

Following is the outline from a message by Pastor Dave Tietjen at Evangel Baptist Church, Wheaton IL [www.evbapt.org](http://www.evbapt.org). This sermon was originally presented in March as part of the series on Elijah. It makes a fitting final sermon for Evangel (there will be no message during the "Farewell Service" next week) because of its emphasis on the church's demonstration of the hard choice it faced after nearly 60-years of ministry. Also available are the pdf file of the [PowerPoint® version](#) of the notes, as well as an [audio podcast](#)

## Message Notes

### "The Honor of a Hard Choice"

#### 1 Kings 19:19-21 (ESV)

July 16, 2017

#### The Honor of a Hard Choice Celebrated

- ◆ **Example Chosen "A League of Their Own"**
  - "It is supposed to be hard. The hard is what makes it great."  
(“Coach Jimmy Dugan” – Tom Hanks)
- ◆ **Elijah's Context**
  - ◆ **The Foes Faced**
  - ◆ **The Focus Forward**
  - ◆ **A Friend Found**
    - ◆ **Good Definitions**
      - "One who multiplies joys, divides griefs."
      - "A watch which beats true for all time and never runs down."
      - "A friend is one who comes in when the whole world has gone out."
  - ◆ **God's Design**
    - ◆ **Refreshment**
    - ◆ **Release**
    - ◆ **Reality**
    - ◆ **Relationship**

#### The Honor of a Hard Choice Illustrated

- ◆ **A Distinguished Connection Experienced**
  - 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. (1 Kings 19:19)
- ◆ **Elisha's Calling**
  - ◆ **His Work**
  - ◆ **His Wealth**
- ◆ **Elijah's Commissioning**
  - ◆ **A Signature Item**
    - "A mantle was the official garment of a prophet." (Ray Pritchard)
  - ◆ **A Symbolic Intention**
    - "Without any special fanfare or formalities, Elijah strode across the plowed ground toward Elisha. Whipping off his own mantle, already soiled with dust and dirt from his desert travels, he tossed it around the young plowman's shoulders." (Phillip Keller)

◆ **A Difficult Choice Expressed**

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 19:20-21)

◆ **An Important Request**

◆ **An Intriguing Response (Luke 9:61-62)**

“Go back and say goodbye, for I have done something important to you. But think carefully about this; for your call is not from me, but from God.”

◆ **An Irrevocable Result**

“Unfortunately, many Christians today seem more like the man Jesus repudiated than like Elisha. Somewhere along the line, we got the idea that Christianity means God does everything for us and we have to do nothing for Him. We are content to serve Him, so long as it does not interfere with any of our plans or pleasures; but the idea of making a radical sacrifice for the sake of God’s kingdom is utterly foreign to us.”

(Robert Ellsworth)

**The Honor of a Hard Choice Demonstrated**

◆ **Evangel’s Commitment**

◆ **We Started from This Place:**

◆ **A Strategic Pastor**

“As we seek God’s leading and direction for the next chapter in our corporate life, it seems wise to include a discussion of pastoral transition in our plans. Specifically, being able to plan for the conclusion of my ministry will assist in clarifying other aspects of our strategy for the future.”

(Pastor Dave, August 2015)

◆ **A Supportive People**

◆ **We Sought These Paths:**

◆ **Renewal**

◆ **Realignment**

◆ **Retirement**

◆ **Evangel’s Conclusion**

◆ **This Intention Sought**

“We chose ‘mission over me’ and ‘ministry over money.’ Consistent with our history of fiscal generosity and mission focus, we are willingly surrendering our limited present for limitless possibilities.”

(Pastor Dave)

◆ **This Invitation Stated**

◆ **Affirm His Leading, Acknowledge Your Loss**

◆ **Carry Your Memories, Continue Your Ministry**

*“Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also –  
The body they may kill; God’s truth abideth still:  
His kingdom is forever.”*

(“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” by Martin Luther)