

You've Outgrown It

Stop Playing Small

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ECHO CHURCH

2 Kings 6:1-7
NKJV

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“And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, See now, the place where we dwell with you is too small for us. Please, let us go to the Jordan, and let every man take a beam from there, and let us make there a place where we may dwell. So he answered, Go.”

2 Kings 6:1-2

“The widest thing in the universe is not space; it is the potential capacity of the human heart. Being made in the image of God, it is capable of almost unlimited extension in all directions. And one of the world’s greatest tragedies is that we allow our hearts to shrink until there is room in them for little besides ourselves.”

A. W. TOZER • THE ROOT OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Second Kings 6 opens with an unusual confession from the sons of the prophets. The place where we dwell with you is too small for us. Notice, nothing in the text says anything was wrong with the place. The place had served them. The place had housed them. The place had been connected to their development. The place had been good for a season. But growth created a new problem. What used to fit them no longer fit them.

There is a difference between leaving because you are frustrated and moving because you have developed. Sometimes dissatisfaction is immaturity. But sometimes discomfort is evidence of growth. The danger is that many of us would rather shrink ourselves than admit that something around us no longer has the capacity for what God has put within us. So we keep squeezing. Adjusting. Compromising. Downplaying. Apologizing. And God may be saying, the problem is not that you do not fit. The problem is that you are still trying to fit somewhere you have outgrown.

You can be grateful for where you are and still be honest that you have outgrown it. There are places you can appreciate without remaining in. There are seasons you can honor without repeating. There are structures you can be thankful for without being restricted by. You can honor where God brought you from without allowing where you came from to dictate where God is taking you.

Here is the big question this message answers. What do you do when the place that helped develop you no longer has the capacity to contain who God is calling you to become? Over these verses we will watch four things. Recognize what you have **outgrown**. Trust that God **goes where He sends you**. Accept that something can **go wrong** while you are doing the right thing. And learn what to do when you have to ask, **where did it fall?**

God did not grow you so you could spend the next season shrinking yourself to fit the last one.

MOVEMENT ONE

Recognize What You've Outgrown

"The place where we dwell with you is too small for us." 2 Kings 6:1

Watch who names the problem. Elisha does not announce, you need a bigger place. The sons of the prophets recognize the limitation themselves. They say, this place is too small. Growth requires self awareness. Sometimes God does not need to send you another prophecy. He needs you to be honest about what is already obvious. We keep asking, God show me, God confirm it, God send me a sign, when the evidence may already be surrounding us. Sometimes your problem is not that something is wrong with you. Your problem is that something has grown in you. The place did not become smaller. They became bigger. Their capacity changed. Their community expanded. And that is why growth can feel uncomfortable, because sometimes you have grown while your environment stayed the same.

◆ PR THOUGHT

What are you still calling comfortable that God may be calling too small?

1. Stop Playing Small to Your Anointing

The first thing we have to stop shrinking is what God has placed in us. These are sons of the prophets, part of a prophetic community, developing and being trained, and eventually their growth produces a capacity issue. Understand what anointing is. Anointing is not popularity. It is not a platform, not followers, not being better than someone else. Anointing is divine enablement for divine assignment. And one of our tragedies as believers is that we confuse humility with self reduction. Humility says, what I have came from God. Playing small says, therefore I will pretend God did not give me anything. Those are not the same thing.

Some of us are still operating according to an outdated version of ourselves. God has developed you, but you keep introducing yourself according to who you used to be. You keep walking into rooms apologizing. You keep dismissing your own ideas. You keep waiting for people to validate what God has been developing in private. You keep saying, I am just, I do not really, I am probably not ready. Maybe you were not ready then. But you have grown since then. Stop shrinking what God has strengthened.

◆ PR THOUGHT

God cannot maximize through you what you insist on minimizing within you. Have you mistaken minimizing yourself for being humble?

2. Stop Playing Small to Your Purpose

“Let us go to the Jordan, and let every man take a beam... and let us make there a place where we may dwell.” 2 Kings 6:2

The sons of the prophets do more than identify the problem. They develop a plan. In essence they say, let us go, let us get material, let us build. That matters, because purpose does not merely recognize what is wrong. Purpose assumes responsibility for building what should exist next. There are people who have spent years explaining why something does not work. They can diagnose every limitation and point out everything missing. But eventually purpose asks a harder question. What are you going to build? It is one thing to say this is too small. It is another thing to say, let us build something bigger.

