

Chariots of Fire

36 - Living the Simple Gospel: Philippians
Church on the Park I Sunday,

Text: Philippians 3:17; 4:9; 2 Kings 6:16-17

Theme: God is making his people into chariots of fire.

Intro: In ancient times, kings moved on chariots. The chariots were simple structures, often with two wheels, propelled forward by horses. The wheels had to be strong and balanced for the chariot to move forward. Today, God is making his people into chariots of fire. The great mystery of God is that he has made his home in you and wants to move through you. You are his chariot of fire. Jesus is the driver and his Holy Spirit is the fire and horsepower that moves you. The **structures** in your life are like wheels and if the wheels are not crafted correctly you will never go anywhere. Today, I want to focus on the **wheels**.

1) See what others fail to see (2 Kings 6:16-17).

- The first time we find **chariots of fire** in Scripture is when **Elijah** is taken into heaven (2 Kings 2:11).
 - Elijah didn't die, instead he was snatched by the angels and brought into heaven.
- Next—and this is what I want to focus on—we see the **chariots of fire** with **Elisha** in 2 Kings 6:17.
- **Leaders** are those who **see** what others **fail** to see. Moreover, they **cause** you to **see**.
 - **Elisha** sees, and he causes **his servant** to see as well.
- Often we **give up** before the **breakthrough**. We **settle** for less. We **allow** oppressors to overrun us. The **battle** is not over.
 - Elisha and his servant were **surrounded** by the enemy. There was no way out. Wisdom would have said to raise the white flag.
 - Instead, Elisha **saw** chariots of fire, **God's heavenly unseen army**. He beheld where others were blind. He became **victor** that day because he had **vision**. May the Lord **open** your eyes today.
 - “Don't be afraid...Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.’ And Elisha **prayed**, “**Open his eyes**, LORD, so that he may see.” Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha” (2 Kings 6:16-17, NIV).
- God wants **heaven reflected on earth**. The chariots of fire refer to his heavenly armies, but he also is making his people into chariots of fire on earth.

2) Let God make you into his chariot of fire (Phil 2:12-13).

- Often Christians do not **go** anywhere in their life. It's like the **wheels** of their chariot have been **blown out**.
 - Things like **bitterness**, unforgiveness, independence, **lust**, pornography, **despair** and **fear** have **blown out** their wheels. They cannot move.
- I want to share with you an **illustration** the Lord gave me to help you become strong in spiritual life. It has to do with the **wheels** of the chariot.
- The **cleansing water basin** in **Solomon's temple** had **chariot wheels**. It's **described** in 1 Kings 7:33: “The **workmanship** of the wheels was like the workmanship of a chariot wheel. Their axles, their rims, their spokes and their hubs were all cast.”

