



## Losing It All to Find Everything

By Debbie Childers

As recorded in 2 Kings 4:1-7, the prophet Elisha once approached a desperately poor woman. She was deep in debt and her sons were being sold into slavery to pay off her debt. The only possession she had left was one small pot of oil.

And that's exactly what Elisha decided to use. Why would he do that? The pot of oil was her only source of income left and Elisha asked her to trust him with it. Why would he ask her to give up literally **EVERYTHING** she had? And what does that have to do with us today?

What Elisha told this widow to do is exactly what God calls us to do in our own lives. He tells us to trust Him and Him alone. Elisha didn't want this widow to depend on her little pot of oil. He didn't want her to depend on anything but God. So she literally took a risk with her last hope in the world--she placed all her hope in what God could do.

Most of the time we have a warped picture of what "*trusting God*" really means. It's not just an event by event cycle where we find ourselves in a problem and say, "Well I just have to trust God." Then we go about our business as normal while things are under control. And when we find ourselves in a problem we can't fix again, we repeat the declaration.

But trusting God really means, "***I give up everything I am depending on... other than God. I will not trust in my abilities, my bank account, my control over a situation, other people, my career, my social standing, my possessions, my church, my health, my personal strength--or anything else of this world. I am emptying my life of anything that would lead me to place my trust in anything but God and God alone.***"

If we feel the need to hold on to what little we have, just in case we need it, we will miss the way God wants to use "that little" to provide more than we can imagine. That's true for individuals and it's true for churches. The best we can get from that limited resource is a limited return. But when we give it to God, He is unlimited in the way He can use it.

With her little pot of oil, the best the widow could have hoped to receive was a minimal income that would last a short time and then send her boys straight into the slave market. But notice this: God had no intention of a minimal return on her investment. **God will ALWAYS multiply anything we surrender.**

Filling just the one pot she owned would not bring enough income to pay off her debts. Elisha knew that God was going to give her more than she had containers to hold. So Elisha told her to go out and gather empty pots from everyone she knew, specifying they had to be EMPTY!!

Why do you suppose that is? It's because God cannot completely fill anything if it is not completely empty. We cannot receive all of God's good gifts if we are holding on to something and won't let go of it. If we want God to bless us completely, then we have to empty ourselves of anything we are holding on to that is taking up space.

But when we surrender whatever we are gripping and trusting to meet our needs, God will take it and use it for our benefit and His glory.

The next thing Elisha told the woman to do was to close her doors. She had gathered all the empty pots she could find, so she went inside her house and closed the doors behind her. Why did Elisha tell her to close the doors before God did the miracle? I think God put that little detail in the story to let us know that outside distractions sometimes keep us from getting our pots filled!!

As the widow surrendered and poured out her last remaining precious pot of oil, God multiplied it and used it to fill every pot she had gathered. Elisha said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you and your sons live on the rest" (2 Kings 4:7).

Over and over in Scripture, God records His "exchanges." He exchanges our sin for His righteousness; our death for His life; our sinful past for the sinless past of Jesus; our hopelessness for His hopefulness; and our limitations for His unlimited potential!

There is no benefit in gripping tightly to what God directs us to release. If we fail to let it go, we will miss a miracle of God in our lives!

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