

WHO DO YOU FOLLOW?

INTRO//

-What's up Faith Students! Welcome to the best night of the week! So glad each and every one of you are here.

-Tonight we're continuing our series called: *Birds of a feather*

-This comes from the saying "birds of a feather flock together" meaning that you run with similar people. In other words, it's really important to pay attention to who you surround yourself with, because you probably are or will become like them!

-Last week we talked about David + Jonathan, and how Jonathan shows us the kind of friend we should be to others through humility + love.

-Tonight we're talking about the kind of people we **follow**

ILLUSTRATION + CONNECTION//

-Who/what you follow says a lot about you!

- I follow a lot of sports accounts, says I like sports
- If you follow certain artists, you probably like their music
- If you follow actors and TMZ accounts, you probably like celebrities and their drama
- If you follow random accounts that post nothing but memes and brain rot... That says a lot about you too!

-At the end of the day, who/what we follow says a lot about who we are, because it likely reflects our interests, who we are and who we're becoming

-I'm obviously not just talking about accounts/people in Instagram we follow, I'm talking about the people we allow to speak into our lives and form our opinions, ideas and decisions

-Some of ya'll got friends that have no Instagram but they're a bigger voice and influence than anyone

-Some of ya'll have people in your life that you will follow their every command/idea

-But we have to ask ourselves: are these people worth following?

-We have to ask ourselves, do I REALLY want to become like these people I follow? Because the truth is we WILL become like the people we follow

-I want to look at a passage in scripture of a young man and an older man he followed, and what it shows us about who we should follow in our lives.

-Tonight I want to look at the story of Elijah and Elisha, and I want to start in **2 Kings 2:1-6**

When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were traveling from Gilgal. **2** And Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here, for the LORD has told me to go to Bethel.”

But Elisha replied, “As surely as the LORD lives and you yourself live, I will never leave you!” So they went down together to Bethel.

3 The group of prophets from Bethel came to Elisha and asked him, “Did you know that the LORD is going to take your master away from you today?”

“Of course I know,” Elisha answered. “But be quiet about it.”

4 Then Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here, for the LORD has told me to go to Jericho.”

But Elisha replied again, “As surely as the LORD lives and you yourself live, I will never leave you.” So they went on together to Jericho.

5 Then the group of prophets from Jericho came to Elisha and asked him, “Did you know that the LORD is going to take your master away from you today?”

“Of course I know,” Elisha answered. “But be quiet about it.”

6 Then Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here, for the LORD has told me to go to the Jordan River.”

But again Elisha replied, “As surely as the LORD lives and you yourself live, I will never leave you.” So they went on together.

-Tonight I want to dive into this story and look at how Elisha follows Elijah and the impact it had on his life

-Before we do: let's pray!

[ILLUSTRATION + CONNECTION//](#)

-We find ourselves committed to all kinds of things if we really want to:

- Commit to watching that show or playing that game
- Commit to staying up to listen to a new album
- For a while people were deeply committed to pokemon go

-We will commit to things if we really want to!

-This could be applied to a lot of things and be a whole other sermon entirely

-But for now I want us to recognize the commitment of Elisha to follow Elijah

-Several times Elijah tells Elisha he can just stay where he is, but responds with

“As surely as the LORD lives and you yourself live, I will never leave you!”

-That’s commitment! Basically saying I’m following you until you die !

-in verse 3 + 5 people confront elisha saying

“you know Elijah is about to be taken by God right?”

-His response is still the same: I don’t care, I am following Him until the Lord takes Him

-What commitment and dedication!

-it’s because he knew Elijah was **worth** following!

God used Elijah to:

-Keep a faith-filled woman’s cabinet full of oil and flour forever

-raise a dead boy

-bring fire down from Heaven and destroy Baal and Baal worship

-Boldly speak words/revelations of God to the people

-Elisha knew Elijah was worth following because of his faith + fruit

-How do we know who to follow? Who is worth following? Someone with faith + fruit!

1//FIND SOMEONE WITH FAITH + FRUIT

-We see Elisha begin to follow and be Elijah’s assistant back in 1 Kings 19

-There was a good amount of time that Elisha followed Elijah, committed + daily

-He saw not only the miracles and moves of God through Elijah, but saw his daily walk + faith in God

-You know someone is worth following when you see them follow God in public + private

-they really know God in a personal way!

-but a real faith is seen in actions/fruit!

