



LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

“Church and State: Part 2”

Ps. James Lowe – July 5, 2015

WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

- What’s your default reaction when something challenging happens?
- If you could travel in time, when would you like to live? Why?
- Can you recall a time when your team seemed to be losing but ended up winning the game? What turned the tide?

WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at <http://www.bethelworld.org>

In light of the recent events in our nation, it is easy for us as the church to either enter into panic and retreat, or give into anger and fight with the same weapons the world does. But as we look at the Scripture, we see God is neither surprised nor intimidated by the decision made by human rulers. Since the beginning, God wasn’t surprised by Adam’s sin. He even sent his Son into this world ruled by unjust rulers. Jesus continued with his mission, despite the rulers opposition and the peoples’ pressure to make him king. He faithfully fulfilled the mission the Father had assigned him, and so do we.

We have a mission from the Father, and it is not to accuse others, but to be the salt and the light of the world.

I. Real Victory

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. 2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.” 1 King 19:1-2

God gave Elijah a great victory; so much so that his enemies recognized it. Yet, it seems like Elijah couldn’t see the magnitude of that victory. What happens is that a victory over one area, doesn’t translate into victory over every area in life. Victory over lying doesn’t mean victory over lust. Victory over lust doesn’t mean victory over anger. We have to fight each one of those battles.

It is very difficult to live life thinking we lost when we really won. We need to understand where the real victory is. The problem is not with the Constitution or the Bill of Rights stamping God’s name everywhere, but rather is with the people of God living a life that lifts up the name they proclaim.

II. False Defeat

A sense of defeat comes when we believe what the enemy says instead of the word of God. When Elijah believed Jezebel, fear entered his life. He ran 100 miles away in opposite direction to his mission field.

What is happening in our nation now, doesn't take away the victory God has given us. We still have the constitution. We still have the first amendment that assures our freedom to worship God and preach the Gospel. God has given us authority and he has assured us that his church will prevail.

Elijah was so tormented by fear that he wanted to leave his friends, make his own version of personal religion and abandon God's mission. Fear causes us to want to give up. We cannot retreat in fear. Our nation needs the church of the living God. We need to use the weapons God has given us. Who will pray for our nation if we retreat? Who will preach truth and hope if we abandon our post?

III. Life Mission

To be able to do ministry, we have to receive ministry. Elijah was ministered to by an angel and fed by ravens, but his depression was intense. He received the provision, but still wouldn't go back to his mission field. Yet in his most broken condition, God renewed his strengths, and sent him to the place he should be. God sent Elijah to anoint the new king of Syria, and to choose his successor. Elijah had to understand that despite his persecution, God still runs the universe. History is under his control.

This is the time we need to seek God, renew our strength in him, and go back to fulfill the mission he has entrusted to his church. We ought to preach the Gospel, show the love of Christ and bring hope and answers to a world that is confused and blind with its own sin.

PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.

- What's one area in your life over which you have already received victory? What's one area over which you still need victory?
- What lies have you believed that have brought fear in your life? What does the Bible actually say about that?
- What's your particular part in the mission of God? How can you be faithful to it?

PRAYER (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Pray for our president and for those in positions of authority. (2 Timothy 2:2)
- Pray for courage and wisdom to stand for God's word and do so in the spirit of love and grace.
- Glorify God because he is sovereign, he reigns and he has given us victory.