

Practical Application Questions - 2 Kings 4:1-7

1. Have you nailed down your “sun stand still” prayer yet? What “God-sized” prayer are you praying for this month?
2. The widow in tonight’s story was arguably tenacious in her desire for help. When hard times come your way, are you naturally inclined to fight or take flight? Pray & fast or sulk & whine? Endure the pain or work like crazy to find a way out?
3. It was suggested during the message that the widow might have been initially vague about her prayer need. Do you find yourself being very specific during prayer or do you generalize your requests to God, (*e.g.: Lord bless the world and let us all be happy someday....*). What advantages are there to being specific in prayer? Any negatives?
4. In the story, God worked with the “little jar of oil” the widow already had present in her home. In light of your “sun stand still” prayer for this month, what natural gifting, opportunity, relationships, or physical items are currently present in your life that God might be intending to build on?
5. The bible says in Romans 12:3 that to each believer has been allotted a certain measure of faith. On a scale of 1-10, and in light of your experience as a believer, where does your faith (*the ability to believe God for the impossible*) rate? How did you put that faith to action in 2010?
6. In light of what’s “already in your house” (*your version of a “small jar of oil”*), how can you begin putting your faith to action this week?

Psalm 119:11

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you



7. This widow experienced God's power in a big way, in private, but it's outworking was very public in that she was able to payoff her debtors and live on the rest. What are some private prayers you've prayed that God answered in a big public way?
8. It was suggested during the message that, had the widow and her sons known the little jar of oil wouldn't stop flowing, they would have secured more jars. If you knew for certain that this month was an "open-heaven-season" and your prayers would be answered, what would be your sun stand still prayer? And if you already have one, would it be different?
9. Whatever your answer is to question 8, make that your sun stand still prayer! In addition, are you willing to join us in week 2 of our Thursday fasting and prayer for the ministry?
10. Galatians 6:7 and Jeremiah 17:10 affirm that not only can God not be deceived but He is intimately familiar with every single detail of our lives. As you pray your BIG "sun stand still" prayer this month, what areas of your life do you need to ask God to help you clean out completely? What needs to be confessed and surrendered to Jesus Christ? Start there.

Questions for Further Study

digging deeper into the biblical text.

1. Who were the company of prophets mentioned in verse 1?
2. Who is Elisha and how did he become boss-prophet? Why was he the one the widow turned to?
3. Why did the debtor in verse 1 have the right to enslave the widow and her sons even though the real culprit was dead?
4. Why did Elisha ask the widow what she had in her house? Is there any significance to this question?
5. Why did Elisha instruct the widow to "shut" her door during the miracle?
6. Where else in this book (2 Kings) did God take a little and multiply it into much?

THE REMIX MINISTRY

theREMIX is the college and 20something ministry of Grace the church on the Mount.

As part of a church-wide vision to raise up a generation of families that are built to last, our goal is to prepare young adults to engage in healthy relationships at every level of their lives. Hence, our worship gatherings are designed to equip young adults with biblical truths so that they in turn influence the people in their lives for Jesus Christ

MATTHEW 22:37-39

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Part two: '2 Kings 4:1-7' series: 'SUN STAND STILL'

Some of you might have seen this viral video on YouTube. It's the video of a homeless man whom I would say dared to believe God for the impossible.

On Monday morning, January 3rd, Ted Williams was a homeless panhandler with a golden voice living on the streets. By Tuesday evening the next day, he was one of the most in-demand voice personalities in the world, thanks to offers from countless radio stations, voiceover gigs and even the Cleveland Cavaliers.

As you watch this video, pay attention how he describes his

dreams, his desires, and his willingness to seek God for change in his life, or what I would describe as his own personal sun stand still prayer.

(<http://new.music.yahoo.com/blogs/amplifier/51933/golden-voiced-homeless-man-captivates-internet/>)

What an incredible story right? Now we don't know the details of his life on the streets or the actual status of his relationship with Jesus Christ, but we do know from his own words that he knew enough to call upon God in prayer even when the odds were seemingly stacked against him.

