

WELCOME HOME

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November 20, 2022

TEXT

2 Kings 4:1-7, John 14:12-14, Psalm 89, Is 43: 1-3;18-19

TALK ABOUT IT

1. If you were in the widow's situation and were sent to go collect jars, how many would be too many?
2. What do you discover about God that the oil stops after all the jars are filled?
3. Where do you find yourself today: are you needing to kneel in need, move in faith or stand in expectation? Why?

LOOK TO THE WORD

Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the Lord. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves. 2 Kings 4:1-2

- What is the relationship between the widow and Elisha?
- Why does the widow point towards the husband's reverence for the Lord?
- At this time, what did it mean to have "debt" like this widow had and have creditors in the midst of Israel?

Let me sing the Lord's kindnesses forever. For all generations, I shall make known with my mouth Your faithfulness. For I said: forever will kindness stand strong in the heavens You set Your faithfulness firm. Psalm 89:1-3

- Why does the psalmist describe the Lord's everlasting kindnesses?
- What does it mean "for all generations"?
- What stands out about 'kindness that stands strong' and 'firm faithfulness'?

Elisha replied to her, "How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?" "Your servant has nothing there at all," she said, "except a small jar of olive oil." 2 Kings 4:3

- Why is it important that God uses people to meet other peoples' needs?
- Why does Elisha ask the woman about what she has in her house?
- Was Elisha aware what God might do?

Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side." 2 Kings 4:3-4

- Do you think Elisha knew what God was about to do?
- Why did He insist on not "just a few"?
- In this moment: what did Elisha believe? What did the widow believe?

"I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!" John 14:12-14

- What does Jesus mean "greater works"?
- Why can we have the confidence of "greater works"?
- What does it mean to "ask in my (Jesus') name"?
- What is the connection between answered prayers and Jesus' bringing glory to the Father?

She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one." But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing.

2 Kings 4:5-6

- Why did the widow shut the door?
- Why is it significant that the oil stopped flowing *AFTER* there was no other jar left?
- What lesson do we learn about God's preservation and faithfulness through the widow's oil?

LOOK INWARD

Scott opened with a story about asking God for a word.

- When was a time you asked God to speak in a particular?
- What did you hear? Or experience? Or didn't hear?
- What are ways that God can speak for people?
 - Scott's example: "God showed up and said, you've got friends with jars. I saw God's provision in people"

The widow's husband had been faithful to God, yet their family still found themselves without answers and owing debtors.

- How do people respond when they have been faithful but God seems to be distant?

- Why do we expect abundance/thriving/excess when people say they follow God?
- What are ways we can remind ourselves of God's provision?

Scott said, "Often, we are too full of ourselves to let God in... doing, solving, controlling, scared, proud."

- What steps do you need to take to empty a bit of yourself so that God can fill you?
- What thing or personal posture gets in the way for you to let God work?

Scott said "The Bible doesn't tell us how many jars the widow filled up that day, but I bet that if she were asked to do it again, she would have found more jars.... The only limit to God is our expectation."

- What are your expectations of God?
 - Do you feel like you are allowed to have expectations of God?
- If you were told to go get containers to be filled, how many would be too many; e.g. when would you stop asking for more containers?
- Today, where are you asking God to exceed your expectations?

Where did your faith stop?
Where did you hope stop?
Where did your expectation stop?

Kneel in need. Move in faith. Stand in expectation.

- Where are you today? Kneeling? Moving? Standing?
- How are you asking God to fill you?

Read Isaiah 43:1-3; 18-19.

LOOK OUTWARD

Scott said, "God is looking for a people who would believe beyond what they have seen, thought and experienced."

- How can others experience God when you "believe beyond"?
- What impact does "believing beyond" have on others' doubt, insecurities, questions, concerns...?

Scott asked:

Do you want prayers answered? Keep praying

Do you want to make a difference? Then make yourself available to be used by God

Do you want to see a city changed? Then get involved in people's lives.

- Who needs you to be praying?
- What difference do you want God to make? Who are you making yourself available to?
- How is God calling you to "get involved" in peoples' lives?
 - And who is coming along with you?

SO WHAT?

The only limit to God is our expectation.

BREATH PRAYER

If you're kneeling, pray: God, may my doubt give way to faith.

If you're moving, pray: God, may my hesitancy give way to courage.

If you're standing, pray: God, may my limits give way to your abundance.

PRACTICE THIS WEEK

Find a jar.

Empty the jar. Clean it well. Take a moment to ask God to fill your jar.

Use the experience/symbol to ask God what He is going to do next and ask God what He needs to clean out of your life.

NEVER STOP PRAYING

- Praise God for the renewed home we have to grow our family into
- Praise God for the movement of prayer that we have been able to be obedient and steward
- Praise God for the *Something Different* youth retreat last weekend
- Praise God for the growing church family; many of which attended a service in the auditorium this weekend **FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER**
- Pray for those preparing for baptism
- Pray for the upcoming season of Advent and Christmas
- Pray for those who are grieving the lost of loved ones this week
- Pray for the support of families as they grow their generations in family; as parents become the spiritual leaders in the lives of their families