that song was brand new somebody woke up and
wrote that song it was a day that how great
was brand new man there is something about those
old songs like that that that they've got meaning
and they're not about a place they're about a
person doctrinally sound the greatness and the
faithfulness and the goodness of God those speak
to your heart I'm just man they speak to your heart
1st Kings chapter 18 1st Kings chapter 18
sometimes you ever forget what you said or you
get home and say I wonder if I said this I can't
remember if I said that if you if you have that
disease you don't want to be a preacher because
you live inside your head all the time you go you
know what I don't know if I actually finished that
thought of the point that I felt led to convey this
morning and I want to do that tonight before we
actually dive into the text I talked about the danger
of desiring a moment of display or that craving to
experience and experience and I don't think why
I explained why that's dangerous the reason it's
dangerous is experiences fate if all you get is that
moment there comes a time that moment's over and if
you live in the mud till you get the next moment you're
gonna spend most of your time living in the mud and in the
in the doom and the gloom we don't desire that fire but we desire to live in communion in harmony with
a God who brings the fire I don't know if I stated that clearly or correctly this morning but I wanted to get
that out of the way 1st Kings chapter 18 begin verse reading in verse number 36 we looked at this
morning and want to continue to read on down through verse number 45 1st Kings chapter 18 look at
the God of Elijah
verse number 36 all the way down through verse
number 35 all the way down through verse number 45
in communion, in harmony with a God who brings the fire.
I don't know if I stated that clearly or correctly
this morning, but I wanted to get that out of the way.
1 Kings chapter 18.
Begin verse reading in verse number 36 we looked at this morning
and want to continue to read on down through verse number 45.
1 Kings chapter 18, looking at the God of Elijah,
verse number 36 all the way down through verse number 45.
I love what Brother Wayne said.
He said, I look back, it looked like we was having churches.
I had a house full of people.
It was good to see everybody back today.
1 Kings chapter 18, verse number 36, and the Bible says,
And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the
evening sacrifice that Elijah the prophet came near

and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel,
let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel,
and that I am thy servant,
and that I have done all these things at thy word.
filling those, that trench up with water,
pouring that on the sacrifice.
Elijah did not come up with this on his own.
These were the instructions of God,
and Elijah had simply done what God had told him to do.
He says, hear me, Lord, hear me,
that this people may know that thou art the Lord God,
and that thou hast turned their heart back again.
Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering,
the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust,
and licked up the water that was in the trench.
And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces,
and they said, the Lord, he is the God.
The Lord, he is the God.
That was the entire purpose of this event,
to get God's people back on their face,
recognizing the greatness and the majesty of who God is.
Then we see in verse 40,
If you do not think that our God takes seriously
the actions of those who lead his people astray,
read this, read this, read this, read it,
and read it over and over many other places.
They forfeited their right to live.
Verse 41,
And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink,
for there is a sound of abundance of rain.
So Ahab went up to eat and to drink, and Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel,
and he cast himself down upon the face of the earth,
and put his face between his knees.
He said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea.
And he went up and looked and said, There is nothing.
And he said, Go again seven times.
And it came to pass at the seventh time that he said,
Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand.
And he said, Go up, saying to Ahab,
Prepare thy chariot and get thee down,
that the rain stop thee not.
Lastly, verse 45 says, And it come to pass in the meanwhile
that the heaven was black with clouds and wind,
and there was a great rain.
And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.
Let's pray.
Heavenly Father, Lord, we thank you.