Did you catch his "sun stand still" prayer during the interview? In what he describes as his prayer-hour with God each day, he says his prayer was that, "God would keep his 90-something year old mum alive long enough so she could see him rebound from his former way of life." And on January 3rd, the Lord answered his prayers by sending a crew of news reporters along Ohio's highway 71 who offered him a new job, new life, a brighter future, and a chance for a reunion with his mum.

If an aging destitute homeless man who had every reason to give up hope found enough

courage to pray such an audacious prayer for his life, what's keeping you from praying your own sun stand still prayer this month?

In tonight's message, I'm going try and show you a rather simple truth from the scriptures, and it's this, "God's power is most actively displayed in the lives of those who actually call on Him." Simple right? But you'd be surprised at the amount of Christians who actually fail to see this fact.

There is an account in the scriptures that I think vividly illustrates this point and it's what we will be studying together tonight. It's the story of the prophet Elisha and a desperate widow, and it's in the Old Testament book of 2 Kings 4.

"I'm in great need!" – (CARRYING A HEAVY BURDEN) – 2 KINGS 4:1

"The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "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."

How many of you were here during our series through the book of Ruth? How many of you recall a term we used during the series called, "kinsman redeemer"? Remember what it means? A kinsman redeemer refers to a particular individual in a tribe whose job it was to reacquire property lost by family members who had fallen on hard times. It was a law prescribed by God in the Old Testament as a way to ensure no one was taken advantage of. In this case, the prophet Elisha had stepped into that role as the leader of the company of prophets, and so the widow in this story brings her great need to him. Apparently her husband had taken up some sort of loan that wasn't fully paid at the time of his death.

Unfortunately during this period, debts were not written off because death. In fact the Mosaic Law allowed for creditors to enslave debtors and their children to work off a debt they could not pay, hence this heavy burden/request in verse one.

Something you'll discover in this series is that they all follow the same pattern. Generally, there is a burden or a great need that needs to be taken care of otherwise something precious is lost. The



need is always greater than what the individual or the group can handle, hence they find themselves at a crossroads; lay down and accept defeat, or call upon an intercessor to help relieve the burden.

One of the encouraging lessons you'll discover through these messages is that none of our main characters ever adopts the attitude of, "oh well, that's life." Not one of them sits on the sideline and willingly accepts whatever sad portion life deals them. They all persist in trusting God for a breakthrough. They all persist in believing that if they call upon the name of the Lord, HE will hear them. And in each case, God shows up in a big way and does immeasurably more than what they could have asked for or even imagined.

As we make our way through tonight's message and this series, one of the questions I'd like you to begin thinking through is, "what personal negative life circumstances have you accepted as normal simply because everyone says, "well, that's life."?"

NO! IT'S NOT JUST LIFE! Christ Himself says, "He came to give us life, and life to the full" (John 10:10). That doesn't mean life is always going to be an easy walk in the park, but it does mean you have the option not to simply "endure" whatever difficulties or

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problems come into your life. You can tap into the greatest resource known to mankind – God! The widow in our story did exactly that. She has decided that she does not want to spend the next few years of hers and her sons lives in slavery paying off the debt of her dead husband. And so she approaches the closest thing or person she knows represents the presence of God – Elisha.

"What do you have?" – (STARTING WITH WHAT'S AT HOME) – 2 KINGS 4:2

I find the prophet Elisha's first question to her most curious. After hearing her, he says in verse 2, "How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?"

"Wait a minute, the very reason I came to you was because my sons and I have nothing in our house, we are B-R-O-K-E!!" I think its possible that Elisha asked that question because she wasn't being specific about what she wanted him to do, perhaps she simply assumed he would know what she meant and what to do.

Even if I'm wrong in my assumption, that principle still holds true for the way many of us come to God in prayer. Many of us struggle in prayer because we lack clarity on what it is we want God to do on our behalf. The assumption is that, "since God knows everything, why do I have to spell it out for him? So you know

what, I'm just going to pray generally and ask Him to watch over me, bless me, be with me, keep me safe, provide for me, and never ever let me go."

