

Preaching Dates

Sunday 3 May 2020

Bill Haining (am) at Bridge of Don Baptist Church using YouTube for a 30-minute service then using Zoom for a Sunday gathering 30 minutes after. The first service is pre-recorded and edited together before uploading to both YouTube and Facebook.

Stephen Ilett (am) will be providing, via email, a written sermon and prayers for Dingwall Baptist Church for the next two Sundays

Sylvia Jones is to record another short thought for the day for Galashiels Baptist Church

Dawn Martindale (am) at Rosyth Baptist Church leading the Zoom call with prayers and communion.

Charles Sommerville (pm) via Zoom at Kelty Evangelical Church



“There is a Cloud”

By Stephen Morton

As servants, we seek to do what our Master requests - to serve Him diligently with conviction in all circumstances. This is not an easy task. We frequently find ourselves first seeking His will, then trying to fulfil it. Like modern day versions of Old Testament prophets, we seek to serve God in a society which is going its own way, paying lip service to God only when it is convenient to its social norms, while they look to hold us to a standard of lifestyle which is beyond their abilities to achieve or understand.

Like our predecessor, Elijah, we will all know times of closeness to God, and times of distance and aloneness. Feeling pressured and perhaps even persecuted. But in 1 Kings 18:41-46, we find Elijah on a high point of his service, having singlehandedly demonstrated to the nation that God is God and sovereign over Israel.

Three and a half years before, at God's command, he had prayed for the rains to cease on Israel, and they had. Now, to demonstrate God's supremacy, he bows down on the top of Mount Carmel, presses his forehead into the dirt and begins to pray for rain. He asks his servant to look out towards the sea and tell him what he sees. The servant returns and says, "I see nothing." Six times he does this, but on the seventh time of asking the servant returns and says, "I see a cloud."

Can you see the corners of Elijah's mouth begin to curl upwards as a smile begins to break over his face? Elijah finds himself in that sweet spot of God's service. He is where God wants him to be, doing what God wants him to do, and he can see God moving as a result.

Can you hear the quiet confidence and perhaps humour in his voice as he tells his servant "Go tell Ahab to hurry or he will get caught in the rain."

James 5:16-18 references this passage, describing Elijah as "a man with a nature like ours" and uses him as an example of the results of effective, committed and diligent prayer.

What aspect of our service warrants pressing our foreheads deep into the Axminster? What aspects of the churches where we preach need our committed, diligent and repeated prayers?

If we harbour the desire to be in the sweet spot of God's service and see his power in action, we need to be like Elijah. "The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results." NLT

If we want the churches we visit and serve from the platform to be changed as a result of our preaching, we need to be diligent and committed in prayer for them, so that when we visit them again, we ourselves are encouraged by seeing God's power at work within them.