Lord, that it is your faithfulness.
Lord, that it's new every morning.
That it's great beyond comparison.
Lord, indeed, all that we have ever needed,
or will need,
your hands have provided.
Lord, from the physical to the spiritual.
God, I pray tonight that you would take your word.
Lord, you tell us in your word
that faith come by hearing
and hearing by the word of God.
That this is profitable.
Lord, this record of this event of many, many years ago
is profitable for your people
for doctrine, for instruction,
for proof, for correction,
for instruction in righteousness.
Have your way in this service tonight, dear Lord.
We love you and thank you.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen and amen.
This morning we looked at the subject in verse number 18, chapter 18,
before the fire fell.
Very easy to get fixated on that fire.
What a move of God.
This violent fire.
This consuming fire.
By the way, Hebrews tells us that our God is a consuming fire.
How do I know I'm in relationship with God?
All we got to do is ask ourselves,
is there less of me today than there used to be?
God comes in and he begins to take over and he consumes.
But we see some things that happen before the fire fell.
Sin was confronted.
God sent Elijah to Ahab.
To confront him on his sin.
To confront him on the people's sin.
If we're going to dwell in the presence of God, sin must be confronted in our life.
A question was asked and a challenge was issued.
If God be God, serve him.
But what you can't do, how long halt ye between two opinions?
You can't dabble and straddle.
It is impossible.
He said, well preacher,
I see people doing it all the time.
Actually what they got, they're not doing both, they're doing the other.
You cannot serve God and mammon.

It is an impossibility to accomplish that.
But the question really is this simple.
Is God who he says he is?
Do we believe that God is who he says he is?
If we do,
the answer is easy.
Forsake all and follow.
Drop all,
follow.
Die to self,
praise him,
love him,
serving.
This God is worth all of these things.
Sin was confronted.
A challenge was issued.
And a construction project took place.
Again, it's not about mortar and bricks and wood.
But it's that place, that altar of God
that exists here, it existed there,
more than anything exists, it exists within our heart.
To where we kneel down before God
and we examine the most important things.
His holiness,
His righteousness,
His jurisdiction over our lives, His goodness,
His grace,
and our relationship with Him.
Those things happened and the fire of God fell.
Men were humbled,
God was exalted,
and His enemies were defeated.
But if we continue reading this passage of Scripture,
we've got to recognize there was still a drought.
All of these things happened,
but there was still a drought.
Not a short drought, not a small drought,
but a drought now
that had lasted for three years.
See,
this was no time,
even though God had moved for everybody to go home,
celebrate,
kick up, and relax.
No, now it was a time to pray.
It was a time,
God, we still need you because we are still living

in this drought-stricken land.
Tonight,
I want to share on this thought of before the rain came.
Just as there were some things that happened before the fire fell,
there were some things that happened before the rain came,
a drought-busting rain,
a life-giving rain.
And particularly,
I want us to look at this man that prayed
and the manner in which he prayed.
We get a good picture of this here
in the book of 1 Kings, but I also want to
read a passage to you out of the book of James.
James chapter 5,
if you'll turn with me.
James chapter 5, beginning in reading verse number 16.
James says, Confess your faults one to another
and pray for one another
that you may be healed.
The factual,
fervent prayer
of a righteous man
availeth much.
Elias or Elijah was a man subject to like passions
as we are
and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain
and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.
And he prayed again and the heavens gave rain
and the earth brought forth her fruit.
The man that prayed
and the manner in which he prayed.
Number one, the man that prayed.
Elijah was
a regular man.
Now a big mistake would be made
if we fail to miss
the great examples
that we have in scripture of men that God used
to accomplish great things that live great lives.
One of my favorite
in scripture is Daniel.
I love the consistency of Daniel.
As a young man who refused to defile himself for the king's meat as an old man
refused not to pray as he had prayed
and faced the lions then.
Daniel was no flash in the pan.
He wasn't perfect but he was no,

