloak and the mantle, and God did not forget him either.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. Is there something you sense God has spoken over your life that has not yet come to pass?
2. What would it look like this week to be faithful right where you are instead of reaching ahead of God's timing?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

"God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference."

The Serenity Prayer, attributed to Reinhold Niebuhr

ACTION CHALLENGE

Name one thing you are tempted to force into being ahead of God's timing, and consciously set it back down today.

DAY 4

No Plan B

> **1 KINGS 19:21 ESV**
> *"And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate."*

VERSE STUDY

Here is the detail that makes this more than a farewell dinner: Elisha does not just leave the plow behind, he burns it. He uses the wooden yokes as fuel to cook the oxen he has just sacrificed, then feeds the meal to the people around him. There is no equipment left to go back to.

That is the destruction of a plan B, plain and simple. It connects to Jesus's own words to another would-be follower who asked to say goodbye to his family first: no one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God. Elisha does not just walk away from the plow, he removes the option of ever picking it back up.

One image from the message stuck: a relay race, where runners are never slower than the moment both hands are on the baton, one letting go and one not yet fully gripping it. The same thing happens in us when we try to follow Jesus while still holding onto what we are supposed to be leaving.

This is not a call to recklessness. It is a call to honesty about what you have quietly kept in reserve in case following Jesus does not work out, and what it might look like to finally let it go.

TAKE HEART

You are allowed to be all in. Whatever plan B has kept one hand on the old plow, Jesus is not asking you to run slower for its sake.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What is your version of the plow you have kept intact, just in case?
2. What would it cost you to burn that plan B rather than keep it in reserve?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

"Thanks be to thee, my Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits thou hast given me, for all the pains and insults thou hast borne for me. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, and follow thee more nearly, day by day."

Prayer of Saint Richard of Chichester, 13th century

ACTION CHALLENGE

Take one concrete step today to close off a plan B you have been quietly keeping open, even a small one.

DAY 5

What Will You Leave?

> **MATTHEW 4:18-20 ESV**
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> *"While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.' Immediately they left their nets and followed him."*

VERSE STUDY

It is a list easy to skim past too quickly: Abraham left his family and his land. Moses left the comforts of Egypt. Peter left his nets. Matthew left his tax booth. There is no one of real significance in scripture who did not leave something real behind to move into what God had for them.

This pattern still holds today. You can keep as many plan Bs as you want and still try to have it all, and the world tells you that is possible, but it is not how the kingdom of God works. The whole thing is built on sacrifice.

One connection tied it back to the garden. We were forced out of a place because of sin. Now, in God's redemptive plan, we get to choose to leave a place in order to follow him into the next one. The forced exile becomes a willing departure, and that is part of how God redeems the whole story.

Nobody follows Jesus into more without first leaving something behind. The question worth asking honestly is not whether that is true, but what, specifically, he is asking you to leave.

TAKE HEART

Every person in scripture who walked into what God had for them first walked away from something. You are in good company if that is where you find yourself today.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What has following Jesus already cost you, and what might it still ask of you?
2. Where have you tried to keep something comfortable in place instead of fully leaving it behind?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

"Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to thee, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly thine, utterly dedicated unto thee; and then use us, we pray thee, as thou wilt, and always to thy glory and the welfare of thy people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen."

Book of Common Prayer, A Prayer of Self-Dedication

ACTION CHALLENGE

Write down, honestly, the one thing you sense God is asking you to leave behind, even if you are not ready to act on it yet.

DAY 6

Before the Mantle, the Water

> 1 KINGS 19:21 ESV
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> *"Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him."*

VERSE STUDY

Here is something easy to rush past in the final line of this passage: Elisha does not immediately become a prophet. He becomes Elijah's assistant. The last word on this chapter of his life is not about power, it is about service.

There is a whole roster of people in scripture who served before they led: Joseph served Pharaoh, Joshua served Moses, Samuel served Eli, David served Saul, the disciples served Jesus. Put plainly: before Elisha carried the mantle, he carried the water.

Jesus said it of himself too, that the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. If Jesus modeled service before he modeled leadership, none of us gets to skip that step either.

If you feel like you are stuck in a season of quietly serving rather than visibly leading, this is not a detour from your calling. For Elisha, it was the road to it.

TAKE HEART

Carrying water is not beneath the calling God has for you. For Elisha, it came right before it.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. Where in your life right now are you serving quietly, without much recognition?
2. How might that unseen service actually be preparing you for what comes next?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

"Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

ACTION CHALLENGE

Find one act of quiet, unrecognized service to do today, and do it without mentioning it to anyone.

DAY 7

Seek Him First

> **MATTHEW 6:33 ESV**
> *"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."*

VERSE STUDY

The message closed with a question worth sitting with all week: how baseline can your relationship with Jesus get and still be enough? Not the calling, not the platform, not the vision for your life, just sitting with him, serving at his side.

One honest admission stood out: he has told Jesus more than once that if all eternity turned out to be nothing more than sitting at his feet, that would be enough. He cannot fully know his own motives when he says it, but he believes it is true, and prays that it is.

It all came back to the ordinary obedience this whole week has traced: recommit to walking with Jesus. Not to changing the world, not to the next assignment, just to walking with him today. The rest, the calling, the mantle, the assignment, will lay itself at your feet in its own time.

This is the same line the whole week has circled from the very first day at base camp: seek the kingdom first, and trust him with everything that follows.

TAKE HEART

You were never called to change the world before you were called to walk with Jesus. Start there today, and let everything else follow at its own pace.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What would it look like this week to seek Jesus himself before seeking his plan for you?
2. What is one ordinary way you can walk with him tomorrow, regardless of whether the mantle has come yet?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

"One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple."

Psalm 27:4, prayed as a prayer

ACTION CHALLENGE

Spend time today simply being with Jesus, with no agenda beyond that, and let it be enough.

MEMORY VERSE

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

Matthew 6:33

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