At some point the prayer has to change. We keep praying, God do something. And God’s answer may be, I did, I put you there. You may be the answer to something you keep asking God to change. Notice the instruction, let every man take a beam. Everyone has something to carry. Expansion requires participation. The future cannot be built by spectators. If God is building a church, everybody has a beam. Someone serves. Someone gives. Someone invites. Someone disciples. Someone prays. Someone leads. Someone creates. Someone carries. Stop attending what you are supposed to help build. Build the business. Develop the gift. Write the book. Start the ministry. Apply for the opportunity. Go back to school. Have the conversation. Make the move. Not because ambition is driving you, but because purpose has made passivity uncomfortable.

◆ PR THOUGHT

When purpose outgrows your present capacity, faith does not just ask for more room. Faith starts building it. Are you asking God to enlarge something He already gave you permission to build?

The Release: “Go”

They present the vision to Elisha, and his response is one word. Go. This is important. Elisha does not become threatened by their growth. He does not make their expansion about himself. He does not interpret their desire for more room as disrespect. He releases them. Healthy leadership celebrates the growth it helped produce. If the people you develop never grow beyond their previous capacity, did you actually develop them? Their growth does not diminish his leadership. Their growth validates it.

But here is the other side. Some of us are still waiting for God to give permission for something He already released. God said go, but we heard renovate. God said go, and we said maybe I will rearrange some things. God said go, and we said maybe if I make this old place more comfortable, I can stay. There are moments when God is not calling you to remodel what you have outgrown. He is releasing you to build what is next. Some of us keep asking God for a renovation when God has given us a relocation. It may not be physical. It may be a mental, spiritual, leadership, relational, vocational, or structural relocation.

◆ PR THOUGHT

What are you trying to renovate that God already released you to leave?

3. Stop Playing Small to Your Position

There is a difference between being given a position and occupying it. There are people who have been positioned by God but are still thinking like they are standing outside the room. God opened the door, but internally you are still asking, am I supposed to be here? God trusted you with responsibility, but you are still waiting for everyone

else to affirm you. God increased your influence, but you are afraid to use your voice. God elevated you, but you keep shrinking to keep other people comfortable. Position is not merely where you stand. Position is your willingness to function where God placed you.

Esther had to occupy her position. Joseph had to occupy his position. David eventually had to sit on the throne. You can spend so much time trying to prove you are humble that you become hesitant to occupy what God assigned. You do not honor God by standing beneath a position He assigned you to occupy. This is not arrogance. It is stewardship. Arrogance says, I deserve this. Stewardship says, God entrusted this to me, so I have a responsibility to handle it well.

◆ PR THOUGHT

Where has God positioned you that you are still asking permission to stand?

MOVEMENT TWO

God Goes Where He Sends You

“And one said, Please consent to go with your servants. And he answered, I will go.” 2 Kings 6:3–4

After Elisha releases them, one of the men asks him to come along, and Elisha responds, I will go. This may be one of the most encouraging parts of the text. He does not simply release them. He accompanies them. There is a picture here worth holding on to. You are not being released into a place where God’s presence cannot follow you. The God who sends you is not intimidated by where He is sending you. New territory does not mean absence. Expansion does not mean abandonment. Transition does not mean separation from God’s presence. God can be with you in the unfamiliar place just as much as He was with you in the familiar one.

And notice where Elisha is. He is not waiting back at the old building. He is in the new place. He is around the work. He is present during construction. That matters, because we often think God’s presence only looks like church, prayer, worship, prophecy, and miracles. But sometimes God is present in the planning, the meetings, the building, the strategizing, the working, the learning, the creating, and the executing. God is not only present when you are praying about it. God can be present while you are building it. The building process itself can be spiritual.

◆ PR THOUGHT

The God who sends you is not intimidated by where He is sending you. He can be present while you build, not only while you pray.