it was just a life that was consistent.
Man, those lives speak volumes.
I love that we see the change in Paul.
He was Saul
and God made him Paul.
So we need to see the examples that God uses
the meekness of Moses and the faithfulness
that we read about in Hebrews of Noah and David
and so many others.
but I think an even bigger mistake would be made
if we turn these men into something more than men.
You follow what I'm saying?
The scripture in James says Elijah
was a man subject to like pastures just as we are.
Matthew,
what does that mean?
That means that Elijah wasn't superhuman.
Elijah was a mere human
and Elijah was really,
really human because if we make it to the next
chapter we're going to find out just how human
Elijah actually was.
The point that
James is making here is that these weren't supermen.
These were regular men,
normal men
that God used in mighty,
mighty ways.
So we can take this book and we can look at the lives of people like Elijah
and Elisha and David and Peter and Paul
and all of these people
and we place them in this spectrum and we place them in this realm
of somehow they're supernatural people who haven't,
I mean, they haven't lived
in the 21st century.
They haven't had to deal with all the things that we're having to deal with.
Can I tell you that nobody's ever lived in a more wicked day than Noah lived in?
They were normal people
that God used
in a miraculous way.
I'm convinced by the word of God
there is no person too dirty
that God can't make clean nor is there
no person too small
that God can't use
and as a matter of fact those are the type of people
according to the scripture

that God prefers to use the most.
Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians he said but God
hath chosen the foolish things of this world
to confound the wise
and God has chosen the weak things of this
world to confound the things which are mighty.
In other words God has taken the smaller things
the things that really aren't looked upon
are the lesser men to use them in a mighty way and we say well God why would God
operate that way?
Why would God take regular people
and use it in such a way?
I'm going to tell you the reason why
because when the deed is done and all this is accomplished that everyone
will know assuredly this was not a work of man
this was the work of God.
I love the story of Gideon Gideon had that army
and God whittled that thing down to 300
you're not even going to go around Jericho not Gideon
but Joshua you're not even going to fire a shot
what I love about this is God used Elijah
in a miraculous way
but I want you to know
if you're a child of God don't matter if you're a preacher don't matter
if you're a Sunday school teacher you come to God as Elijah come to God
as a normal person
who's been made right
you pray for the will of God
in the zeal of God
God can use and intends on using
every believer
in this church
I cannot accomplish it all
as a matter of fact I can accomplish nothing
none of us on our own can accomplish anything
but what would happen if a church
was to come together like Elijah came realizing that regular men
are the type of people that God used but also
what God uses is not just regular men regular men who've been turned
into righteous men James says the effectual fervent prayer
of a righteous man availeth much folks we can't overstate this enough
or overemphasize what the Lord is saying
through James it's Elijah when he come to God
Elijah is coming with clean hands this is huge
folks the only reason any man can pray right
is because God has first made that man right
but even for a man

that's been made right
he must come to God right
he must ask for that daily cleansing that there's nothing in the way of his life
as Elijah sits down there to pray
he could look to God and go God I have done this as you have told me to do it
I'm just a normal guy an old man from nowhere the back 40 or nothing
but you have called me
you have sent me you have commissioned me to go
and the same is true right here
that the normal person who has been made by the power of God and the grace of God
that's praying for the will of God the manner in which that man prays
but it first begins with the man that is doing the pray
he was made right
he's a righteous man
I love this phrase the fact that a righteous man
availeth much
I want you to look that word up avail what does that mean
it means to be a force
to be strong
I believe this
does God hear me
more than he hears Mitzi or does God hear Dolores
more than he hears
brother Randy
does God have respect her persons when it comes to prayer
no not as long as
that individual is righteous and comes clean
absolutely not
but I tell you what also is true
there are some people
who are a force in prayer
I mean they are a force they have power
they have strength
and it's not because they're extra special it's not because they're extra Christian
or they just got some special anointing upon them but the reason
they avail in prayer is because a lot of what we're going to see tonight
they recognize who God is they recognize the deity of God
the power of God
the majesty of God they realize how weak that they are and how much
they need their Lord and James writes
the factual fervent prayer stretched out reached out prayer
of a righteous man
it is a force
it's not coercing a reluctant God to move but y'all know y'all got them
I've got a little lady that I used to go to church with
named Carol Phillips she had a son she buried
her son not too long ago how old was I don't know