Is it ever wrong to pray like that? No. It's just that God has already promised through His word that He's going to do all those things for us anyway.

So whenever I find myself praying generally like that, I'm training myself to pause for some clarity and ask, "what is it I'm really asking God to do?" For those of you who don't feel comfortable praying regularly, you might find that when you are specific, you actually have a ton to communicate with God in prayer.

Having finally understood what she was asking, Elisha asks her another question that I found most insightful. Instead of loaning her the money to pay off her bills (assuming he even had it), or praying for her, he asks her what she had available in her house? Why in the world would he ask that question? I want to suggest that the reason he asked her what she already had available at home is because often times, God will demonstrate His power in our lives through what's already present in our lives.

Last week, I asked you all to think and pray about your personal sun stand still prayer. Perhaps some of you decided to pray about being a great and successful businessperson, well the business idea God is going to bless in your life is probably a project or business idea you've already been thinking of or are already involved in. Perhaps your sun stand still prayer was for a relationship? Well it's very possible you already have some form of a relationship or connection to that individual. Or perhaps your prayer is for a particular addictive habit in your life to come to an end, it could very well be that the resources and relationships that will help you break through are already part of your everyday routine.

Ted Williams (guy at the beginning of our story) already had a heaven sent voice, which God was going to use to put his life back on track.

At REMIX, our prayer continues to be that we would see God draw young adults who are far from Him into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. We are praying that this year, we would see

this room filled with passionate new believers who can't get enough of Jesus, and who are learning to walk and grow in obedience to Him each day. But as we prayed about that desire, the Holy Spirit began to put on our hearts that part of what He was going to use to grow and disciple these new believers were the Christians who were already present among us. And so, instead of trying to recruit seminary students from outside who would come equip our new believers, we recruited 10-15 small group and prayer team leaders from within REMIX, trusting that God had already planted in our midst the seeds



How Big is your Faith?

"How many jars did they end up bringing into their house, and would that number have increased had they known the one little jar wouldn't stop flowing?"

He was going to use for a spiritual revival in the ministry.

So what's in your house? What's your little jar of oil? What answers has God already placed around you? Sometimes you just need to prayerfully look around you. Consider this widow's initial response to Elisha's question. At First she says, "I have nothing in my house, nothing at all." But then a light goes on in her head, "...but wait I do have a small jar of olive oil." For Elisha, and ultimately for God, that was good enough.

"God and ask...but not just for a few" – (TURNING FAITH TO ACTION) – 2 KINGS 4:3-6

And so he gives her a set of even stranger instructions. In reality, what he was doing was encouraging her to put her faith to action. Starting in verse 3, "Elisha said, **"Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. 4 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."** 5 She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring; 6 **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."

Every time I've read through this account, I find myself wondering about the same question over and over, "How many jars did they end up bringing into their house, and would that number have increased had they known the one little jar wouldn't stop flowing?"

The verse that continues to intrigue me is in the middle of verse 6 where it says as soon as her son said, "there is no jar left, the oil stopped flowing!" The implication being, had there been more jars, the oil would have kept flowing. In my sermon notes next to this verse, I wrote down this statement, "God's miracle in their home went only as far as they were willing to believe." Perhaps they took Elisha's word lightly and brought in 25 jars? Well that would be the extent of their blessing. Or perhaps they put all their faith in the God of Elijah and found 250 large jars, well that would also be the incredible extent of their blessing.

How much are you willing to believe God for this year?

I promise you, this is not a reprimand, but last week, we asked each one of you to come up with your sun stand still prayer? How many of you actually did that? For those of you who did, did you play it safe and asked God for something you can work out on your own if He didn't come through? Or did you dare to believe that the God who made the earth stop in its rotation cycle around the sun because of the prayer of one man is more than able to answer your impossible prayer?

For those of you who didn't come up with your own sun stand still prayer yet, is that because you can't think of something big enough to trust God with

or are you worried of being let down?

