

## True Strength in Turbulent Times

Portraits of Power

Growth Group Discussion

2 Kings 4

**Opening Questions** (get everyone involved in discussion):

- The Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12 is reflecting on the visions He has been given by God. In verse 7, we learn that God gives him a thorn in the flesh. Read verses 7-10. Paul says “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” There seems to be a connection to God’s power being displayed in our weakest moments. Where have you seen God’s power being displayed most powerfully in your life? Were they in weak moments? Why do you suppose that is?
- Begin with prayer. Take at least 30 seconds to be silent, clearing your minds of distractions and preparing to hear from God’s word.

### 1. Take Turns Reading 2 Kings 4:1-37.

#### ● First Portrait - The Widow’s Olive Oil

- Notice the widow’s tenacity in wanting help from Elisha. Notice how she grounds her request for help in her husband’s righteousness by saying “you know that he revered the Lord.” The message spoke about the importance of a legacy of faith.
  - Have you considered that some of the blessings you enjoy now or have enjoyed are because of Christian people in your past praying for you?
  - Psalm 37:25 says “I have been young and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread.”
    - Is David’s statement about God’s faithfulness true for you?
    - What does this tell us about God’s Character?
- Despite the fact that the widow only had “one jar of olive oil”, God was still able to work with that and sustain.
  - Reflect for a moment. What natural gifting, opportunity, relationship or physical item present in your life may God be intending to build upon just like he did with the widow’s jar of oil.
  - This miracle points to God’s power to sustain life. How has God sustained your life on little--either spiritually or physically? What did God teach you about Himself after doing that ?
  - Read Romans 12:3. It says that God has distributed an amount of faith to each person. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the belief that God can do anything, where is your faith in God presently. How did you put it in action in 2020?
  - In light of what you already have (like the widow’s jar of oil), how can you put your faith in action this week?
  - Notice that the amount of jars that the widow and her sons gathered was an indication of their faith. The oil only ran out when the amount of jars collected were filled. Pastor Erik warned “beware of limiting the power and work of God by a lack of faith and obedience.”

- Can you point to a time where you did this or saw this in somebody else?
    - Ephesians 3:20 says: “Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us”
      - God’s power in providing for the widow is a picture of that in action. As Christians, our Lord is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think. Think about that for a second. It is sometimes scary to think about asking God for something big..but the verse says God is able to do FAR MORE ABUNDANTLY than what we can ask or think.
      - Is there something specific you have been hoping or wishing that God would do? Take some time to pray for that.
  - **The Second Portrait - The Shunnamite Woman (vv.8-37)**
    - Notice the generosity of the Shunnamite woman. She does two things that we should emulate. First, she notices God’s people. Second, she uses her resources to be a blessing to others.
      - Have you known a person who has these qualities? Who is it?
      - Are you actively looking for ways to partner with God?
        - Sometimes we get so fixated on our routines that we miss God’s people passing by us along the way. How can you notice God’s people more?
        - Share a time where you have been blessed by others who used their resources to be a blessing.
    - The account of the Shunnamite woman shows us God’s power over death. God’s Life-giving power is most displayed at the Resurrection, where God in Christ claimed victory over death by being raised from the Grave.
      - Read Romans 8:9-11. This is a guarantee that because Christ was raised, we will be too. While the news of resurrection is great, Christians often struggle to keep it front and center in their minds.
        - How would things change in your life if you consciously remembered that just like the Shunnamite woman’s son, your body will be raised as well?
        - What needs to be done for you to keep the hope of resurrection central in your mind?
    - What do we learn about God’s character from the account of the Shunnamite woman?
    - What do we learn about mankind from the account of the Shunnamite woman?
    - How does this account point us forward to Jesus Christ?
2. **Application - God’s Life Giving Power is Displayed When We Come to Him in Desperation**

- The Key Idea of 2 Kings 4 is that God's Life Giving Power is displayed when we come to Him in Desperation.
  - Where do you need God's Life Giving Power to be poured out in your life?
- We see in this account that God is more than able to care for the needs of His People. Paul says in Phil. 4:19 - "and my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."
  - Reflect on a time where God met a material need in your life. Praise Him for this.
  - Is there any need that you are hoping God will supply? If so, pray remembering that God is able to supply all your needs.
- As we looked at the Shunnamite Woman's son, Pastor Erik asked the question: "What are your children facing now or going to face that makes you feel desperate?"
  - How should God's power comfort you?
  - (Perhaps) Spend time praying toward this end.

**PRAYER:**

- Pray in response to what God has shown you through this study and discussion.
- Take time also to share about and pray for any other needs that exist in your group.