he was in the mid-twenties
twenty-seven
she brought this little rascal to church every Sunday
most of the time by herself without her husband
what was his name Cody Cody
Cody was born with some type of disease I don't
know if it was cerebral palsy or what it was
but he was in a wheelchair and I mean he had his deformities
I mean her whole life was to take care of this child
and she would wrestle this boy to church in that
wheelchair and did it all the way to he was a grown man
by herself most of the time
and she stands about this tall
but I want to tell you there's something about that woman
and it ain't a show
it ain't for anything else
there was a
there was a power and there was there is a strength and there is something
inside of her
and I think it's because
she had to find out very very quickly that she
could not do what she was going to have to do
all on her own
so she leaned on God like hey give me this day my daily bread
like really did it
and she did it for like twenty something years
so when it got in church and it comes time
to praise the Lord
she was ready to praise the Lord and I want to tell you what you had a need
you want something to pray he said go get that little four foot nine woman
and bring her up here because we want sister Carol praying
because she's righteous in the eyes of God and she has learned
to cast all of her cares upon him
because he she knows
that he cares for her
and it's a force in the prayer life and in the lives of other people
this man that prayed he was a regular man a normal man
he was a righteous man but the manner in which he prayed I want to share
just four very quick things with you
the three quick things with you
and the manner in which Elijah prayed number one
he prayed with recognition
what does that mean go back to verse number one chapter 18
verse number one the Bible says and it came to pass
after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year
saying go thyself go show thyself unto Ahab
and I will send rain

upon the earth
you say preacher what does that mean
when Elijah knelt down
on top of Mount Carmel to pray
he did not do so blindly
and he did not do so in ignorance
Elijah recognized and he remembered something
very very important
you say preacher what is that
God has made a promise
God had already told him
I am going to send rain upon
the earth
so when Elijah sat down and kneeled down to pray
he knew that he was praying
not for his own will to be accomplished
but the clearly revealed will
of God he knew what God had said and he was praying for what God had said
to be accomplished I love what Adrian Rothers
said he says nothing lays out nothing lies
outside the power of prayer except that which lies
outside the will of God that he knew he was praying
in the will of God in three and a half years of no rain could not stop would not stop
God from sending him he played with recognition
he played prayed with remembrance
I don't believe that's the only thing that he
remembered I believe he remembered chapter 17
I believe he remembered the ravens that fed him I believe he remembered
the meal and the oil and the widow's son that was raised to death
I believe he remembered how the fire just fell
all of these things working in his life
is what allowed him to pray in the manner in which he prayed preacher
what's that got to do with me folks there ain't a person in here
Ricky you can go back and you can see where God
has done things
in your life you know that it was God after you know that it was God you know
that it was God and you know that it was God
so when you sit down and pray
you can recognize and remember this God
has moved before this God
has made a promise and I'm praying in the will of God
it makes all the difference in the world
I've got my little books now I've got two
I used to talk about my black book
a lady gave this to me when I was first called to preach in 2005
and in that little black book I would write
down every date that I preached where I preached

and what number it was
and what I preached about
I filled up one book
now I'm working on my second book
August 22nd 2010
number 61
was right here
number 61
I've been preaching for five years
number 61
tonight
July something 2026
we're 1,671
well ain't you special no I ain't special I'm going to tell you why I keep them books
because I open them up from time to time
I look at it when I feel dry as a bone
when my hands are so nervous they freeze people y'all go preach your hands
I'm nervous I could throw up when I get up here I'm so nervous but what I've learned
I can recognize and I can remember
that God has moved great is his faithfulness
all I have needed thy hands have provided
Elijah could look back and he's praying to God
Lord it ain't rained
in three and a half years God
but you said it would
and I remember
what you've done I remember what you've done I'm just asking you
to do some remembering and recognizing next time you learn that and pray
but number one make sure you're right what God pray come with clean hands
because if you come
with dirty hands and a dirty heart your prayer
ain't going to get above the ceiling of your house
pray to recognition
he also prayed with a reliance look at verse number 42
verse 41
it says Elijah said and Ahab get thee up eat and
drink for there is the sound of abundance of rain
verse 42
says so Ahab went up to eat and to drink and Elijah went up to the top of Carmel
I love this picture
and he cast himself down upon the earth
and put his face between his knees
I can't I can't even do it
I mean all
this is the this is the picture
this is the picture
do we have a record of what Elijah's saying

