**1. Motivate**

When have you received help that arrived just at the right time?

* got a job just in time
* received money in the mail/someone paid a lone in time to pay a bill
* someone helped change a tire when stranded
* ordered items came just in time to finish a job/complete an assignment
* someone called (even when unknown) with a solution to a problem I was struggling with
* received help with directions when you were almost late to catch a plane or make an appointment
* the repair shop you stopped at “just happened” to have the right parts

**2. Transition**

God knows what we need and when we need it

* God provides for our needs
* On time

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View it at <https://tinyurl.com/4nxkdyyp> . If you have no wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/5fynffv8>

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Cry Out!

Listen for limited resources.

2 Kings 4:1-2 (NIV) 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." 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 little oil."

What events created a situation for a woman to cry out in despair?

* lost her husband
* a single mom with two kids (in a culture with not much help for widows)
* in debt … creditor coming to take two sons away as slaves to pay for the debt

To whom does she make her appeal, and why?

* calls for help from Elisha
* knows Elisha is one of the prophets
* husband had belonged to the company of the prophets
* figured they would have compassion
* he was known for doing miracles

What are some things we know about her husband? Who was her deceased husband in relationship to Elisha?

* “your servant” –
* was previously one of the members of the “company of prophets”
* now deceased
* owed money

Why do you think Elisha asked what she had in her house?

* what is something God can use to meet her need
* God works with what we have – resources, skills
* then he would have a suggestion or instruction
* also got her to admit or explain the limitations of her situation

How did the woman assess her inventory of resources?

* “nothing at all”
* just a little oil (cooking, lighting, …)

If we are asked to volunteer for some task having to do with the different ministries of our church, we may think we are just as lacking as the widow. But, what kinds of seemingly insignificant resources might we have that God could use?

* time
* a household talent – cooking, cleaning, sowing, yard work
* willingness to learn a needed skill
* energy, youth
* a hobby to share with youngsters
* patience with young people
* technical, mechanical skills

Why are we sometimes hesitant to cry out to God for help in our time of need?

* embarrassed to admit we are in need … people might think poorly of our stewardship of finances or health
* may be a personal physical need
* too small – God can’t be bothered with piddly needs (in contrast to His busy tasks)
* too big – even for God … it’s such a mess, even God can’t fix it
* pride – want to be able to handle things on our own

What does this story reveal about God’s concern for those in desperate need?

* God is concerned about even seemingly insignificant people – a widowed mother
* God’s resources are vast – unfathomable
* He wants us to come to Him
* He wants to provide our needs
* He can do so in miraculous, unexpected ways

3.2 Get Ready!

Listen for specific instructions.

2 Kings 4:3-4 (NIV) 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."

What did Elisha instruct the woman to do?

* go ask all your neighbors for empty jars
* get as many as you can
* start pouring oil into the empty jars
* fill as many jars as there are

Why do you think he told her to carry out the next step of his instructions behind closed doors?

* an act of faith
* won’t be something to be “advertised”
* between her and God
* didn’t need for her to become famous as the “Miracle Oil Lady”
* this was a specific need that she personally had and God would meet that need specifically
* her sons would see the miracle God was doing and also learn to trust God

The Widow was told to keep pouring until all the jars were full. How do our actions demonstrate our faith in God’s provision?

* when we obey what God says to do
* we might not have an Elisha setting us up for a miracle, but we do have specific commands and principles taught in Scripture
* when we obey these, we demonstrate our faith in God
* for example, tithing, even when finances are tight
* recall the youngster who donated his loaves and fish (Fila-o-Fish Happy Meal) and it stretched to feed 5000+

What does God want me to do while I wait on His provision? How could I “gather more jars” in anticipation of His provision?

* look for opportunities to serve Him
* ask church staff if there are opportunities to help
* get to know your neighbors who might need friends, might need the Gospel
* offer to help elderly folks nearby with yard work or chores
* become involved in God’s Kingdom ministries
* tell God you are trusting Him for your need

3.3 Use It!

Listen for the miracle.

2 Kings 4:5-7 (NIV) She left him and afterward 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. 7 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."

You are writing an article for your church’s news letter about the widow’s miraculous provision. Determine the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How elements of the story.

*Who*: widow and two sons

*What*: had a certain number of empty jars and a small vial of oil

*When*: after consulting with Elisha

*Where*: inside her house

*Why*: she needed money to pay debts, avoid having sons sold into slavery

*How*: God worked a miracle – as long as there were empty jars, the oil kept flowing out of the original small container – able to sell the oil, pay the debts, and have oil to live on

What is the significance of the oil only stopping when the jars ran out?

* God is watching and controlling the events
* He knows how much was needed, no more, no less
* could be the woman’s faith was limited as seen in how many jars she gathered
* what God gives will not be wasted

Why do you think the miracle involved the widow’s small jar of oil and not something more extravagant?

* shows God doesn’t need an extravagant resource
* God can multiply the little one has and get extravagant results
* usually our resources are NOT extravagant
* usually in an area of need all we have is small resources
* if it was an extravagant resource, the widow didn’t need God’s help

How does this passage encourage you to act in faith, even when you don’t understand the outcome?

* God wants to work in our lives, He has promised to provide our needs
* sometimes a door of opportunity will open and we are challenged to proceed in faith
* when we trust God and obey His direction, He is faithful to meet our needs, accomplish His purposes in our lives
* God is able and desiring to work miracles in our lives

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

Assess the true needs in your life.

* Sometimes it may be difficult to distinguish between wants and needs in our lives.
* Ask God to reveal to you what are the true needs in your life.

Ask for help.

* Lower your pride and raise your faith by asking God to help you in your time of need.
* Make it a matter of consistent prayer.

Help those in need.

* Look for God’s hand at work revealing to you how you can be a blessing by meeting the needs of someone who is in a desperate situation.
* Ask God to help you to be discerning, sensitive, and compassionate in response to those in need.



Yikes! What a storm … it blew a bunch of the letters off of our church sign. Help us put them back. They fell straight down so that should make it easier. Start with the columns where just one letter fell. Then work on the two and three letter words to find which letters make a reasonable word. When you finish, let your maintenance staff know the quote so they could use it too. For help and other cool Family Activities go to <https://tinyurl.com/5fynffv8>

Fallen Phrases Puzzle