-Galatians 5:22-23 ”But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. “

-James 2 talks about how our faith is seen in our actions

-when I say fruit I mean the actions and tangible outward evidence of what's on the inside

ILLUSTRATION/

-We all bear "fruit"

- But some fruit is lookin like this: (picture of good fruit)
- and other fruit looks like this: (Picture of gross, rotten fruit)

-It's about finding people bearing good fruit of faith

-too often we settle and follow people that bear fruit of selfishness, bitterness, anger, greed, jealousy, gossip

-Would we find and follow people *worth* following! People that are selfless, joyful, peaceful, kind, faithful and have self-control

-People that have a real + true genuine relationship with God

-People that will truly help us grow and develop into who we were created to be!

-Elisha knew Elijah was worthy to follow because he was faithful and fruitful

-We know who to follow from their fruit!

-As Elijah neared the end of his time on earth, he wasn't about to die, he was about to be taken by God

-It was known and prophesied that God would take him up

-He legit didn't die! Just ascended up in a really cool way

-As this is about to happen, Elisha asks an interesting question:

2 Kings 2:7-15

7 Fifty men from the group of prophets also went and watched from a distance as Elijah and Elisha stopped beside the Jordan River. **8** Then Elijah folded his cloak together and struck the water with it. The river divided, and the two of them went across on dry ground!

9 When they came to the other side, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I can do for you before I am taken away."

And Elisha replied, "**Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit and become your successor.**"

-Here Elisha is not asking for literally double of what Elijah had, he's asking for the same anointing and power of God to be passed down to Him

-He's wanting the same kind of faith and spiritual strength to be given to him

-He understood the key to Elijah's ministry was the anointing and spirit of God

-This is what happens next:

10 "You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah replied. "If you see me when I am taken from you, then you will get your request. But if not, then you won't."

11 As they were walking along and talking, suddenly a chariot of fire appeared, drawn by horses of fire. It drove between the two men, separating them, and Elijah was carried by a whirlwind into heaven. **12** Elisha saw it and cried out, "My father! My father! I see the chariots and charioteers of Israel!" And as they disappeared from sight, Elisha tore his clothes in distress.

13 Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak, which had fallen when he was taken up. Then Elisha returned to the bank of the Jordan River. **14** He struck the water with Elijah's cloak and cried out, "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" Then the river divided, and Elisha went across.

15 When the group of prophets from Jericho saw from a distance what happened, they exclaimed, "Elijah's spirit rests upon Elisha!" And they went to meet him and bowed to the ground before him.

-Elisha understood what made Elijah's ministry powerful, and he wanted to step into that himself

-He didn't just follow Elijah around, He actually learned from Him and paid attention

-This shows us the 2nd key and takeaway from Elisha and Elijah and its:

1//FIND SOMEONE WITH FAITH + FRUIT

2//APPLY THEIR ADVICE

-Elisha could've followed Elijah around all he wanted but if he never actually paid attention and put into practice the wise words and life of Elijah it would've done him no good!

-But instead Elisha followed Elijah physically + spiritually

-Walked in the authority of God! (River split)

-Elisha goes on in just the next few chapters to see God do some incredible miracles through him:

-purifies a town's water

-sent bears to attack some boys mocking him + his ministry

-helped a woman provide for her and her son with jars miraculously filled with oil

-a barren woman had a son

-food was miraculously provided in a famine

-This is just a few of the miraculous things done through Elisha

-His faithfulness in following God + Elijah affected not just him but many others around him

-As you truly follow someone with faith + fruit, others will be impacted!

-Elisha applied Elijah's faith + walk with God, and it led to the miraculous in other's lives!

-Led to others seeing the glory + power of God

-The challenge for us today is to find someone with faith + fruit, and to begin to follow them

-Not just hang around, but genuinely and truthfully follow them and apply their words and wisdom

-Ultimately, we follow Jesus! He is truly worthy of following! But we also should follow people in our life/world that follow/reflect Him, and apply their advice as long as it's in line with the words of Jesus

-Who we follow has a deep impact not only on ourselves, but on those around us!

-The good news is that you have people like that in this room! Each leader in this room loves Jesus, loves you and wants to help you be a faithful follower of Jesus.

-So to close out tonight we want to make time to break up into our small groups and our leaders just want to take time to pray over you !

RESPONSE//

- To follow Jesus/Salvation call
- Make time/space for leaders to pray over students. Break into small groups and give time for leaders to pray over each student!