here's a man he just gets up he just gets up there
he has done everything that God has told him to do
right
folks this is huge now
we can't not do the things that God
has told us to do and expect to go to our prayer closet
and be a force and have power in prayer it don't work that way
but when we follow
we submit we mind we obey we remember what God has
said we remember what God has done here comes Elijah
and he puts his face down between his knees listen he didn't do so blindly
or in ignorance see here's the thing
Elijah could confront the king
and he did but he couldn't conjure up a cloud
Elijah could summon the false prophets but he had no power to end the drought
and right here there's no dancing there's no demanding
there's no barking there's no begging
there's just a man with his face down in the dust from which he came
we see a man who is fully relied upon the power
of God
that's what we see not barking not begging not dancing not making a scene
just a man to go God I've done what I can do I've done all that I can do so right now
I'm putting my face in the dirt and I'm going to fully rely on you now to do
something that only you can accomplish
and I had to ask myself I wrote this down in my notes does this describe me
trusting
and entrusting
fully
relying upon God keep going back to that motto prayer
give us this day our daily bread godly dependence does that mean Elijah does nothing
no Elijah was really really busy but he knew at the end of the day in order for fire
to fall or rain to come this was a work of God and only God could do it
so he's just fully relying upon the Lord
trusting in the Lord
all of these things happened before the rain came
the man that prayed a regular man
who's a righteous man
the manner in which he prayed with recognition and reliance
but look at verse 43
here's a man who prayed with resolve
verse 42
says so Ahab went up to eat and to drink and
Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel
and he cast himself down
upon the earth and put his face between his knees
and said to his servant go up now look toward the sea
and he went up and he looked and said there is nothing

and he said go again
seven times
as Elijah's servant
is looking
Elijah is still
in his prayerful position
this is strange
it's not strange because it's it's real this is how it works
God had promised this thing
but it's
it's not comical I mean it's education
God did not immediately
send rain the first time Elijah prayed for
nor the second time nor the third time
goes back to the purpose of prayer purpose of
prayer isn't to change God it's to change us
here's what happened go look again
go look again go look again but what we see in this passage of scripture
is that Elijah remained dedicated
during the lay he remained dedicated he had resolved because he had faith
because he knew the will of God he was in the will of God and you combine
all of these things with his experience of God
and his faithfulness God's faithfulness to him
here was a man those things
enabled him to remain dedicated
and show this
spiritual resolve
to continue to continue to continue
in prayer now listen we got to understand this
prayer is not coercing
a reluctant God to move I heard it taught like that
if you just pray hard enough you'll finally get God
to change his mind on moving your behalf that's
a bunch of garbage that ain't the way it works
we're praying for God's perfect will we're not praying for our will at all
we're praying for his will to be accomplished
we can look at his word we can see his will
hear this passage knew his will
he's in his will
so why not stay there
prayer is not coercing a reluctant God to
move but when we look at scripture in general
we see where reliance
and persistence
in God's eyes equals sincerity
sincerity it means something I've shared this many many times many many times
but it just it just comes to my mind again my little boy when he was a little boy