- Notice the **parts** described: 1) Hubs, 2) Spokes, 3) Rims and 4) Axles.
 - Today, I'd like to focus on the **hub and spokes**, and how God wants to give our lives **strong wheels**.
 - **Jesus** is the **workman** building these wheels, but he also uses preachers, teachers—his fivefold ministers— and his people as workmen.
- Please **draw** a chariot wheel. One that has a **hub** and **six spokes** (one vertical line down and an 'X' in the middle).
- First, every **wheel** needs a **hub**.
 - And the hub is **your relationship with God**. You can also see your **heart** as the hub of your life.
 - If you don't have a **strong hub**, you will not go anywhere in God.
 - You may move in your **flesh**—you may be restless, moving from one town to another, travelling here and there—but your **spirit** will not move, neither will you be a threat to the powers of darkness.
- Second, you need **spokes**. And this is the **heart** of the **message**.
 - Spokes give the wheel **strength and balance**.
 - They need to be **strong, balanced and numerous**.
 - This is the reason why I find most people struggle to walk with God: they don't have enough strong and balanced spokes in their lives.
- Who are your spokespeople? A spokes person or spokes ministry...
 - 1) **Strengthens** - *Who is **strengthening** your life? Are you **actively building** relationships with people who will strength you?*
 - *Who and what are these spokes?* They are the people and ministries that are feeding Christ into your life. They are godly, Spirit-given relationships.
 - You need to **take the initiative** here; don't wait for people to come to you. (**Acts 14:19-23**; cf. the nature of crowds; first a god then a devil - Acts 14:8-18).
"strengthening the souls of the disciples."
 - We are not talking about people who agree with you, but rather people who strengthen your spirit. *Are they **strengthening** your spirit, rather than your flesh?* Someone who makes you feel **comfortable** in your **sin** is **not** a spokesperson for Christ in your life.
 - 2) **Prays** - *Who are the people that pray for you? Who are those who have a genuine care for your life? Are you asking for people to pray for you? (Phil. 1:3-11)*
 - *IMPORTANT: Often these spokespeople for God's Kingdom are already in your life. You just need eyes to see them. Also, you need to value them and actively pursue them, just like Elisha pursued Elijah.
 - Those who move for God have continual life coming into them. They get rid of every weak and uneven spoke. They don't allow them to be attached to the structure of their life.
 - 3) **Oversees** - *Who is overseeing you? Who is observing your life? Who is watching out for you?* You can't just have one person, you need as team of people. **Hebrews 13:17**. These people are not about meddling in your life; you need to give them permission.
 - 4) **Knows** - *Who knows God? Who knows Jesus' ways? These are the kind of people that you want to open your life to. Have you let people in. Who knows you? Really knows you? (1 Thes. 5:12, KJV)*. Look for people who know God and know you.
 - 5) **Equips** - *Who is equipping you? Ephesians 4*.
 - You need to reach unbalanced people, but only as you are being made by God, only as you are being equipped.
 - If you don't allow yourself to be equipped, you'll end up falling into the same pit these people are in.

6) **Supports** - Who is supporting you? (Ezra 5:2; Exo. 17:12; 1 Chron. 11:10 & *2 Chron. 16:9).

- *So what should your spokes look like? How can you be made into a chariot of fire?*
- Philippians 3:17ff - Action words: join, observe, wait, stand, live in harmony, help.
- **Paul** exemplified what a **real spokesperson** is.
 - Philippians is a very autobiographical letter. In it we see what makes a man of God tick and the right sort of people you need in your life.

3) **Value all the relationships the Holy Spirit is crafting into your life (Exo. 17:12; 1 Chron. 11:10 & *2 Chron. 16:9).**

- I want to **warn** you that you can't put your **spiritual well-being** all on **one person**.
 - You need a **family** of spokespeople in your life.
 - This is the purpose of the **community** of the church. Also, you need strong ministries that are like spokes in your life. I hope that Holy Fire Ministry Training School, this church, JC Souljahs, the Prayer Tower, Basilea, the Holy Fire Choir, the MOV, can be spokes in your life. You need to take advantage of these ministries and go to the ones the Holy Spirit is drawing you to.
 - **No one person** or ministry can be your god.
 - But God has put you in a **community** to **empower you to move**.
- This is what I'd like you to meditate and pray about this week.
- **To be continued**...Next week we will talk about who you are a spokesperson of the Kingdom to.

Conclusion: Jesus wants to make your life into a strong wheel. This wheel has a solid hub and balanced spokes. The spokes are those who: 1) Strengthen, 2) Pray, 3) Oversee, 4) Know, 5) Equip and Support your walk with God.

MISC PERSONAL NOTES

As you have strong spokes, you can become God's chariot of fire.

I think for many of you God has already given you spokes. He wants you to see and recognise them and value them. He also wants to take out of your life, unbalanced and weak spokes, people trying to influence you, who do not represent Christ and his heart for you.

Wheel One: Receiving - Who's speaking into you?

Wheel Two: Giving - Who are you speaking into?