MOVEMENT THREE

Something Can Go Wrong While You’re Doing the Right Thing

“But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron axe head fell into the water; and he cried out and said, Alas, master! For it was borrowed.” 2 Kings 6:5

While one of the men is cutting down a tree, the axe head falls into the water. This is critical. They were released. They were obedient. They were working. They were building. They were accompanied by Elisha. And something still went wrong. Being in the will of God does not mean everything will go according to plan. You can be in the right place, doing the right thing, with the right people, for the right reason, and still lose your axe head. Purpose does not eliminate problems. Anointing does not eliminate accidents. Obedience does not eliminate setbacks.

Growth does not eliminate frustration.

Then the man reveals another layer. The axe was borrowed. Now he has not simply lost a tool. He has lost something entrusted to him. The very instrument he needed to help build what they were released to build fell into a place he could not naturally reach. That is where a lot of people find themselves. You are building, obeying, moving, and somewhere in the process you lost something. Maybe you lost confidence. Momentum. Energy. Resources. Joy. Creativity. Hope. Courage. Trust. Clarity. What do you do when you have outgrown where you were, started building where you are going, and then lost what you thought you needed to finish?

◆ PR THOUGHT

Do not interpret what sank as proof that the building is over. Setbacks are not the same as missing God.

MOVEMENT FOUR

Where Did It Fall?

“So the man of God said, Where did it fall? And he showed him the place.” 2 Kings 6:6

Elisha’s first response is not a formula. It is a question. Where did it fall? Before there is recovery, there is identification. And that question can preach. Where did your confidence fall? Where did your courage fall? Where did your joy fall? Where did you stop believing? Where did disappointment enter? Where did you become afraid? Where did you start shrinking yourself? Where did rejection alter the way you see yourself? Where did somebody else’s opinion become louder than God’s call? You cannot address what you refuse to locate.

The man has to show Elisha the place, and that requires honesty. He essentially says, right there. That is where I lost it. That is where I got hurt. That is where I stopped trusting. That is where I became scared. That is where I started playing small. Honesty is often the doorway to recovery. You do not have to pretend that nothing fell. God is not asking you to deny what happened. He is asking you to show Him where it happened.

◆ PR THOUGHT

You cannot address what you refuse to locate. Honesty is the doorway to recovery.

THE CLOSE

It Doesn’t Make Sense, But It Still Floats

“So he cut off a stick, and threw it in there; and he made the iron float. Therefore he said, Pick it up for yourself. So he reached out his hand and took it.” 2 Kings 6:6–7

Elisha does something that makes no natural sense. He cuts a stick, throws it into the water, and the iron rises. Iron does not float. The natural order says it should stay down. Logic says it sank. Gravity says it stays there. Experience says you are not getting that back. But this text shows us something about God. God is not restricted to the conditions that restrict us. Your situation says it should be over, but it still floats. They said the opportunity was gone, but it still floats. You thought you lost too much time, but it still floats. What you needed sank somewhere you could not reach, but it still floats. Your resources changed, your plan changed, your relationships changed, your circumstances changed, but it still floats.

Then watch the last thing. God makes the axe head available, but God does not put it back into the man's hand. Elisha says, pick it up. The miracle puts it within reach, but the man still has to reach. Grace can bring it within reach, but you have still got to reach. God can restore your confidence, reach. God can reopen the door, reach. God can restore your creativity, your courage, your opportunity, but you have to reach. Stop standing there amazed that it floated, and pick it up.

◆ PR THOUGHT

Grace can bring it within reach, but you have still got to reach. Stop standing there amazed that it floated, and pick it up.

THE RECAP

You've Outgrown It

You have outgrown some things, so in this season, stop playing small to your anointing and stop minimizing what God developed in you. Stop playing small to your purpose and stop waiting for someone else to build what God assigned you to help create. Stop playing small to your position and stop apologizing for standing where God placed you. When God says go, He can go with you. When something goes wrong while you are building, it does not mean you missed God. When something sinks, it does not mean the story is over. Because the God who told you to build is able to bring what you need back within reach. You have outgrown shrinking. You have outgrown apologizing for your gift. You have outgrown playing beneath your capacity. So if the place is too small, stop shrinking and start building. And if something falls while you are building, show God where it fell, watch Him bring it back within reach, and when it rises, reach for it.

SUNDAY DECLARATION

"I have outgrown playing small. I will stop shrinking and start building. And when something falls, I will show God where it fell, and when it rises, I will reach for it. It does not make sense, but it still floats."

Echo Church • Worship & Word • Pastor Rich Saunders Jr.