

2026-10-07 Points

Title: Choose This Day: Wavering Faith, Bold Obedience, and the God Who Answers by Fire

Sermon Summary: Drawing from the dramatic confrontation on Mount Carmel in 1 Kings 18, this sermon challenges believers to stop wavering between devotion to God and accommodation to the surrounding culture. Using Elijah's bold stand against the prophets of Baal and his direct rebuke of King Ahab, the pastor calls the congregation to examine whether they are truly following God or merely identifying with Him in name only. The sermon draws sharp parallels between ancient Israel's spiritual compromise and the modern church's tendency to lower biblical standards, disengage from cultural and civic responsibility, and avoid the cost of genuine discipleship. Communion is offered at the close as an invitation to rededication and deeper surrender.

Key Points:

- King Ahab's accusation that Elijah was a "troubler of Israel" reflects the world's tendency to blame those who speak God's truth, and Elijah's response models how believers should remain focused on God's message rather than becoming personally defensive
- The people's silence when asked to choose between God and Baal mirrors a modern Christian passivity that mistakes attendance or belief in name for genuine, obedient discipleship
- Elijah's challenge -- "How long will you waver between two opinions?" -- is a timeless call to decisive, wholehearted commitment to God rather than straddling the fence between godly and worldly values
- Sins of omission -- failing to witness, failing to uphold biblical standards, failing to vote according to God's principles -- are treated as serious failures of faithfulness, not minor oversights
- The church has historically been a civic and moral force in society, and its withdrawal from that role has contributed to cultural and moral decline in America
- Elijah's prayer before the fire fell was brief, humble, and God-centered, demonstrating that effective intercession is rooted in obedience and trust

rather than religious performance

- The involvement of the people in gathering water and pouring it on the altar illustrates the importance of "skin in the game" -- that genuine faith requires personal investment and effort, not passive observation
- Suffering for Christ is presented not as an unlikely possibility but as an expected dimension of true discipleship, and believers must be prepared to stand for their faith even at personal cost
- Communion is framed not merely as remembrance but as an opportunity for rededication and honest surrender of areas where God's commands have been ignored

Scripture Reference:

- 1 Kings 18:16-39, which recounts Obadiah's report to Ahab, Elijah's confrontation with the king, the assembly on Mount Carmel, the contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, and the fire of the Lord consuming the sacrifice

Stories:

- The confrontation between Elijah and Ahab, in which Ahab calls Elijah a "troubler of Israel" and Elijah redirects the accusation back to the king and his family's abandonment of God's commands
- The contest on Mount Carmel, in which 450 prophets of Baal call on their god from morning until noon with no response, cutting themselves and shouting, while Elijah taunts them and waits
- Elijah's repair of the broken altar using twelve stones, his instruction to drench the sacrifice and wood with water three times, and his brief prayer before the fire of the Lord falls and consumes everything including the water in the trench
- The congregation's own experience of renovating their church building around 2010, used as an illustration of how communal sacrifice and sweat equity produce spiritual bonding and lasting fruit
- A brief reference to Job, used to distinguish between suffering as divine discipline and suffering as a means of deepening faith and demonstrating its authenticity before God