there was no there was you never knew
what he was going to ask for
never knew
I mean it could be a BB gun it could be a three wheeler
it could be a I mean you just never knew
but there was times that little rascal would get something on his mind
and then I'd know
daddy
I really want a BB gun
daddy I really want that BB gun now daddy I really want that BB gun
I want that BB gun now I'm not trying to make this too simplistic but I think
sometimes we'll just throw something up to God and listen it's nothing but a passing
thought it's nothing but a you know I mean it just comes in one side
and out the other you let a woman of God or a mama of God or a daddy of God
or a granddaughter of God a child of God come before his God because he's got
a real need in his life and he's coming to God to meet that need because he can't
need it and he shows up day after day after day
fully dependent upon the Lord Sister Sheila
in God's eyes consistency and reliability and resolve
that equal sincerity he knows that it matters to you
and he knows that it matters to him and those are the type
of individuals
that avail
and they're a force in prayer
he kept on praying he kept on praying and I love the end of the story I gotta read it
I don't see nothing about the size of a little cloud about the size of a man's hand
that was enough for him to tell Ahab you better get
going or you ain't gonna make it down off this mountain
folks this is more than just a story it is something that the Lord
the Holy Spirit
instructed James to pen to the New Testament church
about how to pray I wanna back up something real quick
I said something
in the model prayer and I wanna
clarify this too
so I'm not taking that out of context
our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name thy
kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
give us this day our daily bread forgive us our debts
as we forgive our debtors
lead us not to temptation but deliver us from evil for
thine is the king the power and the glory forever amen
and in teaching through that
I made the comment that there's nothing in there
about the physical healings or anything like that
there's not there
but there is in James

look at verse 16
of chapter 5
confess your faults onto another
and pray for one another that you may be healed
the factual fervent prayer of a righteous man
availeth much Elijah was a man subject to like passions we are
and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain and it rained not on the earth
by the space of three years and six months
and he prayed again and the heaven gave rain and the earth
brought forth her fruit
we find more things about prayer
confess your faults one to another
what does that mean that we all get up here and take our turn behind the pulpit
and confess all of our dirty laundry that ain't what it means at all
it means if I've done something to offend Alton or sin against
Alton I go to Alton and I tell him
we confess this amongst one another and make it right
because if we don't it's going to hinder our prayers
pray for one another
pray for one another
that you may be healed
is that physical or is that spiritual
honestly I think it's got a little bit of both
I think it's got a little bit of both
I know the scripture says it's appointed unto man once to die and then the judgment
I know that eventually
every one of us
no amount of prayer is going to keep us from dying
because it's our time
it won't happen
but I also believe
but I also believe
I also believe
that if we love one another
and I care about sister
I'm going to pray for you
I'm going to pray
that God would touch your body
so brother Brian am I now going to be praying outside the will of God
no
no God knows you know what you know what
you know God knows what we say whether we pray
about what we think whether we pray about it or not
he does
sister Sherry
he knows that
but what I do is I Lord

if you're willing
because I love this woman I want her legs to regain her strength
Lord if you're willing
I want this young man or whomever it is
I want them to be better
y'all seen this young man who recently died of cancer it's been all over Facebook
everybody in the world has been praying for him been praying for him been praying
for him did God drop the ball on that one
no
God might have used that boy's death
and his sickness
to make more people wear him than what would have ever
happened in that young man's life had he not had cancer
but what I know
is God says we are to be people who pray
for each other
spiritual healing above all things
regular men
who have been made righteous
relying upon God
recognizing God
with the resolve of God
churches isn't preacher speak it's the truth
the reason that I preach
as I believe
with all my heart
that the God of Elijah is still God today
that this same God
will cleanse a dirty soul
and send water
to the thirsty soul
he will claim them he will keep them he will save them he will seal them
I believe that the church today
does not need tradition
of yesteryear
we do not need the marketing
and the creativity
of the current year we need the God of Elijah and if we'll be Elijah type of people
that confront sin and answer the challenge and rebuild our altar
and we'll come cleanly before God
with resolve
and rely upon him and recognizing him new Bethel you better get out to rain gear
because God will move
God will move let's pray
Heavenly Father we thank you for your word
and thank you that you are an unchanging God
whose hand does not shorten that it cannot save

we're heavy that it cannot hear
Lord we need you more than the air that we breathe
sadly sometimes we just don't recognize it
Lord teach us through your word
Lord give us a heart that is receptive
or the courage
to act upon
or these unchanging truths that you so clearly clearly reveal
Lord we need your fire
we need your rain
but God most of all we need you
in Jesus sweet name I pray amen let's stand