Don't limit God by what you feel He hasn't done in the past, but trust Him today for who He says He is and what He says He'll do for those who trust in Him and call on Him. "Have faith in God... Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. 24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. 25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins." Mark 11:22-26

Something else I found interesting about Elisha's instructions is the fact that she was told to do it all behind "shut doors." Does that seem a little strange to you? Why do it in secret? I think a simple solution might be that since the widow's need and request was private, then the provision was to be private. I think this serves as a really good reminder that sometimes God prefers to do the spectacular behind closed doors. Sometimes the extraordinary hand of God is demonstrated in our lives through the everyday ordinary acts of God.

But another very plausible explanation is that Elisha's absence during the miracle would reassure the woman that IT WAS TRULY GOD HIMSELF who multiplied her small jar of oil into multiple jar of oil. In so doing, her faith would rest in God, and not in Elisha. We humans have a bad habit of worshipping anything that provides even a temporary sense of satisfaction. Do you recall what happened when Jesus fed thousands with a few loaves of bread and fish? They wanted to riot and make him king because finally they found a king who could make grilled salmon sandwiches out of thin air.

You know what comes to mind as I think of this "closed door miracle?" I think of the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:5-7, where he says, "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your



The heart attitude God is looking for is one that is completely surrendered to Jesus Christ daily, a heart that is willing to believe He is who He says He is and will do what He says He will do, a heart that is willing to trust Him regardless of the timing of when He meets your need, and a heart that is thankful to Him in all things.

Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

Listen, we want you to join us here on Thursday evenings every week to seek God in prayer so that when He answers, you can share in the celebration with us because you had a personal vested interest. But those evenings shouldn't be the only time that heaven gets to hear your voice. The prayers you pray with us on Thursdays should also be heard in heaven during your own daily, personal, prayer times.

"Go, sell, pay, and live" – (ENJOYING THE REWARDS OF GREAT PRAYERS) – 2 KINGS 4:7

When all was said and done, verse 7 says, "She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left."

Don't miss the fact that after she received what she sought God for, she returned back to Him (His servant) to acknowledge what HE had done. And he in turn gave her the blessing to live off the blessings she had received.

I will be the first one to admit that it is very easy to try and use biblical promises as a means to an end. In other words, we will claim God's promises and pray it over our lives, as long as it doesn't

interfere with our plans for our lives. So here's the deal, **do not be deceived; God cannot be mocked (Galatians 6:7).** Jeremiah 17:10 says, "I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve." If there is no real commitment in your life to Jesus Christ, and your prayers simply serve the purpose of acquiring more from God for your own personal pleasure, the bible says, "God will not hear you." (James 4:3).

The heart attitude God is looking for is one that is completely surrendered to Jesus Christ daily, a heart that is willing to believe He is who He says He is and will do what He says He will do, a heart that is willing to trust Him regardless of the timing of when He meets your need, and a heart that is thankful to Him in all things.

That's whom God hears and moves powerfully through. So, what decisions need to be made in the next few moments?

How many of you need to stop limiting God by your feelings of what He hasn't done in the past and start trusting Him for greater things this year?

How many of you need to stop generalizing your prayers and start being specific on what it is you are actually

trying to ask God to do during this prayer month?

How many of you need to start trusting God to use the resources, relationships, or opportunities He's already placed in your life for His glory and your greater good?

And lastly, how many of you need to stop trying to be good people and trust in Jesus Christ as the only one who can save you?

Would you do so even now? **Romans 10:9** says, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

If God has so stirred your heart and you long for that relationship with Jesus Christ, begin by confessing your sins to God trusting that **He is faithful to forgive** (1 John 1:9).

When you're done, tell Him you believe He died for your sins, rose again from the dead, and is seated in power at the right hand of God. Then ask Him to come into your life and be your Lord and savior.

When you're done, **WELCOME TO GOD'S FAMILY.**

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN?

theREMIX meets on Sunday nights at 6:00P.M (year round).

We can be reached online at ([www . remixnj . com](http://www.remixnj.com)) You can also find us on **Facebook | The Remix Ministry**

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